

INSPECTION REPORT

OUTWOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Heald Green,
Cheadle

LEA area: Stockport

Unique reference number: 106094

Headteacher: Mrs S V Blay

Reporting inspector: Keith Edwards
21190

Dates of inspection: 8 – 11 July 2002

Inspection number: 195413

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
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Outwood Road Heald Green Cheadle Cheshire
Postcode:	SK8 3ND
Telephone number:	0161 437 1715
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr D Seton
Date of previous inspection:	16 June 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21190	Keith Edwards	Registered inspector	English Information and communication technology English as an additional language	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? a) The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
11041	Marvyn Moore	Lay inspector		How high are standards? b) Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
8316	Jozefa O'Hare	Team inspector	Science Art and design Design and technology Music Foundation stage Equal opportunities	
15236	Morag Thorpe	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography History Physical education Religious education Special educational needs	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Outwood Primary draws most of its children from the immediate locality. Numbers on roll have fallen since the time of the last inspection. There are 149 full-time boys and girls as well as 36 children who attend the nursery on a part-time basis. The pupils are taught in discrete year groups in the reception class and in the junior classes. The pupils in Years 1 and 2 are taught in the same class. Most of the pupils are white and come from homes where English is the first language. Fourteen per cent of the pupils have an entitlement to free school meals. This is close to the national average.

There is one intake into the reception class during the course of the year. Not all of the children who start in the school's nursery transfer into the reception class. The attainment of most of the pupils on entry to their reception year is below average although a significant number have higher achievement in their personal and social development. There is a wide spread of ability in each class. Twenty per cent of the pupils are on the school's register for special educational needs. This is similar to the national average. Three of these pupils have a statement of special educational needs. A new headteacher and deputy have been appointed since the last inspection.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a rapidly improving school. The headteacher has breathed new life into the establishment and has provided a clear sense of direction for further improvement. The staff and pupils are well motivated and the climate for learning is good. The school is effective. The quality of teaching is good and it enables the children to make good progress. Standards in English, science, geography and history are above average by the end of Year 6. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- The focus on raising standards has led to a significant improvement in the pupils' national test results by the end of Year 6.
- The very effective leadership provided by the headteacher, with the commitment and support of key staff and the governing body, has led to very good progress since the last inspection.
- The quality of relationships is very good and reflects the strength of the team spirit and the caring ethos of the school.
- The provision in the Foundation Stage, particularly the very good quality of teaching, enables the children to make a good start to their schooling.
- The school provides a stimulating curriculum that enables the pupils to develop a positive attitude towards learning; the pupils are enthusiastic about their school and their standard of behaviour is very good.
- The school has forged very good relationships with the parents and the community to support the pupils' learning.
- The school provides well for those pupils with special educational needs and enables them to make good progress.

What could be improved

- Standards in music are below average.
- Attendance levels are well below the national average.
- The quality of marking is variable from class to class.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made very good progress since the last inspection in June 1997, particularly since the arrival of the new management team, and it is well placed to continue to improve. The ethos of the school is much improved and there is a shared sense of determination to move forward and to succeed. Standards are rising. The recommendations of the previous inspection report have been met. For example, the school now has clear assessment procedures which enable the teachers to track the pupils' performance as they progress through the school. Furthermore, policies and schemes of work have been introduced to ensure that the curriculum has a clear structure. The quality of the teaching has improved significantly and it enables the pupils to make good progress. The school has introduced new policies to improve standards of discipline and these are clearly understood and have been very

successful. The behaviour of the pupils is now a strength of the school. Resources have been enhanced and the internal condition of the school is much improved.

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				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1999	2000	2001	2001	
English	C	D	D	D	well above average A
mathematics	C	C	E	E	above average B
science	D	D	E	E	average C
					below average D
					well below average E

The attainment of the children on entry to the nursery is broadly average and the children make good progress. However, many of these children, particularly the higher attainers, do not transfer to the reception class. Many children start in the reception class with standards of attainment that are below average. They make good progress in the Foundation Stage, particularly in their personal and social development. Progress in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory and standards in reading, writing and mathematics are broadly average at the end of the infant stage.

The above table relates to the pupils who left the school in 2001 and does not reflect the current picture within the school. The school is now successful in meeting the challenging targets it sets for different groups of pupils. For example, the test results for 2002, which have yet to be confirmed, show a much improved performance in English, mathematics and science. Furthermore, the pupils make good progress in the junior classes and the standard of work seen in English, science, geography and history is above average at the end of Year 6. Standards in mathematics are broadly average. Only in music and in aspects of information and communication technology are standards below average by the time the pupils leave school. Standards are close to the expected level in each of the other subjects.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	The pupils' attitudes to school life are very positive. They concentrate well and persevere with their work. Parents report that their children enjoy going to school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Standards of behaviour in and around the school are very good. The pupils behave particularly well in lessons. There has only been one exclusion in the last two years.
Personal development and relationships	The pupils show a high level of maturity and confidence for their age. They are very polite and are developing essential social skills. The quality of relationships in the school is very good.
Attendance	The pupils' attendance is unsatisfactory. Punctuality at the start of the school day is a challenge for a significant minority of pupils.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Very good	Satisfactory	Good

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

The overall quality of teaching and learning is good. The quality of teaching is very good in the Foundation Stage and it enables the children to make good progress, especially in their personal and social development. Throughout the school, the teachers have established very good relationships with the pupils and maintain good discipline. Further strengths include the quality of the teamwork with the other adults who support in class and the focus on practical experiences for the pupils; these motivate the pupils and enrich their learning. Furthermore, English is taught well; the teachers are very successful in providing opportunities for the pupils to write about their work in different subjects. Mathematics is well taught. The teachers have a secure grasp of the National Numeracy Strategy and have remedied the weaknesses in the teaching of mental mathematics reported in the last inspection. Although the teachers make effective use of assessment information to set work with appropriate challenge for the different ability groups within each class the quality of marking is variable. The pupils with English as an additional language receive sensitive support and have good access to the curriculum. The pupils with special educational needs receive good support and so make good progress in learning basic skills.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The curriculum is broad, balanced and enriching. It has improved markedly since the last inspection. The provision in the Foundation Stage is very good. The school has implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies well. The school has established very good links with the community and pupils benefit from a wide range of visits.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good overall. In the very short time since her appointment, the co-ordinator has produced very good individual education plans and all of the pupils' targets are relevant, sharp and measurable. In addition, she has produced a well-considered register of gifted and talented pupils that reflects the range of their abilities. Support staff are used well.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The small minority of pupils with English as an additional language receive sensitive support to enable them to benefit from their lessons. The school is seeking guidance on how best to provide structured support to develop the pupils' reading and writing.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. Particular strengths are the quality and range of the provision for the pupils' social and moral development. The School Council strongly supports the pupils' social development and the work of the 'Green Gang' raises the pupils' environmental awareness. The cultural provision reflects the multi-faith and multi-ethnic dimensions of contemporary Britain. The pupils' experiences in creative dance enhance their spiritual and cultural development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Although procedures need to be brought up-to-date, the school provides a safe and secure environment for its pupils. Assessment procedures are well used to ensure that the pupils are achieving their best.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides very good leadership. She is well supported by senior staff and has developed an effective team which has enabled the school to make very good progress in the last two years.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body provides good support for the work of the school. The governors take a keen interest in the school's performance and its standing in the community.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The procedures for self-evaluation are a key factor in the success of the school. Senior staff make a detailed analysis of test results and track the performance of each individual pupil. There is a regular programme of monitoring the quality of teaching and learning. The outcomes are used in an atmosphere of trust and confidentiality to improve the school's performance.
The strategic use of resources	The school improvement plan benefits from wide consultation and funds are carefully allocated to priorities. The school is shrewd in its use of resources. Principles of best value underpin the school's development. The school provides good value for money.

There is a good match of teachers and support staff to the demands of the curriculum. Apart from the concerns regarding the surface of the playground the accommodation is good.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The teaching is good • The school expects their children to work hard and to do their best • The school is well led and managed • They find the school to be approachable • Their children enjoy school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of activities outside lessons

The inspection team strongly endorses the parents' positive views and judge the school's provision for activities outside lessons to be well organised and better than average.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The attainment on entry to the nursery class covers a wide spectrum but it is broadly average. In spite of the very good start these children have in the nursery class, some parents remove their children and admit them into another school for their reception year. This affects the overall attainment on entry into the reception which is generally below average especially in the children's communication skills. Nevertheless, the children continue to make good progress and successfully build upon their learning, through the very good provision made for them in the reception class.
2. The children in the Foundation Stage make good progress in their personal and social development because the adults provide such good role models and provide a rich variety of experiences for the children. This also contributes significantly to the children's growing confidence in speaking and listening. The children follow a stimulating curriculum that includes a wide range of activities, routines and experiences that are carefully chosen to meet their learning. In particular, the consistently high quality teaching of the Foundation Stage teachers and the close teamwork evident between them and the classroom assistants and the nursery nurse, results in a positive atmosphere where children are inspired to learn. The classrooms and the outdoor play area provide a stimulating environment for learning. In addition, there is a strong emphasis on valuing each child and this helps the children to feel included and have a really positive start to their education. Assessment is used consistently well throughout the Foundation Stage to ensure that the children build on their previous experiences. The children with special educational needs are sensitively supported and helped to make good progress, particularly in their communication and mathematical skills.
3. The National Curriculum tests and assessments at the end of Year 2 in 2001 showed that the pupils' attainments were below average in writing; standards in reading and mathematics were well below average. In comparison to similar schools, the pupils' attainments were well below average in reading; below average in writing and very low in mathematics. However, last year's Year 2 contained a high proportion of pupils who were on the school's register for special educational needs. An analysis of the current Year 2 pupils' work and early evidence from the 2002 national tests show a marked improvement on previous years and indicates that standards in reading, writing and mathematics are now broadly average. This is because the school has analysed its performance and has taken radical steps to raise standards. The school has introduced detailed tracking procedures in the core subjects to ensure that the progress of the pupils is carefully monitored. The school is now meeting the targets it sets for the pupils in Year 2. However, there is scope for raising the expectation of the infant staff to ensure that all of the pupils, particularly the higher attainers, achieve their potential in literacy and numeracy. Overall, boys and girls make steady progress in Years 1 and 2.
4. The National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6 in 2001 show that standards were below average in English and well below average in mathematics and science. There is a similar picture when drawing a comparison with similar schools. Inspection evidence presents a very different perspective. Standards in English and science are above average at the end of Year 6. Standards are broadly in line with the national picture at the end of Year 6 in mathematics. This judgement is supported by early evidence of the 2002 national test results for Year 6. The improvement is the result of the rigorous use of target setting and tracking procedures, much improved teaching and a renewed sense of purpose among the staff and pupils.
5. Up until 2001, test results for Year 6 at Outwood have not kept pace with the national trend. However, the school has a quite significant pupil mobility problem. Data analysis shows that those pupils who start at Outwood in reception and stay at the school until the end of Year 6 make good progress. Furthermore, the pupils' progress in English and science in 2001 from the end of Year 2 to the end of Year 6 matches that of pupils in similar schools over the same period of time.
6. The pupils make good progress in speaking and listening and standards are above average for their age by the end of Year 6. Most pupils are confident and articulate. They listen carefully to

their teachers and to their peers in class discussions. They express themselves clearly using a good range of vocabulary. The pupils make good progress in learning to read as they move through the school. The pupils respond well to the daily opportunity for them to become engrossed in a book and in the current Year 6 standards are above average. Furthermore the culture of the school is one in which books are valued and the richness of literature is shared and appreciated. Most pupils read with a good degree of expression, fluency, accuracy and understanding. Their reference skills enable them to work well in other subjects where they need to research information.

7. The pupils with special educational needs make good progress in their reading and in writing because they are well supported. An additional factor in this good progress is the clarity of the pupils' individual education plans which are relevant and introduce the appropriate amount of challenge. Because of the school's effective use of assessment, those pupils who have been identified as being gifted and talented make good progress because they are given work that is well matched to their abilities. The pupils who have English as an additional language make good progress in developing their communication skills because they receive sensitive support.
8. Current writing standards are broadly average by the end of Year 2. The pupils' spelling, sentence construction, punctuation and handwriting are improving. There are some examples of pupils using their newly learned skills to extend their writing in other subjects, such as their writing about the human body in science and the paintings of Vincent van Gogh in art. Standards of spelling and punctuation match those expected of pupils at the end of Year 2. The pupils make good progress in writing in the junior classes and standards are above average at the end of Year 6. This is because the pupils are given many opportunities to express themselves in writing in a range of styles and formats. The pupils are encouraged to develop their literacy skills in many other subjects and this policy is proving to be successful. By the end of Year 6 the pupils understand the conventions of grammar, know how to punctuate their work accurately and the higher attaining pupils use a rich seam of vocabulary and a range of literary techniques to create atmosphere for the reader. The handwriting style of most pupils is well-formed and their spelling is generally accurate.
9. By the end of Year 6, standards in mathematics are average. The National Numeracy Strategy is well established and a particular strength of the pupils' achievement is their standard of mental calculation. This has boosted the confidence of the pupils as mathematicians and they make accurate calculations involving tables and measurement. The teachers insist on the use of appropriate mathematical vocabulary and this has resulted in the pupils making good progress. The pupils are able to collect data and represent the information in a range of graphical forms, sometimes with the aid of information and communication technology. The pupils are offered frequent opportunities to apply their numeracy skills in other subjects such as science and geography and this makes a strong contribution to the pupils' progress.
10. The pupils make good progress in science and standards are above average by the end of Year 6. Throughout the school the pupils engage in practical investigations and learn from making predictions and from direct observation. Younger pupils benefit from visits to places of interest to support their learning on plants and animals. They can classify materials according to their properties. By the end of Year 6, the pupils engage confidently in a range of investigations and apply sound scientific methods to their conclusions. They check the validity of their predictions and know how to apply the concept of a fair test. Their skills are consolidated through the application of their knowledge to other subjects. For example the older pupils use their knowledge of electrical circuits when making models in design and technology.
11. The pupils respond well to the improved provision for information and communication technology and make sound progress in learning the technical skills of word processing, data handling and researching information. They benefit from the use of information and communication technology to support learning in other subjects. This is particularly the case in the infant class where the pupils use programmable toys, tape recorders, digital cameras and computers to support learning.
12. Standards are satisfactory in religious education at the end of Years 2 and 6 and meet the requirements of the Agreed Syllabus. The pupils, including the more able and those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress overall and good progress in the social and moral aspects of religious education. The pupils have developed a satisfactory understanding of Christianity and other world faiths.

13. Standards in history and geography are average by the end of Year 2 and above average at the end of Year 6. These subjects are well supported by field visits that stimulate the pupils' interest. Standards in art and design and design and technology are supported by clear schemes of work and are average overall. The pupils achieve satisfactory standards in physical education overall but there are particular strengths in dance, where the junior pupils perform with a fluency of movement and great sensitivity in their interpretation of themes. The pupils' achievements in music are below average in the infant and junior classes. This is because the school lacks a specialist teacher and opportunities are missed for the pupils to perform, to appreciate a range of genres and to understand musical structures.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

14. The pupils have very good attitudes to the school and display very good behaviour both in and out of the classroom. This is an improvement on the last inspection. Children both in the nursery and the reception class make a very positive start to their school life and develop a good understanding of school routines and adhere to them well. Their personal and social skills are well promoted as they progress through the school. Pupils are able to work in an independent manner, relate extremely well to adults and each other, and play and work well together.
15. The children in the nursery and reception classes are able to follow instructions, stay on task and concentrate well. The children's behaviour is good and they have a well-developed sense of right and wrong. The pupils in the infant and junior classes show great interest in their lessons and activities and remain on task well. They contribute to discussions, listen carefully to questions and give sensible answers. Most pupils behave in a sensible manner and are polite and confident when talking to visitors. They are very proud of their school and are keen to tell others.
16. Almost all of the parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire felt that behaviour in the school was good and this is confirmed by the inspection findings. In the overwhelming majority of lessons seen during the inspection week the pupils behaved well, they interacted well to teachers, showed respect for the views of their fellow pupils and responded well to instructions. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language show very positive attitudes to their work in lessons, especially in small group activities. They relate very well to classroom support staff and behave very well at lunchtime because of well-focused support.
17. The pupils' personal development is very good. The pupils are given responsibility to use their initiative such as acting as monitors, answering the telephone, arranging music in assemblies and looking after the environment and acting as house captains. At lunchtimes, older pupils sit with younger pupils and help them, acting as friends and buddies. This makes lunchtimes a very pleasant occasion. The school has recently introduced a pupil council where pupils from each class meet to discuss any matters that they feel could improve the school. Pupils are responsible for setting the agenda, chairing the meeting and taking the minutes. During the inspection week a very successful council meeting was observed. The pupils understood the concepts of democracy and were developing responsibilities and duties of chairperson and council secretary. As a result of this innovation by the school, pupils have developed a sense of maturity and independence and have become self-assured. Pupils at the school have a good respect for the feelings, values and beliefs of others and a good understanding of the impact of their actions. Relationships in the school are very good.
18. The school has very little bullying and pupils are very keen to respond to the 'Golden Rules' of the school and earn house points or be awarded 'Golden Pupil of the week'. As a result of the behaviour strategies introduced by the school there has been just one temporary exclusion in the last two years. The pupils treat books and other equipment with care and respect.
19. Attendance in the current year, at a little under 95 per cent, is unsatisfactory. The school does take measures to improve attendance but needs to be more pro-active in contacting parents on a first day absence basis. Some pupils arrive late and this has an impact on the school's daily programme.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

20. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good. In almost all of the lessons observed the teaching was satisfactory or better. Sixty-six per cent of the teaching was good or better with 31 per cent judged to be very good and two lessons, both in the juniors, being excellent. Only two lessons, one in the infants and one in the juniors, were judged to be unsatisfactory. This represents a clear improvement since the last inspection and supports the parents' view that the quality of teaching is good. The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is very good. It enables the children to develop positive attitudes towards learning. The overall quality of teaching is better in the junior classes than it is in Years 1 and 2 and it contributes towards the pupils' faster progress, particularly in Years 5 and 6.
21. The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is very good across all areas of learning. The children thoroughly enjoy all the activities that the staff provide for them, because the teaching is inspiring. For example, in the nursery class, the teacher uses a glove puppet to encourage talk and role-play in the yellow submarine. The children are delighted to see fish 'swimming' outside the porthole. In the reception class, the teacher and the assistants also plan imaginative activities to meet the learning objectives of the children. For instance, the children excitedly count the number of teddies that will travel on the Outwood Airline. In both classes, the children eagerly participate in all the activities provided by the staff, because learning is relevant and fun. Consequently, they love coming to school and work well throughout their busy sessions. The staff maintain a very good record of the children's interests, abilities and progress. They observe the children closely and make quick and efficient notes. This information guides the next step of planning, enabling all children, including those with special educational needs and those who learn through English as an additional language. As a result, children make good progress.
22. The quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory and it helps the pupils to build steadily on their achievements in the Foundation Stage. The teacher's planning is appropriately structured and lessons have clear learning objectives. The planning takes some account of the range of age and ability of the pupils in the class. Praise and ongoing assessment are used effectively to motivate the pupils and to raise their achievement, although too little attention is paid to assessment data to ensure that all of the pupils are sufficiently challenged in lessons. The literacy and numeracy hours are taught satisfactorily. Resources are well organised and the teacher makes good use of display to support the pupils' learning in these areas. Information and communication technology is used well in the infant class to support learning in different subjects. There is a good rapport between the teacher and the classroom assistants and they work well together. Homework is set regularly and the ongoing dialogue between home and school in the pupils' reading diaries supports the pupils' learning. A strength of the teaching is the emphasis that is given to practical work and the pupils are presented with a good exciting opportunities to learn from first hand experience. For example, during the inspection the pupils visited a nursery to find out about plant growth and earlier in the term they visited a zoo to study wild animals.
23. The quality of teaching in the junior classes is good as it builds successfully on the pupils' earlier achievements and enables them to make good progress in English, mathematics and science. The emphasis that each teacher gives to the pupils' personal and social development is a strength; it raises the pupils' confidence and self-esteem and nurtures a very positive attitude towards learning. The emphasis on making learning interesting and exciting is also paying dividends. The classrooms are vibrant and teachers prepare their lessons carefully to ensure that the pupils can make decisions and think for themselves. Expectations are high in most classes. Only in Year 3 are a few lessons impaired by a lack of pace and over-prescriptive teaching. Appropriate attention is paid to the pupils' previous attainment when planning work in English, mathematics and science for the pupils of different abilities. Targets are shared with the pupils in these core subjects and are reviewed regularly.
24. Literacy is taught well overall and very well in Year 6. The policy of giving each pupil the opportunity to read each day outside of the Literacy Hour is working well. It has enabled the teachers to develop the other aspects of literacy, such as writing and grammar in a more focused manner. Furthermore the teachers are skilled in finding opportunities for the pupils to record their ideas in a range of formats in other subjects. Consequently standards of literacy are beginning to rise sharply. Numeracy is taught well throughout the school. The mental mathematics sessions at the start of each lesson are varied and interesting. Furthermore, the teachers promote strongly an investigative approach to mathematics to develop the pupils' ability to think and to respond to challenges. Mathematics is given a very high profile throughout the school both in the teaching of skills and application to other areas of the curriculum. The thorough and systematic monitoring of teaching and pupils' work has been instrumental in improving the level of progress and quality of

teaching. Information and communication technology is increasingly used to support learning in different subjects.

25. The pupils who have been identified as being gifted and talented are helped to achieve their potential. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress according to their targets in the basic skills of numeracy and literacy and behaviour. They are assessed thoroughly and their progress is carefully recorded. Good reference is made to their specific needs in lessons. The pupils with English as an additional language make good progress because they receive much good support. However, the school recognises the need to seek specialist help to ensure that these pupils fully understand what they are reading, for example.
26. Throughout the school the teachers provide good role models for their pupils. The behaviour of the pupils is managed well. However, the marking of the pupils' work is variable. There are some very good examples of meaningful marking, where the teacher acknowledges the pupils' efforts and gives good pointers and challenging questions to extend learning. In the best practice, the pupils are expected to answer the questions posed. This helps the pupils to build on their learning successfully. In other classes, praise is given too readily and the pupils are not required to respond to the teachers' comments. The teachers have at least satisfactory knowledge in all the subjects of the curriculum with the exception of music where the lack of expertise limits the pupils' opportunities to make good progress.

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

27. Pupils throughout the school benefit from an effective, well structured and enriching curriculum that fully meets statutory requirements in all subjects. The school allocates an appropriate amount of time to each subject and the correct levels of emphasis and importance is given to almost all areas of the curriculum. Furthermore, opportunities for learning in two or more aspects of the curriculum simultaneously are frequently included in both long term plans and plans for individual lessons. As a result, pupils may for example, develop literacy skills during history lessons and acquire understanding that promotes their spiritual, moral, or cultural developments in religious education, geography or dance. The curriculum for religious education meets the requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus and is further enhanced by national guidance. The provision for teaching about the Christian faith and the majority of faiths represented in contemporary Britain is good.
28. The headteacher and senior staff have worked very hard to redress the shortcomings in the curriculum identified at the previous inspection where there were too few opportunities for pupils to carry out investigation in mathematics and science and where the curriculum lacked structure and opportunity for progress. Furthermore, the school has made very good improvements to the Foundation Stage provision. The teachers plan the curriculum well to make it appropriate for the stage of children's learning. For example, in the nursery, the teacher and her highly skilled nursery nurse, both provide the children with many imaginatively planned opportunities to explore and to investigate inside and outside the classroom. The staff support the children very well as they embark on the early stepping stones to learning. The teacher and her assistants in the reception class gradually make the curriculum more formal. This enables the children to transfer smoothly into the first level of the National Curriculum in Year 1.
29. The school has implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies well. The national guidance for teaching both subjects is well developed and, in most lessons, it is adapted imaginatively to improve further the quality of pupils' education. Lessons are usually rigorously paced to ensure that appropriate time is allocated to each aspect of the subject. A strong feature is the use of questioning to determine pupils' levels of understanding and to lead them to new learning. The use of assessment to guide curriculum planning is good overall. The analysis of assessment in English, for example, has resulted in an emphasis of writing across the school.
30. This school is an inclusive school, which successfully provides equality of access, and opportunity to all pupils. Provision for pupils with special education needs is good and teachers have begun to identify gifted and talented pupils and provide well for them. Teachers display sensitivity when dealing with issues of equal opportunities and ensure that pupils are included, not only in lessons, but also in visits, residential visits and extra-curricular activities. This applies well

to those pupils with English as an additional language. These elements successfully enhance the quality of pupils' learning.

31. The school makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs. Careful thought has gone into organising the curriculum and grouping to ensure that the diverse needs of all pupils with special education needs are fully met in nearly all classes. The pupils have full access to all subjects taught in school and, where necessary, specialist equipment is readily available and suits their needs. The provision for teaching pupils in small groups and, in some cases, individually enhances their quality of learning and gives them time for quiet concentration. Individual education plans are good. They contain the statutory detail and additional information which is very useful when guiding teachers, pupils and parents towards the identified goals. The targets are relevant, sharp and measurable and therefore used in an evaluative manner to assess progress, not only in learning, but also in behaviour and physical needs. The school makes effective use of external agencies to provide advice, assistance and focused learning for pupils who need it.
32. A very wide range of day visits for all pupils and a residential visit for pupils in Year 6 enriches the curriculum. Very effective use is made of the local community and the wider community to enhance pupils' learning in geography, history and art especially. The school has gained financially by the support of local businesses for example, in providing a secure play area for children in the Foundation Stage and a garden which enhances pupils' scientific learning and environmental awareness. The "Green Gang" takes pride in the attractive grounds of the school and ensures that they are kept tidy and free from litter. This group of pupils show a very high level of awareness of the dangers of litter and people's responsibility in keeping their environment clean. The school has benefited from links with a nearby airport which has funded a scientist to visit school and visits to the airport.
33. The school makes good provision for pupils' personal development through its timetabled lessons, its range of extra-curricular activities, and other planned and informal opportunities which arise during the course of the school day. Aspects of citizenship are very well taught; the headteacher and staff ensure that pupils learn about the importance and functions of the utility services and civic responsibilities including the moral and social issues that arise. Adequate provision is made for raising drug awareness and sex education through the school's science programme, and additional opportunities for learning.
34. Overall the school makes good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and the provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good. This represents a further improvement on the standards reported at the last inspection. Acts of collective worship meet statutory requirements and are systematically organised so that the theme for each whole school assembly is reinforced from different perspectives in the course of year group assemblies. These provide very good opportunities for reinforcing aspects of social and moral behaviour and good opportunities for prayer. However, the opportunities to promote the spiritual development of the pupils through the daily acts of collective worship are not fully realised. For example, there are too few opportunities for pupils to sing either hymns or religious songs and music has a low profile within the school.
35. Overall, good provision is made for pupils' spiritual development in the course of lessons. For example, pupils reflect on the wonders of nature and the need to care for God's creatures in science, religious education and environmental education. Emotions evoked by the memories of a Year 5 visit to Llandudno when pupils produced exceedingly sensitive dance movements emulating the movement of the sea on the shore enhanced their spiritual and cultural development to exceedingly high levels. In a Year 4 dance lesson pupils portrayed the power of the hunter and the emotions of hunted animals showing very high standards of interpretation and awareness of beauty. Teachers regularly encourage pupils to imagine the feelings of others; for example, the emotions felt by Victorian servants who worked away from home, the power of Roman leaders and to wonder at the artistic beauty of ancient civilisations. The quality of poetry evoking the sentiments felt by people on a mountain range and how invaders changed their attitudes when they became settlers further enhance pupils' spirituality.
36. The school makes very good provision for the moral development of its pupils both through the acts of collective worship and through the opportunities constantly given by teachers to reinforce the message of making the right moral choices. Provision is well adapted to pupils' levels of understanding; for example, those in Years 1 and 2 learn that they must wait for their turn to

speak and show understanding for the needs and feelings of others, while pupils in Year 6 discuss the advantages and responsibilities given when people have the right to roam across mountainous regions and the environmental implications. As a result of very good relationships in all aspects of school life, pupils show consideration for others, listening to their ideas and valuing their feelings. Staff intervene promptly when pupils need reminders about behaviour and attitudes. Pupils are well aware of the Golden Rules and value the Golden Time on Friday that is earned and is not necessarily a right. Because of the well-chosen range of fundraising activities pupils are made aware of children and adults less fortunate than themselves and the responsibility of society towards them.

37. The provision for pupils' social development is very good. Strong features of lessons include the purposeful opportunities for pupils to collaborate and investigate in either pairs or small groups. In all classes the pupils have responsibilities for distributing books or clearing away at the end of lessons. Pupils are given very good opportunities to show initiative; for example, the School Council, which is well organised and managed, acts as a forum for pupils' ideas and considers suggestions for improvements. The School Council has a budget for which it is responsible, yet accountable. Through initiatives such as these, pupils begin to learn the skills of accurately representing the views of others and on how to report accurately on decisions. Geography lessons provide pupils with a wealth of opportunity for experiencing and learning about lives in other parts of the world. Through history lessons pupils are beginning to understand how society in Britain has changed since the Vikings invaded Britain and, more recently since the Queen was crowned. Pupils have also shared in celebrations of the Queen's Golden Jubilee and the school's Ruby Anniversary.
38. The school provides well for pupils' cultural development. They learn about ancient civilizations and cultures of people both in this country and in other parts of the world. They study varying aspects of contemporary society in geography; for example, pupils compare life in rural India with Heald Green and life on a Scottish island with their life at home. Pupils become well acquainted with their own heritage through visits of cultural interest, for example, to the Stockport Air Raid Museum and art galleries. Good provision is made for pupils to learn about the faith and cultures of people in multi-faith and multi-ethnic Manchester and Britain. Art is used well to illustrate the cultural heritage of Britain and other countries. Although there are many strengths in the school's provision for cultural development the contribution of music is unsatisfactory. There are too few opportunities for pupils to sing, compose or listen to music either in assembly or during music lessons.
39. The school is a member of a cluster of local primary schools who meet regularly under the guidance of the local education authority to exchange ideas, good educational practice and to disseminate information. The school collaborates very successfully with other schools to ensure that pupils make a smooth transition to their next stage of education. There are good curricular and social links. The school's curriculum has benefited by visits from the teaching staff to Beacon Schools in the area.
40. The school has made significant and very successful efforts to involve the community in the work and life of the school. Members of the community are regularly invited into the school to talk to the pupils. For example, during the inspection week a local diving instructor brought his diving equipment into school for nursery children to see and a local vicar took a very successful assembly. All of the pupils in the school are encouraged to work for local charities and at Christmas time and harvest time the school is involved in providing concerts for senior citizens.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

41. The school has a very caring ethos and is concerned for the welfare of its pupils. The school gives good educational support and guidance to pupils. All staff know their pupils well and are highly committed to promoting their welfare. For example the school has introduced an after school club for pupils whose parents are unable to collect them at the end of the school day. This innovation is much appreciated by parents.
42. The current arrangements for child protection and the procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare need updating to bring them in line with current practice. The school recognises the need to address this as a matter of urgency; training for the headteacher and her deputy has been arranged for the autumn term. The child protection policy is currently being implemented and this will result in

procedures for referral to the Social Services Department becoming more formalised. The school, however, does keep good records of "looked after" pupils.

43. A whole school health and safety audit has been carried in April 2002 at the request of the governing body by the local authority but the school has not yet received the results and does not have records of previous audits. Risk assessment on a departmental basis is not fully carried out and the school does not carry out written risk assessment for school visits. The fire alarm is not tested at regular intervals and no records are kept. The school has a number of first aiders, all of whom have received up-to-date training and are in possession of current certificates.
44. A high level of acceptable behaviour has been achieved throughout the school with the staff acting as good role models and through example and encouragement. Pupils' self-confidence and awareness of others has been enhanced. Procedures for the monitoring and promoting of good behaviour and the monitoring and eliminating of oppressive behaviour are very good. The school has adopted the "Golden Rules" system which although few in number, are very pertinent and are displayed prominently throughout the school. Neither teaching nor non-teaching staff accept bullying or rowdy behaviour and all pupils are very clear about the expectations of good behaviour that the school has. Pupils are very keen to earn house points and to be appointed "Golden Person of the week" for their form. The pupils take responsibility for their own actions and are encouraged to do so by staff. Poor behaviour is penalised by the awarding of yellow and red cards, which ultimately lead to the loss of privileges such as the withdrawal of some recreation time. As a result the pupils' behaviour has very much improved and the pupils are keen to observe rules and display good behaviour.
45. The school's procedures for the monitoring and promoting of attendance are unsatisfactory. The school secretary monitors attendance but not on a first day absence basis. There are no rewards to pupils for good or improving attendance and the education welfare visits the school for only one hour per fortnight.
46. The school has good procedures for the monitoring and supporting of pupils' personal development. Staff meet regularly on an informal and formal basis to discuss the progress of pupils and information is fed into planning. There are also good procedures for the monitoring of pupils' academic performance. Each pupil is given a personal target to be achieved at the end of the academic year identified either by formalised national test results or baseline assessment. Each class is monitored using a standard graph to plot progress. Regular meetings are held between the headteacher and class teachers to discuss progress, and constant use is made of data to identify pupils' needs. Classroom assistants are used to target pupils who are identified as being in need of extra help and this works extremely well.
47. Assessment procedures linked to objectives have been produced for English, mathematics and science and used by all teachers. These help the school to assess whether pupils of differing abilities are achieving the nationally expected levels of attainment across the curriculum. The pupils are appropriately assessed against the national standards by the end of Year 2 and the end of Year 6. Information from assessments is conscientiously maintained in files by each teacher and carefully used to plan the next step of pupils' learning. In addition, targets for improvements are set for the pupils in English, mathematics and science. These systems are making a positive impact upon pupils' progress.
48. Pupils with special educational needs are identified early when they enter school. They are regularly assessed against the targets set for them. Pupils' reviews are carried out regularly in order that their progress and any concerns are carefully considered by all people involved, including teachers, specialist support staff, the co-ordinator for special educational needs and parents. Individual education plans for pupils with special needs contain detailed information and reviews of them are well recorded, as are annual reviews of pupils with a Statement of Special Education Needs.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

49. The views expressed by the parents prior to the inspection through the pre-inspection questionnaire or at the pre-inspection meeting are supportive of the school. Parents interviewed by the inspection team expressed their confidence in the way that the school cares for their

children and they felt that the school well promotes their children's learning in a secure and happy environment. The inspection findings fully agree with these views.

50. The school has produced a very good brochure, which is easy to read and contains valuable information about the organisation of the school, the school rules, ethos and facilities, which the school provides. Regular newsletters are produced, giving parents a wide variety of information about proposed activities, pupils' progress and changes that the school wishes to introduce. These newsletters are parent friendly and are very well received.
51. The school holds three parents' evenings per year where parents are given the opportunity to meet teachers to discuss their children's progress. Annual reports provided by the school are good. They give information on a subject-by-subject basis on pupils' progress and abilities and contain spaces for pupil/parent comments. They do not all offer comments on what the pupils need to work on to succeed further.
52. In addition, the school holds separate evenings for nursery parents to advise them on how to help their children promote literacy and numeracy skills. The school arranges home visits for nursery pupils after enrolment and parents are free at any time to come into school, without appointment, to discuss their children's progress. The special educational needs co-ordinator has made wide-ranging efforts to involve the parents of children with special educational needs. Parents of children who have a special needs statement, are invited to annual reviews, are involved in target setting and all parents are contacted promptly by the school if there is any cause for concern. Every effort is made to keep parents well informed of all aspects of their children's progress, assessment and the provision made for them.
53. The parents are actively encouraged by the school to be involved in school life and their children's education. A significant number of parents come into school to help in various ways and during the inspection week parents and grandparents were observed working with pupils by hearing them read, assisting with art work, information and communication technology learning and helping in the nursery. They help in a number of other ways such as supervision on school outings. This contribution very effective and is much appreciated. There is a lively parent/teacher association (The Friends of Outwood School) who arrange various social activities such as summer fairs, Christmas fairs, barbecues etc. and raise valuable funds for school use.
54. Induction procedures for children joining the nursery and pupils joining the school are very good. The school carries out home visits to pupils prior to entering the nursery and a taster day is arranged for children joining the reception class. The school and governing body have established that liaison with parents and promotion of the school's activities is of a high priority and has formed a marketing sub-committee to give information to respective parents of pupils and promote and advertise the school's values, ethos and successes.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

55. The headteacher provides very good leadership. She has developed a very good balance between the pastoral, strategic, administrative and monitoring elements of her role. In all of these she is very well informed. In the relatively short time since her appointment she has been effective in raising staff morale. She has enthused her colleagues and given them a renewed sense of purpose. All of the staff work well together as a team. Although the subject co-ordinators are not involved directly in the monitoring of teaching in their subjects, they are very involved in monitoring planning and pupil progress and have played a key role in raising standards. There has been very good progress since the last inspection and particularly in the last two years. The key issues from the last inspection have been met and standards are now rising sharply.
56. The headteacher has formed an effective partnership with her recently appointed deputy and together they have continued to motivate their colleagues to strive for higher standards. The headteacher is very supportive of her staff. She provides very good feedback to her colleagues that not only shows her appreciation for the progress made within each class but also serves as a motivation for further achievement. The monitoring of teaching and learning and a climate of open discussion of what works well is a key element in the success of the school. The headteacher has introduced pupil tracking systems that clearly show the progress the pupils have made in the core subjects year-on-year. This information and other analyses of assessment information enable the teachers to support the pupils' efforts towards specific learning targets.

57. The school has a clear policy for equal opportunities, which is effectively implemented in each area of the school's work. This ensures educational inclusion so that all pupils, of whatever background or ability, make the most of the opportunities offered. The school has identified those pupils who are gifted and talented and ensures that they are challenged in the work that is set for them. The very small minority of pupils with English as an additional language have been well integrated.
58. The special educational needs co-ordinator and headteacher have rightly given special educational needs a high priority. All aspects of special educational needs are well managed by the co-ordinator due to her commitment and expertise. The register has been amended to meet the requirements of the new Code of Practice. As a result of a wide-ranging in-service training for teaching assistants and the governor for special educational needs, the pupils are well supported at all times. There are sufficient resources for pupils with special educational needs, which are well organised and used effectively.
59. The school improvement plan is a comprehensive document that is based on broad consultation and a detailed audit of the school's current position. The involvement of staff, governors and the community ensures that the educational priorities identified provide a shared vision for the school's development. There is a strong commitment to improvement among staff and governors and the school is well placed to continue to succeed. The school uses its finances well. This reflects the financial prudence of the school's management team and of the governing body when considering new expenditure. The governing body is aware of the principles of best value and applies them well. The systems for the monitoring of the outcome of expenditure are good. The school provides good value for money.
60. With minor exceptions, such as the ratification of a drugs awareness policy, the governing body fulfils its statutory obligations and makes a strong contribution to the effective running of the school. The governors are well informed and work hard at their individual and collective roles. There is an effective committee structure with appropriate terms of reference. They take their responsibilities seriously and are committed to raising standards. They have a clear view of the strengths and areas for development of the school through their frequent visits, their review of curriculum policies and discussions with subject leaders. Furthermore, the governing body is fully involved in the school's initiatives on promoting the school's standing in the community in the face of increased competition among local schools for pupils in the face of a declining pupil population.
61. The school has made good progress in terms of staffing, accommodation and resources since the last inspection. The recent additions to the non-teaching staff make a good contribution to the pupils' learning in the classroom and the accommodation is much improved. The school benefits from measures to improve site security and the internal fabric of the building, enhanced by attractive displays of the pupils' work, provides a stimulating working environment. With the exception of the surface of the playground, which is showing signs of deterioration, the grounds have been greatly improved. The school has spent its budget and specific grants prudently to enhance its resources for learning. For example the school has greatly increased its stock of books and its information and communication technology capability has been improved.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

62. In order to improve the standards of education further, the headteacher, staff and governors should:-
1. Raise standards in music by:
 - providing training for teachers (paragraphs 26,143)
 - developing a scheme of work to give guidance to teachers on what needs to be taught next (paragraphs 144,146)
 - implementing assessment procedures in music so that pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding of music can be progressive increased (paragraph 146)
 - Sharing the good practice in Year 5 (paragraph 145)
 2. Continue to develop strategies and work with the parents to further improve attendance rates (paragraphs 19, 45)

3. Improve the consistency in the quality of marking (paragraph 26)

Minor issue

1. Seek the means to improve the surface of the playground (paragraph 61)
2. Realign the school's procedures for child protection and risk assessment to ensure full compliance with current legislation (paragraphs 42,43)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	45
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	40

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	14	14	13	2	0	0
Percentage	4	31	31	29	4	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 two percentage points.

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)	18	149
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	21

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	7	30

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	7

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	15
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	13

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.9
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1.2
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	15	7	22

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls*			
	Total	18	18	18
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	82 (88)	82 (94)	82 (97)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls*			
	Total	18	19	18
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	82 (94)	86 (94)	82 (100)
	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	12	19	31

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	5	8	12
	Girls	17	9	15
	Total	22	17	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	71 (71)	55 (68)	87 (74)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	6	9	8
	Girls	18	17	17
	Total	24	26	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	77 (77)	84 (74)	81 (74)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

* As there were fewer than 10 pupils in this group only the combined figures for boys and girls are given.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	8
Pakistani	5
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	119
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	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.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.3
Average class size	24.8

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	94

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	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	33
Number of pupils per FTE adult	9

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000/2001
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	£
Total income	382638
Total expenditure	365097
Expenditure per pupil	1963
Balance brought forward from previous year	3197
Balance carried forward to next year	20738

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	185
Number of questionnaires returned	44

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	70	27	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	66	30	2	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	59	34	5	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	39	48	11	0	2
The teaching is good.	80	20	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	68	25	7	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	80	18	2	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	64	36	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	64	32	5	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	77	23	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	57	36	5	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	36	27	20	0	16

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

63. Children enter the nursery class part-time either in the morning or afternoon sessions, in September and in January. They enter the reception class in September, initially on a part-time basis, then full time. This careful arrangement ensures a smooth transition for the children. In both classes, the children make very good progress towards achieving the Early Learning Goals by the end of the reception year. In their personal and social development, the children are doing better than their peers in other schools.
64. In the Foundation Stage, the staff have developed very close teamwork. This results in very good co-ordination and creates a very effective first stage of learning for the children. In addition, there is a strong emphasis on valuing each child, his/her home language and culture, which helps the children to feel included. Consequently, the school has successfully established a very effective foundation for the children's future education. Both classrooms open onto the newly developed discrete play area, which is very well used by the children for physical and creative activities. There are good resources, such as climbing frames and wheeled toys. This play area has been effectively enhanced with attractive fencing and suitable lawns, where the children are able to play and to extend their physical development. In addition, they use the area as an extension of their classroom environment.

Personal, social and emotional development

65. The children make very good progress in their personal, social and emotional development. The teaching is very good. The staff expect the children to behave well, set a very good example for them and gently encourage them to give of their best. As a result, the children exceed the expected Early Learning Goals by the time they enter Year 1.
66. In the nursery, the children understand what is expected of them and try very hard to co-operate with one another. For example, while playing outdoors, one boy asked others to bring road cones to close off a part of the road, 'because there is a hole in the ground'. The children subsequently did as asked and put up a stop sign to ensure that those who were using wheeled toys, avoided that area. They all amicably ensured that they would not get in the way of the others.
67. The children quickly learn what is fair, because the staff provide clear routines and procedures for turn taking. They tell interesting stories and sing songs, which encourage the children to sit, to listen and to join in. For example, the teacher sings 'now it's time to have our snacks' and dismisses the children by the colours of their clothes. The children wash their hands and find their names by the attractively set out plates, before they sit to their snacks. There are very good relationships between all staff and the children and this encourages them to want to talk more and to be confident to take part in the activities, as well as to ask questions.
68. In the reception class, the staff continue to build on the very good start that the children make. They are positive and praise the children for what they do well. This makes every child to feel valued and boosts the confidence and self-esteem. For example, the support assistant praised the children for hitting the target with accuracy, when they were throwing beanbags. This encouraged them to try even harder. They spontaneously applauded one child who has special educational needs, for her efforts in completing the track successfully.

Communication, language and literacy

69. Children make very good improvement in their communication, language and literacy skills over their time in the Foundation Stage. A significant proportion of children enter the nursery with some limitations in communication skills. The very good teaching that they receive helps the children to develop their skills so that, by the time they enter Year 1, they attain average levels expected for their age.
70. In the nursery, the staff provide very good opportunities for children to play together, where they are encouraged to talk. In the yellow submarine, for example, the children put on their oxygen bottles before 'diving down into the ocean' and use the periscope to see if it is safe to surface.

The staff then ask questions and make suggestions, which encourage the children to say more and to explain their ideas in greater detail. For example, after the break, the nursery nurse immediately established interest in a book, by holding it in different ways, for the children to correct her. She read 'Waves' expressively, which further encouraged the children to participate in the activity. They offered words such as a shell, a pebble or a crab, when she stopped at a crucial point when reading 'The waves come and bring me a....' The children are eager to write letters to the submarine man and to post them into his net. The teacher shows the children how to hold a pencil correctly and comfortably, and to form letters. The children see writing displayed around the classroom and can use the materials provided to improve their fine co-ordination skills as well as to see the purposes of writing.

71. In the reception class, these activities are extended further. For example, the more able children write sentences on what the Baby Bear saw while on his flight. The less able pupils sequence illustrations in the correct order, with simple captions. In another session, the children were observed completing their booking form for a chosen destination, indicating the number of passengers, as well as the day of their travel. The systematic teaching of phonics can be seen in the way that the children sound out unfamiliar words, in order to complete their writing. The teacher uses a simplified form of the Literacy Hour well to introduce the children to reading and writing. The particular strength of these arrangements is the support given to groups of different abilities, to push them as far as they can manage. The children thoroughly enjoy their activities, because of the way that the staff plan to extend learning, through role-play. For example, in the Outwood Airline corner, the children make notes as to the refreshments that will be required on the flight or to describe the moon, which they can see from their aeroplane.

Mathematical development

72. Children achieve very well in their mathematical development and begin Year 1 with understanding and skills at the levels appropriate for their age.
73. In the nursery, the children make sequences of colours as they thread coloured cubes. Outdoors, the children learn about directions, moving forwards or backwards in the tent area. They pay the baby sitter for looking after the baby and in the garage, they fill up their vehicles and pay the attendant. The children recognise numerals up to five as the teacher consolidates these skills, while showing them the little ducks, which swim away one by one. They delight in being able to count forwards and backwards, when the ducks swim away or return. The children fish for a number in the pond and match it with numbers on their cards. They count the carriages on their railway, as they travel to Outwood. Information and communication technology is used well to reinforce understanding of number and shape.
74. In the reception class, the children continue to build on their knowledge and understanding of mathematics. For example, they calculate correctly how many bananas they need if each passenger is allowed two each. The children recognise and name shapes, such as circles, squares, rectangles and triangles. The staff successfully reinforce children's knowledge by providing a variety of first hand experiences to consolidate learning. For example, the children count the number of planes, which land at the airport, or the number of cars that are parked and record these correctly. The staff emphasise the meaning of word such as 'more' and 'less' and encourage the children to use an appropriate mathematical vocabulary throughout the day.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

75. Knowledge and understanding of the world is very well taught, so that, by the time the children enter Year 1, they show levels of attainment that are at least in line with those expected for their age, and a good proportion exceed them.
76. In the nursery, the children are learning to use the computer and know how to move the mouse to hear 'the talking books'. The children notice that the submarine man has his smiling face on, because he is happy, as he has received several letters from them. They recognise the starfish, seaweed and an octopus. The children learn that the turtle wants to go to the sea, because the sand is too hot for him. They give the technological toy directions to ensure that he reaches the sea safely. The children are encouraged to ask questions about their activities, through the positive climate that the staff create for them. For example, one child asked 'Why does the octopus need all those legs when he doesn't walk', during the visit to the Blue Planet Aquarium.

77. In the reception class, the children continue to build on their knowledge and the staff make a point of explaining the meanings of new words. A very good example was observed during the inspection when the teacher was introducing the class to non-fiction text. One of the children asked her for the meaning of the word 'crater'. The teacher gave a very good explanation and consolidated the children's learning by showing them a range of books with illustrations of craters. In the Outwood Airline, the children learn that they need passports to travel abroad and have these stamped and checked against the passenger list. The children use the computer competently to support learning and know how to move the cursor, for example, to give commands to turn pages on the talking book.

Physical development

78. Children develop their physical skills well and make very good progress over their time in the Foundation Stage. They begin Year 1 at the expected level for their age. This area of learning is taught very well and teachers provide a wide range of interesting activities that help the children to improve larger skills such as climbing and jumping as well as improving fine skills such as using scissors and pencils.
79. In the nursery, the children enjoy playing outside with their cycles, cars and climbing equipment provided for them. They quickly learn to pedal and to control their steering, so that they do not bump into one another. The children use construction kits and link carriages to make a long train. They cut out play dough using a variety of implements to make their shapes.
80. In the reception class, the children develop their physical skills further, by using the outdoor apparatus. They concentrate hard when using the climbing apparatus, for example, to ensure safe landing on the mats. The children practise throwing a ball into the net and do this with considerable accuracy. They use pencils, scissors and paintbrushes confidently and multi-link apparatus to make towers in the mathematical session.

Creative development

81. Children make very good progress in this area of their development, because of the very good teaching they receive in both classes. The staff provide a wide range of interesting activities that help the children to be creative in all areas of Early Learning Goals. As a result, the children begin Year 1 at the expected levels for their age.
82. In the nursery, the children draw, paint and use their skills to produce attractive designs for their submarines. In the cloakroom, the children explore musical sounds using a variety of instruments. They are encouraged to be creative for example, by the nursery nurse, asking them to consider which instrument would best represent a starfish or a crab. The children are often observed to be completely engrossed in the role-play, in such situations as the outdoor area, when they create a variety of scenes imaginatively. In the hall, the children listen to Beethoven and use the excerpt to represent waves and fish swimming in the sea.
83. The children in the reception class use plaster to build mountains and craters, that Baby Bear will see on the moon. Well-chosen and well-timed comments by the staff engender enthusiasm, excitement and a feeling for success. As a result, the children create realistic moonscapes. They use information and communication technology to paint balloons and write captions. Presently, the children are involved in learning songs with Years 1 and 2, for the end of term concert. Throughout the Foundation Stage, the teachers, ably assisted by staff, carefully plan activities which link and develop children's learning across all areas of Early Learning Goals.

ENGLISH

84. The pupils make steady progress in the infant class and by the end of Year 2 they are attaining standards that are in line with the national average in reading and writing. The pupils make good progress in the junior classes and by the end of Year 6 they achieve standards that are above the national average in English. This represents an improvement on the findings of the last inspection.
85. The pupils throughout the school are both confident and articulate. Their speaking and listening skills are effectively developed through discussions in lessons in different subjects when the

pupils are encouraged to share their ideas and listen to each other. For example, in Year 5 the pupils entered a formal debate to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of a proposed fairground development in a seaside resort. The pupils learn the techniques of persuasive language and how to sway an audience with well-reasoned arguments. In a similar exercise the pupils in Year 6 considered the environmental impact of unlimited public access to mountain districts. At the conclusion of the more successful literacy lessons the pupils are encouraged to evaluate their own work and share their ideas with the class. In these sessions the pupils show a good range of vocabulary and can express their ideas clearly.

86. The pupils are confident when reading aloud. Most of the infant pupils read accurately, and the most able read with good expression and intonation. Although standards in reading have fallen in the national tests in recent years, the school has taken steps to redress the issue and standards by the end of Year 2 are now satisfactory. Letter sounds are well taught and the school has invested in attractive books that are well structured. Reading targets, with the underlying principle that targets may be made more challenging but never less challenging, have been set for all pupils and this has supported the pupils' progress. Good use is made of the school's fiction and non-fiction libraries. The pupils who experience difficulty in reading are well supported by the classroom assistants. Homework is used well to support reading.
87. The pupils in the junior classes make good progress in their reading and standards by the end of Year 6 are above average. They use their reference skills well and can readily find information from the non-fiction books in the school library. In Years 3 to 6 the reading skills of inference and deduction are appropriately developed within guided reading sessions in addition to the literacy lessons. The school has given this a high priority and has developed effective strategies to help the pupils read beyond the literal interpretation of a text. However, the school recognises the need for more structured guidance in this area for the small minority of pupils who have English as an additional language. The more able pupils talk with interest about the works of authors that they enjoy reading and many are self-motivated readers who display a love of reading and literature. By the end of Year 6, most of the pupils have mastered the skills of scanning a text to retrieve information. These pupils are able to utilise these skills when using information and communication technology to research topics such as the relative weather conditions of mountainous countries.
88. Throughout the school, the pupils present their work well and most junior aged pupils use joined up handwriting. Most teachers model the school handwriting policy well. In the infant classes the majority of pupils express themselves satisfactorily in writing – their sentences follow on from each other in a sensible sequence. The pupils are provided with a good range of writing opportunities and this enables most pupils to develop a range of writing styles. Information and communication technology is used well to support literacy. However, there is scope for more rigour in the use of assessment in the infant class to ensure that all of the pupils are achieving their best. By the age of seven the most able pupils are able to write a simple story. Most pupils spell common words correctly, although they do not readily apply their knowledge of spelling rules when spelling less familiar words.
89. The rate of learning accelerates in the junior classes, particularly in Years 5 and 6, and the pupils make good progress in developing their writing skills. They are accustomed to drafting and redrafting their work to produce the desired effect in their writing. By the age of eleven the pupils have a secure grasp of how to punctuate sentences and the most able pupils use a variety of punctuation to create tension and atmosphere for the reader. The pupils have a good understanding of how to use paragraphs and can write in a range of styles and for different purposes. For example, the pupils in Year 5 write onomatopoeic poetry based on their visit to Styal Mill and younger pupils write letters of complaint about faulty goods and protest letters about pollution and the despoliation of the environment. The pupils in Year 6 respond well to popular authors such as Michael Morpurgo and develop his themes in their own writing. The pupils distinguish between active and passive verbs and construct their writing well, using metaphors and similes to good effect; the most able pupils select the vocabulary they use carefully to create the desired impact on the reader. For example, one pupil wrote:

“Loneliness is a cold, cold blue
It smells like rancid cheese
Loneliness lives in high mountains.”

90. Literacy skills are further reinforced in other subjects, particularly in science, geography and history where the school deliberately seeks opportunities for the pupils to record their experiences in their own words. This is having a marked impact on raising standards. For example, the pupils explore different formats including diaries, dialogues and poems to develop their understanding of historical themes. In music, the pupils compose their own lyrics for the "Outwood Rap". The school effectively supports pupils with special educational needs through a range of strategies and particularly through effective support from classroom assistants. The school makes good use of additional intervention strategies such as booster classes for older pupils to support those who have some learning difficulties.
91. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in the infant classes and good in the juniors. In both phases, the teachers manage the behaviour of the pupils well. There is good liaison between the teachers and the support staff and homework is used well, particularly to support reading. Displays are used effectively to demonstrate aspects of literacy and to guide pupils with their choice of vocabulary.
92. In the infant class the teachers plans a range of interesting activities for the pupils but lessons are impaired by insufficient use of assessment information to ensure that all of the pupils, regardless of their age or ability, are sufficiently challenged. In the junior classes, most lessons have good pace, particularly in Years 5 and 6. Questions are used well to move the pupils' thinking forward and to refine the pupils' understanding. The teachers have appropriate expectations of the different ability groups and the work set is well pitched to motivate and sustain the interest of different groups of pupils. The teachers use praise to good effect and the quality of marking in Years 4, 5 and 6 helps to the pupils to identify the strengths and weaknesses in their work. The quality of marking does not have the same impact in the earlier year groups.
93. The subject leader is a skilled practitioner who has identified areas for improvement and is working hard to raise standards. The school had identified standards in writing as an area for improvement and has been very successful in tackling the problem of under-performance. The liaison with local Beacon Schools has helped Outwood Primary to evaluate its practice and it is beginning to reap the benefits.

MATHEMATICS

94. Overall, standards in mathematics are satisfactory, with a higher percentage of pupils in Year 6 working at more advanced levels than last year. This reflects an improvement compared to the previous inspection and also since last year. The school has improved pupils' standards in mental mathematics due to its successful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy.
95. At the end of Year 2, standards are average in each aspect of mathematics. For example, the pupils understand place value to 100, count in hundreds to 1000 and apply their numeracy skills to measures including, capacity, length and weight. The majority of pupils understand and apply fractions to number, shape and measurements.
96. By Year 6, nearly all pupils have progressed to solving number problems using a wide range of mental skills, including the application of fractions, decimals and percentages. They understand and use a wide range of methods for calculations using the four rules of number. Most pupils apply fractions, decimals and percentages to a wide range of investigations. They construct triangles, draw and measure angles accurately and calculate the perimeter and area of some four-sided figures and triangles using formulae.
97. A high percentage achieve above average standards in their knowledge and understanding of shape and space. They collate and interpret data confidently, using graphs and charts, and use information and communications technology where applicable.
98. Pupils in Year 6 apply their number skills with understanding to their recent studies of mountain ranges and other geographical topics. They also have many opportunities for incorporating and applying the basic skills of numeracy to more open-ended and independent studies. Information and communication technology is used well to support learning.
99. The pupils have positive attitudes towards mathematics, especially as the teachers plan work that is interesting yet challenging. Consequently, all pupils make good progress. Pupils with special

educational needs make good progress towards their targets because of good support, either by teaching assistants or class teachers. In Years 5 and 6, the more able pupils also made good progress because of the level of challenge and the exciting range of mathematics activity, as well as the high expectations of the teachers.

100. Throughout Years 1 and 2, pupils build on the knowledge and understanding learned in the Foundation Stage at a satisfactory rate. In Years 3 to 6 progress accelerates, and it is very good in Years 5 and 6. During the past two years, nearly all pupils who began their education in Year 1 at Outwood School achieved the national average at the end of Year 6 due to the rigorous and successful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy and good record keeping that has enabled teachers to build on what pupils already know and understand.
101. The quality of teaching is good overall. It is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2, good in Years 3 and 4, and very good in Years 5 and 6. Nearly all lessons are well paced and challenging, and teachers have good subject knowledge. Teachers use questioning skills effectively to assess pupils' understanding and to extend their thinking. For example, the teaching of mental mathematics is a strength as teachers focus on encouraging pupils to explain their reasoning. This reinforces their learning and helps others to understand their mental processes. The objectives for lessons are always shared with pupils and, consequently, by the end of the lessons they understand their levels of progress. Homework is often appropriate, but does not always enable parents to share in their children's learning. Parents raised this issue at the parents' meeting and the inspection team agrees with their concerns.
102. The mental mathematics sessions at the start of each lesson are varied and interesting. Pupils enjoy these activities which sharpen their numeracy skills well. In the best lessons observed teachers ensure that all pupils, including the more able, are very well challenged throughout, and that those who need support gain confidence by skilful adaptation of the resources and questions. Classroom assistants, where available, participate fully in mathematics lessons supporting either groups or individuals. A particularly good example was observed in a Year 1 and 2 mathematics lesson where the teaching assistant taught capacity skills to Year 1 pupils, allowing the class teacher to concentrate on more advanced work with Year 2 pupils.
103. The class teachers plan lessons with clear objectives for the different ability groups within the class. Sometimes they have been adapted both during the week and even during the lesson in response to pupils' accelerated pace of learning. For example, in a Year 5 lesson, when the pupils were learning the patterns of squared numbers, a large group of more able pupils identified the pattern so quickly that the teacher extended their work to include algebraic formulae. Another excellent example of challenge took place in a Year 6 lesson, where pupils applied their understanding of percentages and fractional parts of money to pie charts. They collated and interpreted data and studied spending patterns. The mathematics curriculum is now well planned and enriching. The detailed action plan is effectively used to guide developments and improve teaching and learning.
104. The co-ordinator undertakes a detailed analysis of the test results each year in order to identify trends, areas of success and the aspects where pupils have not performed as well as expected. This information is then used to good effect by the school and class teachers when planning and amending the curriculum.

SCIENCE

105. Attainment in science is average at the end of Year 2, and above average in Year 6. The pupils make good progress throughout the school. Since the previous inspection, and since the pupils sat the standardised tests in 2001, the school has made very good improvements. Learning through scientific enquiry and experimental work contributes strongly to this good progress. The pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language also progress well.
106. The good quality of teaching in most classes is at the heart of the pupils' good progress. All the pupils have the opportunity to engage in a range of rich experiences through experimentation and investigation. The pupils in the mixed Years 1 and 2 class become used to making observations, such as measuring the growth of the broad beans. They learn about propagation, during their visit to Brookside Garden Centre and transfer that knowledge to observing plants in the school garden.

The pupils explain that propagation is 'making a new plant' and that 'roots go down, shoots go up'. They understand that there are different ways that plants reproduce.

107. As the pupils move through the school, they learn to make predictions and to ask questions regarding their experiments. Skills of recording become more sophisticated so that by Year 4, they use a variety of methods to communicate their findings. In addition, the pupils devise their own investigations for friction. In Year 5 and 6, the pupils are experienced in making observations and in systematic recording in a variety of ways.
108. The teachers make lessons interesting in many ways. They use a good range of vocabulary, associated with the topic. For example, in Year 4, the teacher gave the pupils a scientific feel to the lesson, when she gave them open-ended challenges, when they were investigating organisms and habitats. The pupils subsequently took responsibility for their own research. In this lesson, good teaching and facilitating of investigative work enhanced the pupils' understanding of the need for precision and for time keeping.
109. The teachers make good preparations for experimental work and manage their pupils very well. In a lesson on forces in Year 6, the teacher used well-organised system of evaluating each group's work with the pupils, so further questions and findings could be discussed. She challenged them, with questions such as 'what could you then investigate having done this?' Group work involving discussions, contributes to the good progress in understanding concepts, that pupils with special educational needs and those who learn through English as an additional language make.
110. There is a good breadth of study in science. The teachers ensure that science is taught in familiar contexts and they make very good links with other subjects. In the mixed Years 1 and 2, the pupils investigated senses, when a representative from Stockport Disability Awareness came to help them understand how they might manage without being able to see. Very good links with design technology were made in Year 5. The pupils consolidated their knowledge of electricity, when they built circuits using a battery and switches in order to make electrical devices for their fairground. The pupils use familiar contexts like the playground to examine the habitats of minibeasts living there, to broaden their scientific knowledge of their own surroundings.
111. The pupils thoroughly enjoy science. They work well in groups and share resources willingly. Their behaviour in class is very good. In Years 1 and 2, for example, the pupils helped one another to use information and communication technology to record ways in which plants, such as daffodils or strawberries reproduce. In Year 4, the pupils used the apparatus carefully and showed a caring attitude for creatures in the environment.
112. The co-ordinator for the subject, who has only recently taken over the management, has made a very good start in evaluating pupils' progress and attainment. Areas for development, identified in the previous inspection have been fully addressed. She regularly attends training, such as the 'bridging unit', to ensure a smooth transition between Year 6 and Year 7. The co-ordinator has many good ideas for using professional development to enhance the pupils' learning in science.

ART AND DESIGN

113. Standards achieved by the pupils at the end of Years 2 and 6 are in line with national expectations. Since the previous inspection, the school has maintained its standards.
114. The pupils of all ability levels, including those with special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language, are making satisfactory progress in the subject. However, most recent developments, such as visiting other schools to observe good practice, have resulted in some good work in art. In an outstanding lesson in Year 4, for example, the pupils produced some sensitive work, using imagery from the environment and from their own imaginations. They were inspired by the work of Chagall, basing their ideas on the environment, habitats and dance, 'Man the Hunter-Animal the Survivor'. The pupils interpreted the music in words, pictures and symbols. They used computer images from a microscope program, as another stimulus. The pupils were very effectively helped to search for deeper meanings in Chagall's work, by the teacher inviting them to consider questions they might ask him. They produced very thoughtful questions, such as 'What is the story behind your picture?' or 'How does that armour-butterfly represent?' The pupils pondered upon the paradox of armour and the fragility of the butterfly. This lesson contributed very well to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

115. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Throughout the classes, there are some good examples of art on display. During the 40th anniversary of the school, the pupils celebrated each decade, making group collages depicting the significant developments of the time. A variety of media was used for a permanent display. The teachers use the work of artists from different traditions and culture to inspire their pupils. In Year 6, the pupils produce landscape paintings and collages after the style of Hockney. During the inspection, they painted trees, in the style of Mondrian. The environment is often a source of inspiration. In Year 5, for example, after a study of the coastline in geography, the pupils made a collage using a variety of materials.
116. The school has focused strongly on linking other subjects to art. This works well, as the pupils learn about art in cultures such as the Aztec, or the Ancient Egyptians. The teachers seek a variety of stimuli for teaching and learning. A very good example was observed of a wall hanging by Years 1 and 2, which arose after the visit to an art gallery in Didsbury. In contrast, these pupils were inspired to paint and crayon illustrations, which they organised into booklets, about Vincent van Gogh. They effectively captured his style.
117. There is an enthusiastic co-ordinator for the subject, who has very good ideas how she should develop art. In consultation with the staff, she has decided to develop an approach based on the Cheshire scheme. The subject features on the school development plan, so that all aspects, including clay work can be progressively planned for each year group. A good start has already been made regarding the use of sketch books. The pupils already make visual notes to help them to improve their art.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

118. Standards are in line with expectations at the end of Years 2 and 6. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make satisfactory and often good progress. Since the previous inspection, when it was judged that standards were below expectations, the school has made good improvements in the subject. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, with one very good lesson observed in Year 5.
119. Throughout the school, the pupils have sufficient skills in making. Their finished products are appropriately constructed and completed. In the mixed Years 1 and 2 class, for example, the pupils made Joseph's coat, carefully joining fabrics. They first designed and made a paper pattern, before producing the coat. These pupils visited the Chinese Art Centre in Manchester to learn about origami. This was also a good opportunity to use food technology for a Chinese stir-fry.
120. Throughout the school, the teachers make very good links with other subjects, notably in literacy and numeracy. These links effectively support learning across other areas of the curriculum. There are some good examples of design and technology, including food technology, in Years 4, 5 and 6. In Year 4, the pupils designed and made different types of money containers, suitable for Ancient Egyptians. These were carefully produced, which again demonstrated good making skills.
121. The pupils enjoy their design and technology lessons and behave very well. In Year 5, the pupils were observed to be completely engrossed while making carousels, where they incorporated motors and pulley systems in a fairground model. The teacher had ensured that all the necessary equipment was available. The pupils were expected to select and use the tools and materials appropriately and this they did successfully. They were helped by the teacher and an assistant, who ensured that health and safety requirements were met. The pupils worked with concentration and perseverance, modifying and improving their designs.
122. The co-ordinator has recently evaluated the work in the subject and has identified areas for development; these include a stronger focus on design and on cross-curricular links, particularly in science, geography and history. The co-ordinator monitors planning regularly and has run an in-service course for the staff, following her own professional development.

GEOGRAPHY

123. Although only one geography lesson was observed during the inspection, the good quality and wide range of work produced by pupils in most classes reflects above average standards overall especially in the junior classes. Standards exceed expectations of pupils by the end of Year 6 and match expectations of pupils by the end of Year 2. Standards of attainment, progress, teaching and curricular planning have improved significantly since the previous inspection.
124. By the end of Year 2 pupils have studied the local area, identified a variety of buildings and followed plans of the locality including the route from school to a Garden Centre on a recent visit. Pupils have compared lifestyles on the Island of Struay off the Scottish coast with their locality especially in terms of geographical features and social elements including transport and occupations. However, in spite of good curricular guidance the pupils have not had sufficient opportunity to cover certain aspects of the curriculum such as using maps and plans and selecting information from a wide range of sources.
125. Pupils make good progress throughout the other classes and by the end of Year 6 they have extended their knowledge, skills and understanding of geography to an above average level. A particularly well-researched and well-presented topic is their recent study of mountains and mountain ranges in which they have incorporated literacy and numeracy skills as well as design and technology and art. For example, all pupils identify mountain ranges on world maps, locate the continents and countries and know the highest peaks. They also understand weather and environmental conditions of the different areas.
126. Pupils, including the more able and those with special education needs make good progress throughout the junior stage and very good progress in Years 4,5 and 6. Their good progress is reflected in the development of their mapping and enquiry skills, their understanding of human interdependence and responsibility for the environment and their understanding of how cultures and lifestyles are dependent on geographical regions and conditions. The pupils use a wide range of visits and additional resources including books, atlases, and CD-ROMs to further their understanding of geographical and environmental issues and have developed good research and reporting skills. These levels of understanding are reflected in pupils' ability to consider many aspects of an argument for example; the rights of humans to have free access to mountainous regions and the environmental concerns where they take on the role of Animal Rights campaigners against the construction of an additional airport runway.
127. Pupils have very positive attitudes to geography. In most classes their work is very well presented and pupils take pride in their quality of work. They are very interested in the range of visits and recall with interest their recent residential visit to the Peak District of Derbyshire and their discoveries. Pupils in Year 4 have undertaken detailed research into the types of litter found in the environment of the school, have classified it, weighed it and suggested many ways of improving their surroundings for example, by placing litter bins in more strategic positions and greater awareness of recycling. The analysis of pupils' work reflects good teaching, especially in the demands made on pupils.
128. The leadership and management of geography are very good. The co-ordinator has established a well considered long term plan for the subject based on national guidance. She effectively monitors planning across the school and pupils' work is assessed at the end of each topic. Pupils benefit from a wide range of resources and visits, although there is a need for more up-to-date atlases. All priorities for this subject are highly relevant and the school is well placed to achieve even higher standards.

HISTORY

129. Standards in history are above average at the end of Year 6. These standards show an improvement compared to the previous inspection. Standards at the end of Year 2 are satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because of the high quality support. More able pupils also make good progress, especially in Years 5 and 6 because of very high quality teaching.
130. By the end of Year 2, pupils have covered an appropriate range of historical topics. They understand the concept of time and use terms such as "now", "then" and "a long time ago" appropriately. In addition they understand the differences that characterise events, artefacts and lifestyles from the past when compared with the present. Pupils also show an increasing

confidence in understanding how we know about the past. For example, pupils identify changes in homes from Victorian homes to the homes of today, and equipment used in homes, for example cookers and irons. They compare transport now and in the past, and classify a wide range of transport according to the historical periods. Pupils learned about changes over time by listening to a Chelsea Pensioner and comparing his lifestyle as a young child with their own, especially in terms of school and toys, and important historical events. As a result, they understand that people can be used as another source of information in addition to books and CD-ROMs.

131. By the end of Year 6, pupils have good knowledge and understanding about a range of historical events and periods. During the inspection, pupils' depth of understanding of the musical contributions made by John Lennon and the events surrounding his death were very well illustrated during a lesson in which they adopted the roles of various people who were affected by his death. One pupil became the television announcer who interrupted programmes in order to give the news of his death; another pupil was a reporter in New York who interviewed 'witnesses'. These excellent presentations demonstrated their very good understanding of the period and the events, and their ability to empathise with the different people. This also illustrated their high quality speaking and listening skills and their ability to research independently and plan collaboratively.
132. The pupils progress well from Years 3 to 6. In Year 3, pupils study the Tudor period, and compare the lives of rich and poor people, and the historical events, especially the life of Henry VIII and the effects of his marriages on future generations. Pupils in Year 4 have researched World War Two and know some of the reasons for the war. They have used a range of materials for investigations, and their knowledge has been enhanced by their visit to the Stockport Air Raid Museum. They understand the need for rationing and careful food distribution, as well as the different types of gas masks used. During the visit some pupils were dressed as evacuees and ate sugar sandwiches as an example of wartime food.
133. Numeracy and literacy skills are well incorporated into all curricular planning. For example, pupils in Year 4 write letters in the role of evacuees, giving accounts of their changing circumstances. They also compare imperial and metric measures. Information and communication technology is used for research on a range of topics.
134. Standards and progress in history are good because of the quality of teaching, range of visits and pupils' positive attitudes. Pupils are observant, interested and keen to share their experiences and opinions. The teachers ensure that pupils make good progress in a wide range of historical skills such as research, mapping, justifying opinions and writing accounts.
135. The quality of teaching is good overall. There is a high level of stimulating teaching which fires pupils' interest and enthusiasm and results in good recall of events and key personalities in history. Many teachers successfully use the imaginative richness of the subject to bring it alive for pupils. This was reflected during the lessons observed and in the analysis of work in Years 3 to 6. Pupils with special educational needs and more able pupils also achieve well. They enjoy the investigations and challenges and work well in groups. They have the confidence to justify their arguments and question opinions.
136. The subject co-ordinator has responded to the weaknesses identified in the last inspection, especially the need for a policy and scheme of work. The curriculum is broad, balanced and enriching, and successfully contributes to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The leadership and management by the co-ordinator and the headteacher are good. The pupils' work is monitored and their learning enhanced by a rich variety of educational visits.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

137. By the end of Year 6 most pupils have a knowledge and understanding of information and communication technology that is broadly average for their age. This is similar to the findings of the last inspection. The pupils respond well to the opportunities to use information and communication technology to support their learning in other subjects and are making sound progress overall. However, as a result of technical difficulties and limitations that result from the school's lack of resources, there are gaps in the pupils' knowledge and range of experience by the time they leave school. For example, the school lacks the equipment to enable the pupils in

Year 6 to work on multi-media presentations and to develop more sophisticated skills in control technology.

138. Pupils of all ages understand that information and communication technology is an integral element of their learning, just as much as a book or a pencil. The teachers' planning ensures that the classroom computers are used to develop the pupils' keyboard and mouse skills as well as to enhance the pupils' learning in other subjects. There is a well-structured scheme of work that ensures that the pupils develop their skills in a systematic way. Information and communication technology has a sound impact on standards in literacy and numeracy because the teachers make effective use of computers and relevant programs to support learning. For example the pupils in Year 5 are required to research information on the internet to support their reading and they use computers to compose their poetry.
139. Standards at the end of Year 2 are in line with expectations. In the infant class the pupils combine text and graphics when finding out about plants and animals. They draw plants using a range of colours and label different parts. The more able pupils know how to use a spell check when writing captions and combine their text with imported graphics. Other pupils experiment with different fonts when word processing simple statements about animals they have seen at Chester Zoo. They learn how to use a digital camera to make a photographic record of their visit. Pupils use computers to support their work in mathematics, particularly in sequencing a series of instructions to enable a programmable toy to follow a set course. They learn to estimate distance and consolidate their knowledge of angles and turns. In each case, the pupils are well motivated and are reluctant to leave the computers at the end of each lesson. The pupils, including those with special educational needs, persevere with their work and willingly take turns.
140. In the junior classes the pupils continue to be taught systematically. The pupils in Year 3 learn how to compile a data base to assemble a personal fact file. This work supports their work on sets in mathematics. The pupils word process their views on favourite holiday destinations and consider the weather they might expect to find there. This work often involves the pupils in using information and communication technology to research information. Older pupils learn how to edit their work by using the cut, copy and paste facilities. They record their personal memories of the school's 40th birthday celebrations. In Year 4, the pupils use information and communication technology to support their work on Ancient Egypt when they learn how to make patterns using image of pharaohs. Older pupils know how to use search engines on the internet to research specific information, such as details about child labour in Victorian times. In Year 6, the pupils understand that there are benefits of using spreadsheets generated by computers, instead of hand written ones, when faced with a change in variables. They are adept at using data handling programs to generate pie charts to illustrate favourite sports.
141. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. The teachers have received training and so that they have grown in confidence and in expertise. A particular strength is the planning which makes the most of opportunities to support learning in different subjects. For example, in an exciting project in Year 4, the pupils are taught how to use a computer microscope facility to magnify images of small insects. The teachers use their questioning skills to good effect to ensure that the pupils are clear about what they are expected to do. However, there are instances, particularly in the lower juniors when the introduction is too long and this restricts the opportunity for the pupils to carry out the task on the classroom computers. The school has ensured that each aspect of the programme of study for information and communication technology is matched with an assessments of what the pupils know, understand and can do but as yet this information is not used to set different work for different levels of attainment within each class. However, good support is provided for those pupils with special educational needs who find some of the processes difficult.
142. Information and communication technology is well managed by the subject leader. She has ensured that the school's major investment in new technology is used to good effect. The co-ordinator recognises the need to ensure that the school is suitably resourced to ensure that the older pupils receive their full entitlement to the curriculum.

MUSIC

143. Standards in music are below expectations by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Overall, the pupils make unsatisfactory progress. The previous inspection judged standards to be above the national

expectations by the end of Year 2 and broadly in line, by the end of Year 6. However, since then, the school has had to increase its time allocation to accommodate literacy and numeracy strategies, and information and communication technology. In addition, the school does not have a music specialist and the staff are lacking in confidence. There is recognition for the need to develop this area of the curriculum.

144. While the overall standards in music are unsatisfactory, the school tries to meet the requirements of the curriculum in full. Towards this end, an able music teacher is employed to broaden the pupils' music experiences. On alternate weeks, she teaches singing to younger and older pupils. During the inspection, she was observed effectively teaching reception, Year 1 and 2 pupils. They sang tunefully, controlling their voices well, singing softly when required, without losing the pitch. This is in preparation for the end of term concert. While this session was very good, nevertheless, the pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding, cannot be built systematically and in a progressive manner, in this limited way.
145. In Year 3, the pupils have weekly sessions, learning to play the recorder, where they also learn to read notation. Six pupils receive violin tuition, for which their parents pay. As the pupils move through the school, there are some good lessons, where the teacher makes suitable links with other subjects, such as history and geography, for example, when evaluating the music of John Lennon, in Year 6. Following their visit to Llandudno, the pupils in Year 5 composed and performed music, adding verses to it. Records indicate that the pupils appraised music by composers such as Debussy, Bach, Chopin, Handel and Mozart and matched excerpts to the fair ground rides. This good practice is not shared throughout the school.
146. Many opportunities are lost for teaching and learning in music. For example, in assemblies, the pupils enter and leave the hall while an excerpt is being played. The pupils are not informed of the composer's name, nor are they given a few moments to listen further, so that can learn to recognise and to appreciate a wide range of music. Neither do they sing hymns. The school tries hard to make up the deficit in music by providing opportunities for the pupils to respond in dance and to be involved in productions, such as the Rocky Monster Show for older pupils. However, these arrangements do not compensate for regular and progressive teaching and learning in the subject.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

147. Standards in physical education are satisfactory overall, with particular strengths in swimming and creative dance. This is similar to the findings of the last inspection. The main contributory factors to pupils' progress are the range of the curricular activities, very high quality teaching in Years 5 and 6, effective use of resources and accommodation, and the way in which individual teachers have developed the creative elements of the subject.
148. Although no lessons were observed in Years 1 and 2, judgements have been made observing pupils' activities during lunchtime and other activity times. However, no judgements were made on the teaching in the infant classes. From the observations of pupils in the playground, they throw balls with a good sense of direction and accuracy, catch well and move with satisfactory levels of agility. By the end of Year 6, pupils have refined their movements and quality of performance in dance. Particular strengths are in the quality of movement, creativity and swimming. During the inspection, pupils in Year 5 gave an excellent response to the music in their creative dance based on 'Coastlines'. During this lesson, pupils showed impeccable control and sensitive movement, both in groups and in class, and consequently evoked the slow movements of the sea as the waves met the shore.
149. Throughout the school, pupils have refined their quality of movement and performance in all aspects of physical education. For example, pupils in Year 4 have created a dance related to 'Man - the hunter, Animals - the hunted'. Pupils change their movements from sensitivity to power most effectively, work well collaboratively, especially where the hunters and animals both need to demonstrate their strengths and skills. In a Year 3 gymnastics lesson, the pupils incorporated a wide range of movements including stretches, curls and rolls into their sequences. They transferred these movements onto the apparatus imaginatively and with precision. Pupils throughout the school understand the reasons for warming up and warming down exercises in terms of the effects on muscles, breathing and circulation.

150. In games lessons, the pupils understand the rules of class games that involve throwing, catching and moving. Particular strengths are in their ability to position, mark opponents, find a space, and pass the ball accurately. Throughout the year, pupils have many opportunities to extend their games skills to class-based and school-based games such as short tennis, netball and football. The majority of pupils in Year 6 swim the required 25 metres, and over half of the pupils swim at least 50 metres. The school provides a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities which includes football and netball where teams compete in the local community. There is even a wrestling team which has been a long-standing school tradition.
151. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall although there are examples of excellent practice, particularly in dance. In these lessons the teachers develop pupils' creativity well by encouraging them to observe, evaluate and refine their movements. The teachers manage their pupils' activities well and have secure knowledge and understanding of the basic skills of physical education. In the successful lessons, teachers use time and demonstrations effectively, and consequently pupils gain a good level of new learning from these lessons. Teachers manage pupils well, have good relationships with them, and use group demonstrations effectively to enhance and clarify the teaching points. Lessons have good pace, and pupils are encouraged to evaluate their own performances as well as those from other groups.
152. Physical education contributes positively to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, especially in the quality of teamwork in gymnastics, and creativity in dance lessons. All pupils are eager to observe and learn from each other. They are conscious of safety and realise the importance of following the teachers' instructions. Pupils are well behaved, listen attentively, and work with high levels of concentration and understanding.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

153. Standards throughout the school are satisfactory and fully meet the requirements of the Agreed Syllabus. This is similar to the findings of the last inspection. The pupils, including the more able and of those with special educational needs make satisfactory progress overall and good progress in the social and moral aspects of religious education.
154. By the end of Year 2 pupils have a sound knowledge and understanding of some of the important aspects of Christianity and other world faiths. For example, they have learned about baptism and its importance to Christians. They took part in a Christening in the Church when the vicar baptised a doll. They also know some of the parables and miracles of Jesus and are able to relate the parable of "The Lost Sheep" to the love shown by God and people who care for them. Pupils also celebrate the Hindu festival of Diwali and know the importance of holy books, festivals and worship in other religions.
155. At the end of Year 6, pupils have extended their knowledge of the range of faiths and have visited the local church, questioned the vicar and, as a result understand his role in the community. They know the importance of the five pillars of Islam to Muslims. They also understand the importance of signs and symbols in religion. The pupils increase their understanding from Year 3 to Year 6 to include the implications and importance of religion today. They consider moral and social issues especially those concerning the rights of different groups of people and understand the hardships encountered by other people especially victims of terrorism and racism.
156. Religious education contributes very strongly to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and, by the end of Year 6, they understand an appropriate range of knowledge about Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism, and Islam. They understand the importance of prayer, ritual and religious leaders in all the religions they study. Pupils have positive attitudes to not only religious education but also the moral and social elements. During most lessons they listen attentively and take pride in accurate and well presented work.
157. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall with good features in Years 4, 5 and 6. Strengths are in teachers' good knowledge and understanding of religious education, teaching of religious and the related social issues and good management of pupils. Consequently, pupils have very high regard for the rights of all people and showed good insight into issues associated with the religions they studied and their applications to school life and society. Most lessons are thoughtfully prepared and teachers use their good subject knowledge well to initiate discussions and pose challenging questions. Relationships established in class are very good and promote

good learning especially in the discussion parts of lessons. However, in most classes insufficient awareness is taken of the different ability groups of pupils when planning written work

158. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory; the curriculum is well planned and incorporates local authority and national guidelines. This ensures that the requirements for religious education are fully met. Pupils benefit from links with the local church and the range of artefacts available for all religions. The co-ordinator has a detailed and relevant plan for enhancing pupils' attainment, range of experiences and visits associated with the subject. Although there is a satisfactory assessment system in place it is not used consistently enough when planning work for the different ability groups within each class.