

INSPECTION REPORT

BUGLAWTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

CONGLETON, CHESHIRE

CW12 2EL

LEA area: Cheshire

Unique reference number: 111033

Headteacher: Mr J Rowan

Reporting inspector: Mr A Blank
8358

Dates of inspection: 12th - 15th November 2001

Inspection number: 195672

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Buxton Old Road Congleton Cheshire
Postcode:	CW12 2EL
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr J Walker
Date of previous inspection:	16 th June 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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9883	Brian Silvester	Lay inspector		How high are standards? - 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?
18709	Nina Bee	Team inspector	English Art Design and technology Equal opportunities Special educational needs	
20230	Jennifer Clayphan	Team inspector	History Geography Music	How good are curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
19765	Pauleen Shannon	Team inspector	Mathematics The Foundation Stage Religious education	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Buglawton Primary School caters 160 pupils aged between 4 and 11 who live in the Buglawton district of Congleton. The school has a pre-school group on site and most of these children enter the reception class at the start of the year in which they have their fifth birthday. The number of pupils on roll has fallen steadily in recent years leading to changes in the way classes are organised. The number of pupils with special educational needs is above average at 20%. Only one child has a statement of special educational needs. The average free school meal figure is 18%, but this ranges between 10% and 26% in different year groups. Children's attainment on entry is generally below average and sometimes well below average. The pupil turnover figure is quite high at 15% in the last complete school year. There are only four pupils whose ethnic background is non white UK and no pupils have English as an additional language.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Standards in recent years have been average in English and below or well below average in mathematics and science reflecting the below and sometimes well below average attainment of pupils when they enter the school. Nevertheless the school is effective in enabling its pupils to make at least satisfactory progress, with many making good progress. Teaching is at least satisfactory and about half is good or better. The school is very well led and managed, enabling it to provide thoroughly sound value for money.

What the school does well

- The school is very well led and managed. The headteacher and governing body work with teachers and pupils to produce a shared vision for school development and improvement.
- Procedures for assessing and monitoring pupils' attainment and progress are very good.
- Pupils' attitudes and their social and moral development are very good.
- Teaching in the foundation stage is consistently good.
- The range of extra-curricular activities is very good
- Standards in art are above average.
- Relationships between teachers, pupils and parents are very good.

What could be improved

- Standards in Key Stage 1 in reading, mathematics, science and in particular the development of early writing skills.
- Some teaching so that it precisely matches work to the full range of abilities in classes, including those pupils who have special educational needs.
- Standards in information and communication technology throughout the school and its use to support other curriculum subjects.
- The development of experimental and investigational skills in science.

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 good progress since the last inspection In June 1997. It has made very good progress in developing a shared vision for improvement that includes the governing body fully. Strategic planning is also very good. The inclusion of teachers, governors and pupils in shaping the development plan is a particular strength. These features were all weak at the time of the last inspection. The role of subject co-ordinator is now clearly defined. The systems for the assessment of pupils' attainment and progress are now very good; previously they were unsatisfactory. The weaknesses in the religious education curriculum and progress in physical education have been eliminated. Standards in English have remained average whilst in mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT) they have fallen in Key Stage 2 since the last inspection, however these standards match closely the ability of pupils on intake and this fluctuates considerably.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	A	C	C	B
Mathematics	B	D	E	D
Science	A	E	E	D

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

In 1997 results achieved in tests in Key Stage 1 were well below national averages, much lower than the standards expected in the last inspection report. Current standards are below average in reading and mathematics and well below average in writing. These standards match closely the school's information on pupils' ability when they first come to school and their progress from age 4 to 7 years is satisfactory. Some of the current strategies used to teach pupils to write in these years do not help them to achieve their best and standards generally should be improved.

Standards in Key Stage 2 have fluctuated considerably since 1997. The general trend does not match the national picture of steady improvement and there was a dramatic drop in standards between 1999 and 2000. Much of the variation is explained by wide differences of ability within different year groups. Changes in comparative grades are exaggerated when year groups are small and at Buglawton there are sometimes only twenty pupils in a given school year. A high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in some year groups also affects how the school compares with others. Nevertheless, in English in 2000 and 2001 around one third of pupils exceeded the expected level for their age, but the number of pupils reaching the expected level 4 did not meet the targets set by the local authority in English or mathematics. Standards in mathematics and science have been consistently lower than English since 1999. Current standards in Key Stage 2 reflect a relatively able year 6 and are at least average in English, mathematics and science, though practical skills in science are not developed sufficiently. In all other subjects standards are in line with national expectations with the exception of ICT where they are lower throughout the school and art in Key Stage 2 where they are above average. The school monitors pupils' progress very closely, the results show that nearly all pupils make progress that is expected and about one quarter of pupils make even better progress.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' attitudes are very good. They enjoy school, concentrate hard in lessons and take a pride in their work. They are very proud of the 'gold books' that store examples of their work over time.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is consistently good both in classrooms and around school. Pupils demonstrate self-control when not under direct supervision.
Personal development and relationships.	The personal development of pupils is good. Pupils experience a well planned curriculum and are given opportunities to take responsibility around school. Relationships throughout the school are very good.
Attendance	Attendance is above the national average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching in the foundation stage is consistently good. In the rest of the school teaching is at least satisfactory and almost a half is good or better. There is some exceptional teaching in the year 4/5 class that enables pupils to make very good progress in that year. Teaching that is satisfactory overall, sometimes lacks precision in matching work to the diverse levels of ability in mixed age classes. Teachers could also make more use of pupils' individual learning targets in their teaching and when marking pupils' work. Teachers' management and control in lessons is consistently good based on very good relationships with pupils whom they know well. Insufficient emphasis is given to teaching science through investigations that develop practical skills and ICT is not used widely enough across the curriculum. Teachers' planning and preparation for lessons is thorough and they cultivate positive attitudes by delivering interesting lessons. Literacy and numeracy teaching is satisfactory at least, and often good, but the teaching of writing in Key Stage 1 does not enable pupils to consolidate one level of skill sufficiently well before moving on and as result learning in this area is not as good as it should be. Teachers' efforts outside the normal school day enable the school to provide a very good range of extra-curricular activities.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is well balanced and the school provides a good range of learning opportunities. The school day is organised very effectively to provide five teaching sessions.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory, but some individual education plans do not have sufficient detail.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The provision for personal, social and moral education is very good, including health education. Provision for pupils' cultural development is good and their spiritual development is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Staff and other adults take good care of the pupils. Older pupils also play an important part in caring for younger pupils in the playground.

The school is committed to maintaining a broad and balanced curriculum that meets the needs of all pupils and statutory requirements in full. The planning of the curriculum reflects classes that are of mixed age and the need to respond to changing class structures. Literacy and numeracy strategies have been fully implemented. The provision for extra-curricular activities is very good and there is a good range of visits, including residential experiences, for older and younger pupils. Procedures for child protection have improved since the last inspection and are now good. Parents' views of the school are very positive. They appreciate the efforts of the staff and play an important role in supporting the school through fundraising and by helping in classes.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The school is very well led by the headteacher. He has led in tackling the key issues from the last inspection to create a united school with a shared purpose. School performance and pupils' progress are monitored very closely.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body plays a full role in shaping the direction of school development. Governors work closely with staff and pupils in devising the school development plan and monitoring work in classrooms.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school monitors its performance closely and uses the information to keep parents and governors informed and to set targets. It investigates anomalies in pupils' performance and progress, gathering considerable amounts of information on both.
The strategic use of resources	The school uses funds wisely through careful planning and by prioritising changes. The school is very adept at obtaining informal, voluntary funding for projects.

The headteacher provides very good leadership and is ably supported by the deputy headteacher. The headteacher has managed the problem of falling rolls well, taking hard decisions over staffing and class organisation. He has led in establishing a shared approach to development and creating a truly inclusive school. The quality of information on pupils' attainment and progress is particularly strong and it enables the school to monitor its performance closely. Governors are committed, active and aware; they know that standards have fallen in recent years and have a clear understanding of how and why. Governors monitor school spending carefully, always seeking to get the best value for services and products. The school has an adequate number of teachers and support staff who work closely and effectively together. The accommodation is well maintained and clean. The ICT suite is not used sufficiently in enriching other subjects. Outside, the facilities for play are generous including an adventure playground area provided largely from funds raised by parents.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers motivate pupils so that they like school. • Pupils make good progress. • The school expects pupils to work hard. • The range of activities outside lessons. • Pupils become more mature and responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information on how their children are getting on.

Inspectors agree with the positive statements made by parents, but not the negative. Information to parents is good. Besides written reports, parents have regular opportunities to meet staff formally and informally to discuss progress.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

The Foundation Stage

1 Children enter the reception class with a broad range of abilities and baseline assessments indicate that there is a wide variation attainment in different year groups. Analysis of data over the last four years indicates that children enter the reception class with below and sometimes well below average attainment. In mathematical knowledge, and literacy skills they are commonly well below average. Despite making good progress overall in the reception class children enter Key Stage 1 still below average in the basic skills and knowledge and understanding of the world, though in other areas such as creative, physical and social development they are average by the end of the foundation stage.

Key Stage 1

2 In the basic skills of reading and mathematics current standards are below average and in writing well below. Results in assessments carried out at the end of year 2 reveal that from 1999 to 2001 the performance of pupils has been well below the national average. When results are compared to schools similar to Buglawton the results are still below in writing and well below in reading and mathematics. Current standards are marginally higher than the results in 2001 indicate, this reflects the school's awareness of the need to raise standards and differences in ability within different year groups. The school monitors the progress of pupils from entry to the reception class to the end of year 2 and this information indicates that nearly all pupils make satisfactory progress and that some make good progress. However, it is a key target for the school to raise standards in Key Stage 1. The teaching of reading and mathematics is sound within the key stage, but in writing the methodology used does not help pupils to develop their handwriting in the most effective way and this inhibits progress.

3 In science and ICT standards are below expectations. In all other subjects standards are in line with expectations. At the time of the last inspection standards were judged to be in line with national averages in reading, writing and mathematics, however, in tests carried out in the same year standards were well below average. In this respect standards have remained similar, with the exception of 1998 when they improved to above average in writing and mathematics and to average in reading. This improvement reflected the higher ability of pupils in that year. Many of these same pupils are currently in year 6. The school is not complacent about standards in Key Stage 1 and acknowledges that improving them is a key priority. The school has used its developing range of information on pupils' progress to investigate the apparent differing performance of some groups of boys and girls. Gender differences, in particular in mathematics, have been considered very carefully. These differences are not regular enough to be described as trends, but they have led the school to reconsider its practice in teaching numeracy so that less outgoing pupils are not left out during oral sessions that involve whole class teaching.

Key Stage 2

4 In tests carried out in 2001, standards were in line with national averages in English and almost one third of pupils achieved a level above that expected for their age. In mathematics and science standards were well below the national average. When these results are compared with schools similar to Buglawton, standards in English are above average, but still below average in mathematics and science.

5 At the time of the last inspection standards were average in English and above average in mathematics and science. These standards were born out in tests of the same year; in fact standards in mathematics and science were actually well above average. Since 1997, standards have fluctuated, but there has been a general decline that is opposite to the national picture of gradual improvement. There was a very large fall in standards between 1999 and 2000. This fall reflects the difference in ability between the two year groups, but in science the fall from well above to well below was also a result of changes in staffing leading to year 6 pupils being taught by temporary teachers who lacked confidence in teaching science. Targets set for attainment in English and mathematics in 2001 were not reached for the percentage of pupils achieving the expected level 4 or above. Fluctuations in performance between year groups are exaggerated by the relatively small numbers within them and information on pupils when they enter the school shows significant differences year on year that mitigate against a consistent picture of standards. Targets for 2002 are significantly higher than the standards reached in 2001 and are based on the results from detailed, ongoing assessments.

6 On the whole standards in Key Stage 2 have been higher than in Key Stage 1. Pupils' progress is at least satisfactory and for approximately one fifth of pupils, progress is good. Current standards are at least in line with the national average in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science and this reflects the generally more able year group presently in year 6. In physical education, design and technology, religious education, history, geography and music, standards are in line with expectations. Attainment in ICT and practical skills in science are below expectations and in art and design they are above.

Pupils with special educational needs

7 Pupils with special educational needs make progress that is similar to the progress made by other pupils, the majority make satisfactory progress and some make good progress. The number of pupils with special educational needs varies significantly from year to year and this often has an impact on standards in general and goes some way to explaining annual fluctuations in results. Pupils are generally well supported in classes reflecting the school's policy to include all pupils irrespective of their ability.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

8 Pupils are keen to attend school and play a full part in its life, participating in the very good range of extra-curricular activities. They have very good attitudes to their work. Pupils listen carefully to teachers and get on well with the tasks they are given. Pupils participate enthusiastically in lessons and are keen to answer and raise questions. Pupils take a pride in their work, much of which is well displayed around the school. They know what is expected of them and want to succeed.

9 The behaviour of the pupils, in class and around the school, is good. In the parental questionnaire nearly all parents said that they were happy with standards of behaviour. Pupils are courteous and polite. They value the feelings and property of others. There is little evidence of litter around the school's buildings and grounds. In the school year prior to the inspection there were two fixed-term and one permanent exclusion, all for violent behaviour. There were no exclusions at the time of the last inspection.

10 Relationships, with other pupils and with adults, are very good. Pupils work well together in groups and in pairs. They are willing to share and take turns. Older pupils have a very caring approach to the younger ones. The small number of ethnic minority pupils are well integrated into the life of the school. Relationships are successfully based on mutual respect and concern for others.

11 The personal development of the pupils is very good. Pupils respond well to the opportunities they are given to take responsibility. The school council has two representatives from each class from year 2 upwards. They put forward ideas to improve the school and have a good record of achievement. Year 6 pupils act as 'Buddies' to the infant pupils at playtime and lunchtime. Some of the older pupils act as librarians and take charge of the physical education equipment. Pupils have been involved in the formation of the school, class and playground rules. They are encouraged to look after their environment. Pupils are involved in recycling projects and helped to plan the new adventure playground. Pupils show initiative by raising money for charities.

12 Attendance is good, in 1999/2000 it was 95.2 per cent, above the national average. Unauthorised absence in the same year was 0.6 per cent. Attendance has improved marginally since the last inspection in 1997. The main reasons for non-attendance are illness and holidays taken in term time. Most pupils are punctual, but a substantial minority arrived late on the last day of the inspection. Good attendance and punctuality promote the learning and attainment of the pupils concerned.

13 In the previous inspection report it stated that relationships were very good, behaviour was good and personal development was sound. These standards have been maintained and, in the case of personal development, improved.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

14 The quality of teaching in the foundation stage is consistently good and this enables children to make at least sound progress in all areas of learning and good progress in some areas of learning such as mathematical development. Lessons are well prepared and the teacher makes learning interesting and enjoyable. In one lesson the teacher links a story of 'The Lighthouse Keeper's Lunch' with ideas on sources of light. The pupils learn that torches use batteries and that the colour of light can be changed using cellophane. Children's understanding of shape is encouraged when they make 'square' sandwiches using 'triangular' cheese and this is typical of the practical approach to learning in the reception class.

15 In the rest of the school teaching is at least satisfactory with about half of teaching being good or better. There is some exceptional teaching that is very good and excellent in the year 4/5 class and here pupils make very good progress. At the time of the last inspection teaching was described as a strength of the school. The unsatisfactory teaching observed at the time of the last inspection has been eradicated, though none of the teaching in Key Stage 1 was judged as excellent during this inspection as some was in 1997.

16 The teaching of literacy overall is satisfactory though there are times when it is much better. In a literacy lesson in the year 4/5 class, excellent teaching was observed. Pupils considered and analysed a report of a local football match. They looked for 'powerful' verbs and 'strong' adjectives that would excite and engage the reader. The teacher involved all pupils in this activity with very skilful questioning. Two pupils with special educational needs were totally involved and being sensitively supported by classroom assistants. Then, the teacher moved seamlessly from analysis to synthesis. Pupils began to draft their own report of the first half of a local derby match against a neighbouring school. Pupils used white boards and the computer for their first attempts then, when they had read, improved and corrected these they wrote the paragraphs into their books carefully. A very special lesson was rounded-off when pupils read back their efforts for the rest of the class to evaluate. A moment of magic ensued as a shy pupil who has special educational needs nervously read back his paragraph, and when he had finished, the whole class clapped spontaneously.

17 The teaching of early writing skills is not as effective as it should be and pupils move on to new techniques such as joining letters before they have mastered the skills of good, regular letter formation. In order to raise standards in Key Stage 1 there is a need to focus teaching even more on developing the basic skills generally in English and mathematics.

18 The teaching of numeracy is generally satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2. Throughout the school pupils are taught in single age groups that reduces the range of abilities than is usual in classes. Teachers have a clear understanding of the national strategy and structure their lessons appropriately with oral introductions and conclusions either side of written or practical group work.

19 In one very good lesson in year 5 pupils were 'warmed up' in a vigorous oral session getting them to identify equivalent fractions in decimal and vulgar form and percentages. This activity was chosen because analysis of some assessments had show that pupils were weaker in this area of understanding. The teacher skilfully involved all pupils and was sensitive to the range of abilities in the class. The teacher then moved on to a prepared flip chart to introduce the notion of regular and irregular shapes and new vocabulary such as 'parallelogram' and 'rhombus'. The session was made more valuable as it involved pupils investigating shapes with a view to classifying them. Pupils learned well as they shared their ideas and debated differing views.

20 Teachers prepare lessons well and planning is consistently good. Planning includes clear ideas of what pupils are to learn and how lessons will be structured. Within the planning, regard is usually given to the different ability of pupils within classes. However, some of these activities are either not defined clearly enough in the first place or they do not match the ability of pupils precisely, to ensure that pupils are really challenged and their learning is better than satisfactory. Where teaching is only satisfactory it is this lack of precision that prevents both teaching and learning from becoming good or better. More use could be made of pupils' personal learning targets in both preparing lessons and as points of reference when teachers mark work. Teachers evaluate lessons and sometimes adjust planning as a result. More emphasis could be placed on evaluating what various groups and individuals have actually done and learnt in lessons, to make future teaching even more effective. In most subjects teaching reflects the pattern of teaching generally, with approximately half of teaching good and half being satisfactory. In art throughout the school and numeracy in Key Stage 2 teaching is consistently good. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. Adults develop good relationships with the pupils they work with which results in most pupils developing positive attitudes to lessons.

21 The management of pupils is consistently good. Teachers know their pupils well and have established very good relationships and standards of acceptable behaviour. As a result there is a peaceful and purposeful atmosphere throughout the school. Teachers also make good use of support staff who generally work with pupils who have special educational needs. There is a good understanding between teachers and support staff who are clear about how to become involved and when to help.

22 The methods employed by teachers are generally appropriate and reflect the nature of the subject being taught. The exception to this is in science where it is clear that a more practical approach is needed to ensure that pupils develop the expected skills in experimentation and investigation. Though there are examples of ICT being used in several subjects, generally not enough use is made of it across the curriculum.

23 Homework is used well. Pupils and parents know what is expected of them and a sensible approach is taken that sees the amount of homework gradually increase with the

age of the pupils. Time limits are used so that pupils do not become despondent and they develop a positive, rather than negative, attitude to work at home.

24 Teachers make a very valuable contribution to the provision of extra-curricular activities. All staff are involved and this helps to extend and enrich pupils' learning.

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

25 The quality and range of learning opportunities are good. They are relevant to pupils' needs and meet national requirements. The school implements the foundation stage curriculum well. Pupils have satisfactory access to the whole curriculum and activities are devised to include all. The school has adjusted the organisation of the school day to provide five distinct teaching sessions. This means that appropriate teaching time is set aside for literacy and numeracy and the school is left with 15 teaching sessions to provide the rest of the curriculum. This feature enables the school to provide a rich and broad curriculum that is very well balanced.

26 The school has adopted nationally recommended guidelines for work in most subjects, except in religious education where the locally agreed syllabus is used, and has integrated them into its overall curriculum plan. The amount of time allocated to each subject and the emphasis that class teachers lay on teaching all subjects rigorously, contribute to the good quality and range of learning opportunities. There is a good link between subjects using the same topic or theme. For example, the juniors are learning about Ancient Greece in history this term, they are familiar with the map of Greece, paint and draw pictures about the Greeks, use the Internet for research and listen to modern Greek music. The school is successfully putting the National Numeracy and Literacy Strategies into practice.

27 The provision for pupils with special education needs is satisfactory. Pupils are placed on the SEN register at an appropriate level once their needs have been identified. This complies with the code of practice. Identification and assessment procedures are satisfactory. The targets on the individual education plans are often not clear enough and this makes progress difficult to measure. Plans are reviewed regularly with parents being involved appropriately.

28 All pupils have access to the curriculum, however when work is not accurately matched to pupils' needs it affects learning during lessons and limits progress over time.

29 The quality of the curriculum is not judged solely on subjects taught in the classroom. There are many very good opportunities for enrichment of pupils' learning. The school organises two memorable residential trips each year. Pupils in year 6 spend a week doing orienteering, science and drama. Pupils in year 2 spend a night at Beeston Education Centre where they make their own beds, play games and have a campfire, and during the day they study aspects of life in a castle. Both visits are very valuable in widening the pupils' personal and social experiences. Each class throughout the school goes on several visits each year in connection with their school work, including a recent whole school trip to the Lowry Gallery. There is a range of visitors who come into school and they widen the pupils' horizons in many ways. There are further learning opportunities through a very good range of clubs that teachers organise out of school hours from football to writing and performance.

30 Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural provision is good overall. Moral and social development is very good and is a strength of the school, cultural development is good and spiritual development is satisfactory.

31 Provision for spiritual development is satisfactory. There are a few examples of special moments created in different subjects, although spiritual development is not systematically planned for within the curriculum. Reception children showed delight when creating their own movements in a dance lesson and pupils in year 4/5 clapped spontaneously when a pupil read out a report. Religious education makes a good contribution towards pupils' spiritual development.

32 Assemblies make a positive contribution towards pupils' spiritual development. The hall has an attractive area, which, together with taped music, helps to create an atmosphere that encourages pupils to reflect. There are good links with local churches and a programme of guest speakers. Assemblies also value out of school achievements and celebrate any charity work. The school effectively links its personal and social development with class assemblies in order that pupils can discuss issues in more depth. The reading of prayers written by each class helps create special moments.

33 Provision for pupils' moral development is very good which is an improvement since previous inspection when it was good. The majority of parents feel that the school helps their child to become mature and responsible. This view was borne out during the inspection. All teaching and support staff give clear moral direction and provide very good role models. School and class rules are displayed prominently and referred to by staff and the headteacher. The school's whole approach involves and values every child. For example the merit book has certificates both for individual excellence and kindness to others. The school's clear message 'to be the best you can' is reinforced through practical physical examples like its 'tree of achievement'. The school's behaviour policy includes rewards by dinner supervisors that motivate pupils who are very enthusiastic about the use of 'tokens'. These effectively reinforce the good behaviour and encourage good work by individual pupils.

34 There is time allocated on a weekly basis for pupils to discuss social and moral issues. Every opportunity is provided for pupils to suggest their own fundraising ideas both locally, in Britain, and abroad. Pupils are encouraged to think of others less fortunate than themselves and take action. For example, used equipment such as crayons, pencils and books are recycled to a school in Africa. The school has an effective school council. Pupils make suggestions for the school's development plan and are involved in major projects such as the development of the school's adventure garden. Pupils know that their views are considered and respected.

35 Provision for pupils' social development is very good. This is an improvement on the previous inspection when it was good. From the time the younger children start in reception, routines are established and reinforced to help the children to settle in quickly. Older pupils care for younger children in the playground and take responsibility for the library. Within lessons older and younger pupils are encouraged to share resources and collaborate. Pupils generally take turns and appreciate each other's contributions.

36 The school provides many opportunities for pupils to work together and form effective relationships. However, pupils do not have enough opportunity to use computers for independent research. For example, the school provides an impressive range of activities outside of classes to enrich the curriculum. The school is rightly proud of its sporting successes, which reflects well on pupils and staff.

37 Provision for cultural development is good. This is an improvement since the time of the previous inspection, when it was satisfactory. Pupils are helped to become aware of their cultural heritage, to appreciate European and non-European cultures and to be aware of the major cultures present in contemporary Britain. They have opportunities to perform in public and develop their talents. There are also regular trips and events to support the curriculum.

Art, history and music make a good contribution to pupils' cultural awareness. The school has addressed very well the issue to extend pupils' appreciation of cultural diversity, raised at the time of the last inspection. For example, art from British, European and non-European cultures is valued, as shown by a striking set of African masks on display. The range of books within classes to raise awareness of the major cultures present in contemporary Britain is good.

38 The school uses community resources effectively to further pupils' education. Good links have been forged with local businesses and there are strong links with nearby churches. The school has recently welcomed the local pre-school onto the school site. There are very close relations with the local secondary school and it welcomes students from there as well as older students for work experience. The school provides a useful learning resource for the community who use its computers to improve adults' computer skills.

39 The school has improved its curriculum since the last inspection. The weaknesses in religious education and physical education have been remedied and amendments have been made to the programmes of work for each subject. There is good provision in place to help pupils to become aware of personal, social and health issues together with a growing idea of citizenship. Information on sex and drug abuse is introduced sensitively and appropriately. Older pupils visit the mayor in the town hall and all pupils in Key Stage 2 have practical experience of democracy through the active and well-established school council.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

40 The steps taken to ensure the pupils' welfare, health and safety are good. The teachers know their pupils well, recognise their needs and give them good support and guidance.

41 The school has a good health and safety policy, which is signed and dated. An annual inspection survey of the buildings and grounds is completed and risk assessments are carried out. Annual checks on hygiene are undertaken by the local education authority (LEA). A range of specialists visits the school, including the school nurse who carries out health checks for the reception children. Personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) is delivered regularly as part of the curriculum. All staff demonstrate a very caring approach and the school provides a happy and safe environment.

42 The school has a good child protection policy. The headteacher is the designated teacher. He is responsible for the implementation of the policy and has received the necessary training, which he shares with other staff.

43 The school's procedures for monitoring and supporting the pupils' personal development are good. Pupils' personal development is monitored by class teachers. The 'gold book' acts as a record of achievement for each child and their progress both academic and personal is recorded from the time they enter the school. Reference is made to the pupils' personal development in their annual report and in weekly assemblies certificates are awarded for merit, excellence, kindness and citizenship.

44 Systems for the assessment of pupils and the monitoring of their progress are good. The school carries out regular tests in English and mathematics that provide reliable information on pupils' progress and to predict their likely attainment at the end of key stages. This data provides clear information on the variations in attainment when pupils begin school and how year groups differ in their academic make up. At the time of the last inspection assessment was weak, it is now very good and it includes systems for all subjects not just the core subjects of English, mathematics and science.

45 The school has sound links with external agents and uses them when necessary to support pupils with special educational needs. Clear documentation is kept on all pupils, which shows the satisfactory progress they are making. There is a positive attitude in the school regarding all pupils with special educational needs that is reflected in their involvement.

46 The school's procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are good as part of an appropriate attendance policy. Pupils' attendance is monitored by the class teachers, headteacher and the school secretary. The secretary phones parents if a child is away without any known reason. If there are any concerns about non-attendance or punctuality the headteacher will contact the parents. The educational welfare officer is called in where necessary to contact parents and to make home visits. Certificates are given to pupils for 100 per cent attendance, but there are no awards for improved attendance or punctuality.

47 The school's procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and eliminating oppressive behaviour are good. There is an appropriate behaviour policy, which contains a suitable range of rewards and sanctions to encourage good behaviour. Repeated misbehaviour is recorded and the parents are involved if necessary. Incidents of bullying are infrequent. When they do occur, they are dealt with swiftly and in accordance with the school's statement on bullying. Parents are happy that any bullying is dealt with well.

48 The previous inspection report stated that the systems for promoting good behaviour and attendance were effective but the monitoring of academic progress and the child protection procedures were unsatisfactory. The child protection procedures and the monitoring of academic progress are now good and the promotion of good behaviour and attendance is still effective.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

49 Parents' views of the school are very good. The school's links with its parents are effective and their involvement has a good impact on the work of the school. The contribution of parents to children's learning, at school and at home, is satisfactory overall.

50 The quality of information provided to parents is good. Monthly newsletters are sent out as well as regular information letters. The school makes home visits to parents prior to their child entering the school. Parents are given a leaflet on how they can help their child at home.

51 The pupils' annual reports tell parents what their child knows, understands and can do in each subject and sets targets for improvement in mathematics and English. There are termly opportunities for parents to come into school to discuss their child's progress with the class teacher and to discuss their learning targets. Parents are also invited in to look at their child's books. In the parental questionnaire prior to the inspection, 22 per cent of parents stated that they did not feel well informed about their child's progress. This view is not endorsed by the inspection team.

52 The parents and teachers association is very active and raises a large amount of money each year. It holds events like a Christmas and Summer Fayre, half-termly discos and coffee mornings. The money raised helped to fund the adventure playground, the school's sound system, televisions, videos and books. About 12 parents help in school on a regular basis. They hear pupils read, assist with group work, help with swimming and support on school trips. The views of parents are canvassed on a number of issues through an annual questionnaire. Most parents have signed the home/school agreement.

53 The school has a good homework policy, which sets clear time limits for the pupils to spend on their work at home. The reading/homework diary records their work but some parents do not always fill this diary in. Most parents are supportive of their child's work at home, but a significant minority could be more supportive and co-operative. Parents are invited to special events like the Christingle service, school productions, open days and sports days.

54 In the previous inspection report it stated that parents were kept well informed, pupils' annual reports were useful and parents played an effective part in the life of the school and this is still the case.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

55 There were significant weaknesses in the leadership and management of the school at the time of the last inspection. Specific targets and priorities for development were not identified and there was no consensus of opinion on the aims of the school. Important information was omitted from key documents and the leadership roles of staff were unclear. The governing body was not sufficiently involved in the affairs of the school and they were failing to comply with a wide range of statutory requirements. All of these weaknesses have been remedied and in this respect the school, under a new headteacher, has made very good progress. The headteacher, supported by the deputy headteacher, staff and governors has established a common purpose with shared aims that include a determination to develop and improve. The quality of leadership is very good. The school is very much part of the community it serves and it is successful in including pupils, governors, parents and the local community in its work. For example, the school has provided facilities for the local pre-school playgroup on the school site and now children are familiar with the surroundings before they reach school age.

56 The monitoring of school performance is particularly strong. The headteacher has introduced systems to measure pupils' progress and overall school performance that provide good quality data on which to base policy and practice. An example of this is how the school has used information to investigate the performance of girls in mathematics since the introduction of the numeracy strategy, because performance had appeared to deteriorate.

57 The school has a sufficient number of teachers and support staff. Teachers frequently take on leadership roles in a number of curriculum areas; they approach the job of co-ordinator with enthusiasm and the headteacher has enabled them to take on monitoring responsibilities by sampling pupils' work, and in some cases, observing colleagues teaching. Documentation is well conceived, relevant and thorough. Support staff are used well, frequently to work alongside pupils who have special educational needs.

58 The headteacher is aware of the need to monitor the provision for special educational needs more closely to ensure that all individual education plans contain specific targets and that all pupils receive work that is accurately matched to their needs. The school uses the funding for pupils with special educational needs well, to give additional support to pupils that helps them develop basic skills in the areas of literacy and numeracy and to develop resources where necessary. There is a positive, whole school ethos reflecting a commitment to equality of opportunity for all pupils.

59 There is a sense of team work amongst the staff who work well together and support each other. Several staff are quite new to the school, their induction and that of the newly qualified teacher has been successful.

60 The governing body is committed and well informed, it fulfils its statutory duties fully. Co-opted members are invited to join on the basis that they have some particular strength or experience that would further enhance existing skills and knowledge. The result is a governing body that is both capable and determined to play a full role in the life of the school. All governors have class and/or subject links that lead to a close understanding with teachers. Governors sit on committees and working parties that also include teachers. These working parties along with the school council, and hence pupils, are the starting point for the school development plan. The system used to compile the plan is first rate. It is inclusive, efficient, effective and responsive to changing circumstances. The result is a clear plan for development that has short, medium and long-term perspectives and has priorities clearly identified. The governing body then monitors developments and spending closely.

61 The management of the school during a period when the number of pupils who attend is falling presents particular problems both in school organisation and budget management. The management team of the school has reacted thoughtfully to these changes, sometimes taking hard decisions, for instance over mixing the ages of pupils in classes.

62 The carry over figure from 2000 to 2001 was 14 per cent, which is very high. However the school had a clear objective for this to maintain current staffing, which it has done. In the subsequent year the carry over figure has been reduced to a more average six per cent. The school has spent a great deal on resources including computers and new furniture. Resources are satisfactory in general, despite the considerable amounts spent on ICT equipment, there is still a need to improve resources in this area.

63 The development of the outside environment has been particularly successful in providing pupils with a range of play areas that include an adventure playground and areas to sit and be quiet. Inside the school is well maintained and cleaned so that the learning environment is very attractive. The quality of display is very high and the good standard of art enriches classrooms and corridors.

64 In looking for the best value in purchasing products and services the school is very efficient, for instance the school has decided to rejoin the LEA support services because recent changes in that service have made it viable and attractive again on the basis of quality and hence value.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

65 To raise standards in Key Stage 1 and improve the quality of learning in Key Stages 1 and 2 for all pupils, the school should:

- (1) Focus teaching and learning in Key Stage 1 on the development of basic skills in reading, mathematics and especially writing. *(Paragraphs 1, 2, 3, 17, 85, 94, 101)*
- (2) Improve the match of work to reflect the full range of abilities in classes in Key Stages 1 and 2 to make teaching and learning more effective by:
 - a) making more regular use of pupils' individual learning targets in planning, teaching and marking;
 - b) improving individual learning plans for pupils with special educational needs, so that they are more detailed and precise;
 - c) evaluating what has been achieved by pupils of different abilities at the end of lessons and using the information to inform future teaching.

(Paragraphs 20, 27, 87, 95, 98, 99, 108, 110, 119)

- (3) Raise standards in ICT and make more use of the subject in other areas of the curriculum. *(Paragraphs 3, 6, 22, 62, 96, 111, 120, 130, 135, 143-146, 148)*

- 4) Make the approach to teaching and learning in science more practical so that pupils have more regular opportunities to develop the skills associated with the subject. *(Paragraphs 3, 6, 22, 115, 118)*

5) 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	56

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2	11	31	56	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)		160
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		29

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		33

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	10
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	14

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	95.2
National comparative data	94.1

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.6
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	15	13	28

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	11	13
	Girls	10	10	9
	Total	20	21	22
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	71 (92)	75 (61)	79 (80)
	National	84 (83)	86 (82)	91 (88)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	12	9	12
	Girls	10	6	9
	Total	22	15	21
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	79 (84)	54 (80)	75 (88)
	National	85 (84)	87 (80)	89 (88)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	6	12	19	31

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	6	7	10
	Girls	15	12	15
	Total	21	19	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	68 (67)	61 (67)	81 (77)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	6	8	8
	Girls	15	15	12
	Total	21	23	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	68 (60)	74 (77)	84 (63)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	4
Indian	
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	
White	156
Any other minority ethnic group	

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage		
Black – African heritage		
Black – other		
Indian		
Pakistani		
Bangladeshi		
Chinese		
White	2	1
Other minority ethnic groups		

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	23
Average class size	27

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	65

Financial information

Financial year	2000-2001
	£
Total income	380506
Total expenditure	416632
Expenditure per pupil	2301
Balance brought forward from previous year	59382
Balance carried forward to next year	23256

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	130
Number of questionnaires returned	41

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	44	54	0	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	46	46	2	0	5
Behaviour in the school is good.	39	59	0	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	41	49	7	2	0
The teaching is good.	49	49	2	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	27	51	15	7	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	56	39	5	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	59	39	0	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	27	59	12	2	0
The school is well led and managed.	37	49	10	0	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	39	59	2	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	51	39	2	2	5

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

66 The school makes good provision for children in the reception class. The reception room is attractive and welcoming and, as at the time of the last inspection, children are provided with a good start to their school career. The teacher provides a calm happy atmosphere, in which all children are valued and they respond well. Children's attitudes and behaviour are very good. Teaching is good and pupils make satisfactory progress overall and good progress in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, and creative development. The admission arrangements are good, and as a result children settle in easily. The teacher meets with the playgroup co-ordinator to discuss children's learning needs. She also meets with the year 1 teacher to discuss children's progress before they change class. These strategies before they start and when they leave reception help to smooth transition into and out of the class. The reception class has a satisfactory range of indoor resources and access to a stimulating adventure area outside. The foundation stage is well managed.

67 Children are admitted to the school at the start of the year in which they become five years old. The current reception class has 17 pupils, 11 are boys and six are girls. Most have had time in a pre-school setting. At the time of the previous inspection pupils' achievements were judged to be broadly average on entry and when they enter Year 1, with satisfactory progress overall. Attainment on entry is assessed using the local authority scheme. Over the last few years baseline information shows that generally pupils are below the national expectations and often well below, particularly in their writing and number skills. The current reception baseline shows that children are average in personal and social development and physical development. They are below average in knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development. Pupils are well below average in writing and mathematical skills.

68 There have been improvements since the previous inspection. The foundation stage curriculum has been introduced; the reception class is now within the school building, with more opportunities to mix with older pupils. Links between home and school have been increased, as have links with the local playgroup. The baseline assessment undertaken in October is revisited in June to check the extent of progress.

69 Curriculum planning is detailed and well matched to the 'stepping stones' of learning for the foundation stage. An impressive feature of the curriculum, which makes it particularly interesting to the children, is the way different aspects of work are linked together through a theme. During the inspection week this was very successfully demonstrated through a range of stories based on 'The lighthouse'. The children receive a stimulating, well thought out, practical curriculum.

70 Teaching is consistently good and at times very good and as a result children generally make good progress in lessons. Teaching is effective because the teacher has a good understanding of the early years curriculum. She plans work carefully to match children's different needs and briefs support staff and volunteer parents well. Ongoing assessments are used well to plan the next step of the children's learning.

Personal, social and emotional development

71 Children enter the class with the skills that are expected for their age. They are confident, friendly, and very well behaved. A prime example of their maturity was seen in a lesson in the hall. The teacher expected the children to find a partner and they did so without

the slightest fuss. Good teaching also promotes children's personal development effectively, by arranging the resources and equipment in such a way that makes it easy for the children to use them. Children are also encouraged to tidy the classroom and put equipment away. This helps pupils develop their independence settle in quickly. There are very good relationships between the staff and children; staff make the children feel secure. The class teacher makes sure the children understand the levels of behaviour that are expected. She uses lots of praise, which the children respond to well. Children listen well to the teacher and are keen to answer questions. Most children work constructively in small groups and alongside each other. Children move confidently in the classroom and playground. Children are encouraged to change their clothes for physical activities and most have well developed personal skills. Most children will achieve the level of personal development expected by the end of the school year.

Communication, language and literacy

72 Children enjoy listening to stories because the teacher makes these sessions lively and interesting. However, though the book area is attractive and welcoming, few children choose to use it during informal sessions. Most children handle books with care and teachers use every opportunity to encourage them to appreciate words, expanding their vocabulary. She makes learning new words fun and is a good role model for how to read aloud with expression and enthusiasm. Familiar words and sounds are attractively displayed on a 'word wall' and referred to regularly so that children can build up their sight vocabulary and knowledge of sounds.

73 Most children recognise their own name. Some children know 'speech bubbles' are where 'words we say are placed'. More confident readers recognise familiar words and are building up a sight vocabulary matched to their reading books. Most children join in rhymes enthusiastically and some children attempt to read simple sentences using known sounds. While most children join in and answer questions in lessons, some are reluctant to communicate and need far more encouragement in smaller group sessions to express themselves. Excellent use is made of an imaginative role-play area to promote language, particularly with the children who are reluctant to express themselves in more formal situations.

74 Teaching is good and children make good progress from a low starting point. Attainment for most children is well below what might be expected, particularly in their writing skills. Supplies of paper, pencils and crayons are available so that children can have a go at making marks on paper. Most children attempt to copy their own name and writing skills are taught, although occasionally informal opportunities are missed to encourage correct letter formation. However, because of their low starting point most children are unlikely to achieve the standards expected of five-year-olds by the end of the school year.

Mathematical development

75 Children have below average skills in number and many have well below average skills in their use of mathematical language, although there is a wide range of ability. The teacher provides daily opportunities for children to experience number activities in a variety of ways. Number songs and rhymes are used well to reinforce learning. For example, in one lesson, a song is used that reinforces the properties of each shape; this helps pupils remember each shape and makes learning fun. Practical experiences bring learning to life and promote discussion and observations. For example a more able child suggests 'we can cut the cucumber in half'. Some less able children have difficulty remembering the basic activity, however, a very able child can explain symmetry as, 'the same on both sides'.

76 An attractive mathematics area is in frequent use and reinforces basic number skills. Children have a daily numeracy session and use numbers up to 10. There are plenty of attractive resources, including, number pictures and puzzles to help children develop number skills. Work is well targeted at children's different ability and this helps more able children further their mathematical understanding. Children have many informal opportunities to count, match, thread beads and use the sand and water trays to fill and empty containers.

77 Teaching is good and pupils make good progress. However, because of their low starting point most children are unlikely to achieve the standards expected of five-year-olds by the end of the school year.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

78 When they enter the class children have below average knowledge and understanding of the world around them. Staff encourage children to share their own experiences. Topics such as 'all about me', 'day and night' and 'toys old and new' encourage children to build up their picture of the world. Most children can talk a little about when they were babies. Religious education topics include the story of Rama and Sita and contribute to the children's appreciation of different faiths and cultures. There is an attractive investigation area that is full of interesting objects, including magnifying glasses, materials and torches. In one lesson children make good progress because they have time to handle and explore a range of different materials and are taught well. Extra support ensures enough time to talk about their experiences in very small groups. Many children show real pleasure in experimenting with torches and a range of materials. A child observes that 'the torch needs a battery to work'. Provision for information technology is not fully developed. Children experience a range of programs, but the skills children have are not recorded and systematically developed; therefore opportunities are missed to fully extend all of the children. Overall progress in knowledge and understanding is satisfactory. Approximately half of the class are likely to achieve the standards expected of five-year olds by the end of the school year.

Physical development

79 Baseline assessment shows that children are in line with expectations in physical development. The school is fortunate in having a good range of spaces in which to promote physical development, including a good-sized hall and an outdoor adventure area. Lessons are timetabled so that reception children can use them regularly. Children also have access to a range of wheeled vehicles and small equipment such as bats and balls that results in most children having confidence in physical activities.

80 When children start reception many have had pre-school experience and have had some experience of using scissors, paintbrushes and glue. Good teaching builds on this and continues to provide opportunities to handle equipment sensibly and safely. Children have opportunities to practise their skills in cutting, sticking, and joining. Overall, children make satisfactory progress and most children will achieve the level of physical development that is expected by the end of the school year.

Creative development

81 Children start with a fairly low level of confidence in their creative abilities and have below average skills. Teachers and other staff work hard to develop pupils' pleasure in creative activities. Children develop their creative talents in music and role-play sessions and join in well-known songs and rhymes, such as 'The Animal Fair'. Many clap and make appropriate actions. However, some are happy to listen and watch others and need to be

encouraged to join in. Many opportunities are found to sing, although some opportunities are missed to allow children to use instruments when joining in with singing.

82 Girls and boys are encouraged to use large and small construction equipment to make, in the week of the inspection, their own lighthouse designs. Children paint, print, and make collages. The class teacher and support staff achieve the right balance between intervening and allowing children to experiment freely. Special moments are created; for example, many children show real pleasure and curiosity when mixing paints for their hot air balloons. Staff show that children's work is valued by the care with which art work is displayed. Children are encouraged to see themselves as artists, as is demonstrated through an excellent display of their work in the style of Paul Klee.

83 Role-play sessions provide children with times to mix informally, play imaginatively and further develop their speaking and listening skills. Children are taught well and as a result make good progress. Most children will achieve the expected level of creative development by the end of the school year.

KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

84 Results in tests taken in 2001 show that standards in reading and writing are well below the average for seven-year-olds nationally. When results are compared with similar schools they are well below average in reading and below average in writing. In national tests for eleven-year-olds in 2001, standards are average when compared with schools nationally. Pupils in Key Stage 2 make good progress and when results are compared with their results at the end of Key Stage 1 more pupils reached the higher level 5 than would normally be expected. Standards are higher than the average for similar schools and the same as those found at the time of the last inspection.

85 Current standards in writing are well below average and in reading standards are below average in Key Stage 1. Pupils reach average standards in speaking and listening. Standards in English in the current year 6 are in line with national averages. The number of pupils who are likely to reach the higher Level 5 is expected to be below the figure achieved in 2001, but the school is likely to reach the targets set for this year.

86 The current year 1 entered the school with below average attainment generally but well below average levels in writing. Overall the progress which pupils make in years 1 and 2, including those with special educational needs is satisfactory. By the age of eleven many pupils have made good progress. In all lessons learning is at least satisfactory. However in one lesson seen learning was excellent. This was linked to excellent teaching; where the teacher skilfully matched activities to the needs of all pupils. Pupils were motivated and support staff were used effectively so that pupils of all abilities achieved very well. There were planned opportunities for pupils to think about and identify what they have learnt.

87 Teachers plan lessons that closely follow the recommended structure for daily literacy lessons. All lessons are taught in mixed ability and mixed aged classes. Although pupils are placed into ability groups within the classes, teachers do not always give pupils work which is accurately matched to their individual needs. Sometimes higher attaining pupils are not challenged effectively and at other times some pupils with special educational needs receive tasks which they do not understand or are too easy. This hinders both learning in some lessons and the progress made by some pupils over time.

88 Scrutiny of past work indicates that progress is satisfactory. However work completed in the year 4/5 class shows better than satisfactory progress. It is good and sometimes it is very good. The consistently good and occasionally excellent teaching in this class allows some pupils to reach standards that are above average. An average year 5 pupil wrote a good account of his visit to Tatton Park using simple and more complicated sentences, which were well structured into paragraphs. His writing was fluent and he joined his letters well.

89 Standards of speaking are typical of seven and eleven-year-olds in other schools. When pupils are given opportunities to sit and listen and watch, for example when visiting theatre groups come into school, they all listen very well. Overall, speaking and listening skills are satisfactorily promoted, however a few teachers sometimes allow pupils to call out their answers and then give instructions over the noise. In some lessons not all pupils contribute during discussions. Not enough is always done to include every pupil. This results in a number of pupils remaining passive because they are not challenged sufficiently by their teachers and learning is affected. Speaking and listening skills were well promoted in a year 1/2 class as the teacher was developing an understanding of words that rhyme such as 'ban', 'can' and 'ran'.

90 Pupils make satisfactory progress in reading by the age of seven but standards are still below average. A few pupils make good progress. For example above average readers are fluent and read texts accurately and with some expression. They begin to establish the meanings of difficult words using different strategies for example through the meaning of the text. Average pupils do not confidently try to decipher unknown words and have difficulty with key words in their reading books such as *Speedway*. They recognise a few words, but there are many which are unknown to them for example 'liked', 'was' and 'come'. Although below average ability pupils read hesitantly and identify a few words some have little understanding of the texts they read. All pupils keep reading diaries, which show the books they have read. The best ones have comments which inform them about what they need to do to improve.

91 By the age of eleven most pupils reach average standards in reading and some reach higher than average standards by making good progress. For example above average pupils in year 6 read fluently showing a good understanding of various texts and excellent expression as they read *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*. Above average and average pupils identify and explain why they like certain books. Average pupils read confidently and accurately and demonstrate a satisfactory understanding of the texts they read. They talk about the different characters and plot and predict what might happen next. Sometimes below average pupils do not understand what they read because their book is too difficult for them. In these instances there is too little guidance given to pupils when selecting reading material. Reading records that identify what pupils are having difficulties with are not always used effectively when pupils choose books. Most pupils understand the difference between fiction and non-fiction; however, a few pupils in year 6 have a muddled idea of this. Teachers' reading records are satisfactory overall, but vary in quality from class to class. The best ones inform pupils how to improve and are used to ensure correct match of book to reading ability. There is a satisfactory selection of reading books.

92 The headteacher has developed a rolling programme, which was started two years ago to completely review all books in the school library. At present the library is not fully stocked, but the books are of good quality. After analysing test results and finding that boys did not do as well as girls in reading, teachers have carefully chosen books which will appeal to the boys. Teachers use the county library services to borrow books for the topics they teach. All classes are well resourced with satisfactory quality books, which enhance the topics they study. There are good links with the local library and the librarian comes into school to talk to the pupils.

93 As pupils get older they are all taught how to use the library and how to find information in books by using the index and contents. The library books are easy to find and the school is in the process of developing a computerised system to catalogue books.

94 When they enter school pupils' standards in writing are low and sometimes very low. Standards by the age of seven are well below average and pupils make barely satisfactory progress. A weakness is that many pupils move on to joined writing before they have mastered print. The school has researched several approaches to teaching writing and they are aware that there is a need to review current practice. Pupils develop an idea of writing in sentences and begin to use capital letters at the beginning and full stops at the end. For example they use their imagination to write adventure stories about castles and dragons.

95 Standards in writing by the age of eleven are average. The majority of pupils develop a satisfactory joined script as they write for a range of purposes such as stories and accounts, descriptively and in the form of poems. Pupils in years 5 and 6 write poems about 'The Living Playground' and write sentences such as 'The sun wanders across the playground'. Above average pupils in year 5 and 6 write in paragraphs and produce work that is accurately punctuated. All pupils learn how to plan their writing beforehand and identify the beginning, middle and end of the stories which they write. In all classes around the school there is evidence of pupils developing satisfactory drafting and re-drafting skills as they produce a 'best' copy. Below average pupils in year 6 often have difficulty with writing tasks. They sometimes do not finish their work because it is too hard for them. When this happens teachers have not matched work accurately to their individual needs. These pupils know how stories are constructed but limited spelling skills affect the overall standard of their efforts. All pupils have regular spellings to learn. Many below average pupils have difficulty spelling common words and are given these to learn for their weekly spellings. The best teaching shows that pupils learn spellings which are graded in relation to the abilities and ages within the class.

96 Literacy skills are used well in many subjects to promote writing. In years 1 and 2, pupils write about the local area in geography. There are good links with religious education as pupils in years 3 and 4 describe the characters in the story of Rama and Sita. In years 5 and 6 pupils use writing skills as they write up a scientific experiment about acids and alkalis as a piece of extended writing. There is little evidence of ICT being used to support English. However in years 4 and 5, after reading *The Secret Garden* pupils use the computers to develop word processing skills and experiment with different fonts as they describe the characters from the book.

97 The teaching of English is satisfactory overall with some teaching in year 4/5 being excellent. All teachers generally have sufficient knowledge of English to teach it soundly. They use support staff and resources well and most have good control of their classes, which enables all pupils to learn soundly. In the best lessons all pupils are engaged in the question and answer sessions.

98 Not all teachers deliver lessons that match accurately the full range of different ages and abilities in their classes. Some tasks are too complicated, for example some pupils had difficulty finding adjectives because they did not really understand what an adjective was whilst others confused adjectives with verbs. At other times higher attaining pupils in some groups are not consistently challenged because there is no urgency to finish tasks.

99 Teachers work hard at devising literacy targets and sharing them with parents. However these are not used as well as they could be in lessons or in the marking of work. This results in many pupils not being sure just what their targets are. Work in books is marked regularly and teachers add some words of praise, but they do not consistently write

comments to show pupils how they can improve. In some classrooms there are informative displays that promote what has been previously taught however there was little reference made to these in lessons during the inspection.

100 A new co-ordinator has recently been appointed and she is working alongside the headteacher. The school has good procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. All pupils are monitored regarding the National Curriculum levels they achieve and pupils are regularly tested. The school analyses test data to identify areas of weakness and uses this information to group pupils during the literacy hour. The co-ordinator runs a writing club each week for pupils aged seven to eleven. They are currently writing a play about 'Bullying in the playground' and plan to perform it in the next few weeks for other pupils. Visitors, such as theatre groups and local librarians invited into school enrich the English curriculum. Pupils' social development is promoted well in all classes when they are encouraged to work together in groups. Well chosen texts, which the pupils read, enhance their moral and cultural development.

MATHEMATICS

101 At the time of the previous inspection standards were well below average in Key Stage 1 and well above average in Key Stage 2. Current standards in year 2 are below average and in year 6 they are average compared to schools nationally. In both key stages this represents an improvement on the standards achieved in 2001. The variations between current standards, those at the time of the last inspection and results in 2001 reflect the different year groups. The differences are magnified when there are small numbers of pupils in different year groups and at Buglawton there are sometimes less than 20 pupils in a given year group.

102 The majority of pupils in year 6 are achieving average standards with at least four pupils operating above the national average. Average and above average pupils in Year 6 have a secure understanding that percentages are fractions of 100. They have grasped the concept of equivalent fractions and are making the necessary links between ideas of proportion, ratio, percentages and fractions. They have a satisfactory grasp of place value up to 1000, which they apply in the multiplication and division of whole numbers and have a secure recall of their multiplication tables. They are beginning to use a range of mental methods, including estimating, reasonably accurately. They are undertaking work on coordinates at an appropriate level and can estimate and calculate the perimeter of simple shapes.

103 Year 2 pupils recall number facts to ten, which they apply when adding and subtracting. They undertake some counting forward and backwards and attempt 2 and 10 times tables. They have a solid basis of practical experiences to reinforce their understanding of simple fractions, measuring and weighing and average pupils describe the properties of different shapes. An above average pupil adds coins up to 20p. There are very few pupils identified as above the national average and overall, standards are below the national average.

104 In lessons pupils make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1 and good progress in Key Stage 2. Examples of good and very good teaching in Key Stage 2 have contributed to some pupils making good progress. The work in pupils' books and discussions with pupils show that over time pupils, including pupils with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress across the school. The school's detailed tracking and analysis of pupils' progress shows, however, that many pupils make good progress from the very low starting point when they join the school.

105 Overall, teaching is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2. There was no unsatisfactory teaching seen during the inspection week. The curriculum is organised so that pupils are taught in their own year groups. This is an effective strategy as it helps teachers to plan work closely matched to the National Numeracy Strategy. Where teaching is good, teachers have a secure knowledge of the National Numeracy Strategy, the pace is brisk and questions are used to take pupils learning on. Where the teaching is very good, teachers deliver mathematics enthusiastically and in a way that makes it very enjoyable for the pupils. There is a buzz of activity and pupils are clearly motivated by the tasks. Teachers have very good knowledge of technical mathematical language and use it in a way that is relevant and understandable to the majority of pupils. In these very good lessons, teachers ask questions that extend and challenge pupils' thinking and make sure work is pitched at the right level for the different abilities of pupils, with extension work to further challenge the more able pupils. Most pupils respond well to the teaching they receive. Attitudes to work are usually positive, their books are neat, and behaviour is generally good. Pupils work sensibly alone and in groups. An appropriate range of mathematical homework is given regularly to support work within the class.

106 A particularly impressive feature of the school is the identification and provision for more able pupils. Two pupils who have been identified as particularly able in mathematics are being taught in older year groups; as a result they make very good progress and clearly enjoy the challenge.

107 Some pupils are identified as having special needs in mathematics, however not enough pupils who have difficulty with mathematics are identified or given enough support, particularly in year 3. The individual education plans for pupils with special needs in mathematics, while providing a starting point, are not detailed enough to be sufficiently helpful. The school is addressing the issue of additional support for less able pupils through the introduction of a project known as 'springboard mathematics' in years 3 and 4. It is already in place in year 5, and though at an early stage, is an effective strategy for helping pupils to catch up.

108 Pupils' calculation skills are appropriately extended in mental arithmetic sessions and the more skilful teachers share a range of strategies to solve problems with their class. In some lessons while the planning is detailed and thorough, the work is not always appropriately matched to the needs of the pupils and examples were seen where the work was too hard for the less able pupils. For example in a year 2 lesson, these pupils really struggled with the work planned for them but made appropriate progress because of the skilful support of the teaching assistant, who adapted the work to match their level of understanding. In a year 3 lesson, an extension activity was given to one pupil but it was too difficult. In some classes the work is not demanding enough for higher attaining pupils, who could be further challenged.

109 Pupils regularly have opportunities to use their mathematical knowledge to solve real life problems. In a year 6 lesson pupils had to draw a rectangular garden and calculate the actual size and the cost of putting fencing around the perimeter.

110 Teachers plan thoroughly and discuss with pupils what it is they want them to learn in each lesson. All lessons are organised into three distinct parts. Lessons start with a lively session of quick questions to help pupils' recall of number facts. The main teaching sessions are relevant and pupils engage in a mixture of calculations, practical work and recording. The final part of the lesson draws together the learning that has taken place. Although pupils have mathematical targets, which are shared with them and their parents, they are not obvious in their mathematics books. This is a missed opportunity as many pupils are not clear enough about what their own targets are and what skills they are working on.

111 Numeracy skills are appropriately applied in other curriculum areas, including measurement in design and technology, weather graphs in geography and time lines in history; however they are under used to support science. Occasionally, ICT is used to support pupils' mathematical learning, as was observed in a very good year 4 lesson, when pupils effectively worked in pairs on a program to support their work on multiplication. However, ICT is not yet embedded into the mathematics curriculum and there are not enough examples of pupils using computers in the classroom to develop their learning, especially in data handling activities.

112 There have been a number of improvements since the time of the previous inspection. The National Numeracy Strategy has been successfully introduced. Many staff have undertaken an extended five day mathematics course to further increase their ability to teach through the National Numeracy Strategy. The school has achieved the basic skills award for teaching numeracy and optional tests have been introduced in years 3, 4 and 5.

113 The co-ordinator for the subject is the headteacher. He has had a positive impact in identifying any issues that might lead to under achievement by pupils and has a clear understanding of how the subject can be developed further. He is an enthusiastic teacher of mathematics and has very high standards. Systematic monitoring of teaching and learning takes place on a regular basis and constructive feedback is given to staff. These developments have not prevented standards from falling but have resulted in satisfactory and sometimes good progress being achieved.

114 Planning and pupils' work is checked regularly to ensure that there is an appropriate balance between the different elements of mathematics in the curriculum. Monitoring is detailed and used well to target areas of weakness identified from analysis of the optional tests and the end of key stage national tests. For example, differences in attainment of boys and girls were identified and strategies put in place together with careful monitoring and as a result the issue was resolved. Assessment procedures are good and accurate predictions are made about the standards pupils are likely to achieve. The use of 'gold books' with pieces of work from each area of mathematics is an effective way of monitoring standards and of showing pupils and parents what achievement there has been over time. Resources are satisfactory overall and the management of mathematics is very good.

SCIENCE

115 At the time of the last inspection standards were well below average in Key Stage 1 and well above average in Key Stage 2. Current standards in science are below average in Key Stage 1 reflecting the lower than average attainment in English and mathematics. Though pupils study an appropriate range of topics they do not achieve the higher levels of knowledge and understanding reached by many pupils in other schools. The development of practical skills is limited by an approach to topics that lacks sufficient opportunities for pupils to carry out simple tests and record results. In some lessons the opportunities are exploited for instance when pupils measure the distance and the time taken by toy cars to travel over different surfaces.

116 In Key Stage 2 the fluctuation in standards reflects similar trends in English and mathematics. However the fall in standards between 1999 and 2000 was extreme from well above national averages to well below. The more extreme drop in standards in science was due to the early retirement of a skilled teacher and subsequent period of time with temporary teachers who were not confident in teaching Key Stage 2 science. Current standards are in line with those found nationally in knowledge and understanding, but below in practical skills.

117 Progress in knowledge and understanding is satisfactory throughout the school. In Key Stage 1 pupils can name parts of the body, can identify sources of light and have an elementary understanding of forces. In Key Stage 2 pupils know the names of the reproductive parts of flowers, they understand how animals are classified and can describe food chains and life cycles. Discussions with year 6 pupils revealed a clear understanding of simple electrical circuits and good knowledge of the solar system.

118 In both key stages there are not enough opportunities for pupils to carry out experiments and investigations that involve measurement and careful observation to produce results that can be recorded, presented and analysed. There are examples where this type of work has been carried out successfully, to do with friction in Key Stage 1 and pulse rate in Key Stage 2, but these are rare rather than common examples. Teachers do make good use of science as a vehicle for extended writing, forging meaningful links with literacy. In Key Stage 1 pupils use the evaluation of their investigations into toy cars to practice writing skills and in Key Stage 2 write about their work with acids and alkalis. The use of ICT is limited and there is much potential for exploiting measuring and monitoring devices and data handling programs.

119 Teaching in science is at least satisfactory with about half being good. Looking at pupils' work it is clear that teachers need to be encouraged and supported in making science more experimental and practical. The monitoring systems used by the school have identified this already and the co-ordinator for science has ordered some resources to help teachers to plan and deliver lessons that are more practical. Where teaching is good, teachers employ good organisational skills; as in a year 4/5 lesson where pupils listen to noises outside the classroom and compare the range with noises inside school. Pupils move between the two areas with little fuss and the teacher controls the question and answer session with a minimum of effort. Where teaching is satisfactory, lessons have a sound foundation based on good planning. However these lessons do not always challenge all pupils sufficiently. For instance in a lesson in the year 2/3 class the teacher used a very novel idea of photographing pupils themselves with a digital camera, as examples of living things to be classified in various ways. Though the idea was good the lesson lost pace as pupils were unclear as to how to begin to sort the pictures. In the first instance they needed more guidance to get started and then later greater challenge to maintain their interest. The lesson was concluded, again very suitably, with some pupils developing the idea of classification using a biological key. In a year 5/6 lesson, sound teaching was prevented from being good because the groups that pupils were working in were too large to allow all pupils to be sufficiently involved in an activity measuring forces.

120 The science curriculum is well planned. The mixed age classes and variable size in year groups mean that the school has to constantly monitor and adjust its curriculum to ensure that all pupils receive their statutory entitlement. It is a problem the school is successful in overcoming, but one it cannot become complacent about if standards are to rise in science. Resources are satisfactory though the school has recognised the need to provide teachers with more ideas on how to approach science practically and there is a need to look for resources that will link science with ICT. Assessment and recording systems are in place. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic however he has not had any substantial training for the role and could benefit from experiences that would increase his awareness and familiarity with good practice in science.

ART AND DESIGN

121 By the age of seven, all pupils make satisfactory progress and reach standards, which are expected for their ages. As they get older pupils build progressively on previous learning and many develop a good knowledge of other artists as they experiment with a wide

range of media to develop their art skills. By the age of eleven, pupils reach standards that are higher than the expected levels. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in this part of the school. There has been an improvement in the standards in art since the previous inspection. Displays create an attractive visual environment and clearly demonstrate the good progress pupils make by the age of eleven.

122 Sketchbooks show how pupils learn to develop their ideas as they draw, sketch and work with patterns and images. Pupils in years 4 and 5 were seen using their sketchbooks well as they recorded what they saw when looking at different pictures. These pupils develop a good understanding of words that are related to the subject such as 'tone' because they are shown works of art which clearly show them what it means. A few pupils describe pictures with good understanding, for example one boy said, "Red in that picture is a fiery, angry colour." Pupils describe how pictures make them feel and by looking at them carefully try to decide the artist's mood and feelings. This was well illustrated when pupils were shown *The Lady of Shalott* by John William Waterhouse. Many displayed amazement when they first looked at this picture and most decided that it made them feel sad.

123 Younger pupils are encouraged to look carefully and extend the images, which they are given. A few lack confidence in particular, when they are asked to decide a title for their artwork. This is because they are not given appropriate words, which they need to help them. In years 1 and 2, pupils' work links with mathematics as the idea of symmetrical patterns is reinforced. They look carefully at the leaf shapes they are given and reproduce them using paints. This task is challenging for a few but they are well supported by the teacher and parent helpers in the class.

124 Displays show clearly that, in particular, observational drawings and painting skills are developed well as pupils move through the school and that many artists' works are studied in all classes. For example pupils in years 4 and 5 show how the work of Fortunato Depero and Christopher Corr has influenced their work on pattern and town scenes. In years 1 and 2 pupils crayon cats on previously painted backgrounds after looking at the work of Jim Medway. Keith Haring has influenced the work of pupils in year 5 and 6 as they study 'movement' in art. There are sound links with other subjects. Past artwork shows how pupils in years 2 and 3 linked art with religious education and made a class mosaic of the story of 'The five loaves and fishes'. By the age of eleven, pupils use a good range of materials and tools and are taught a good range of techniques, which show increasing accuracy to detail.

125 The quality of teaching in art is good. Lessons are well thought out and learning objectives are continually shared with the pupils, which results in pupils having a good idea of what they are learning. Teachers give clear instructions, manage classes well and interact well within groups giving supportive and helpful comments to the pupils. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good. They work enthusiastically at a good pace and this results in good learning during lessons. Resources are used well and pupils have many opportunities to look at and comment on different artwork. Vocabulary, which is specific to art such as 'mood' and 'tone' are emphasised well and pupils are encouraged to use these words when describing their own efforts and when they look at the work of famous artists. In the best lessons pupils are encouraged at an early age to appraise their own work as well as that of others.

126 The co-ordinator promotes art very well throughout the school. Assessment procedures are developing and are planned to be in place next term. ICT is being used to promote the subject, but this is not consistent throughout the school. The art club, which is held weekly, is very popular and involves pupils in years 4 and 5. Pupils have recently developed a good idea of three-dimensional art when they made *Dreamcatchers*. Cultural development is promoted well when pupils are given opportunities to look at artwork in school and take part in whole school educational visits for example to the Lowry Gallery. These experiences influence art throughout the school.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

127 Progress is satisfactory for all pupils and the standards which pupils reach are similar to those expected for their ages by seven and eleven. These judgements are similar to those reported in the previous inspection. Owing to the way in which the timetable is arranged, only two lessons were observed during the course of the inspection. No teaching was seen in Years 1 and 2. Inspection evidence is based on lesson observations, discussions with pupils, scrutiny of previous work, photographic evidence and teachers' planning.

128 In all classes, pupils develop a satisfactory understanding of designing, planning, making and evaluating. Teachers' planning indicates that an appropriate amount of work has been completed and a suitable range of tools and materials are used. Pupils in years 1 and 2 work on developing an idea of how moving pictures and cards work. In years 2 and 3, pupils have designed, made and evaluated vans as they have learned how axles and wheels work. The Greek myths pop-up books, which pupils in years 3 and 4 are making promote skills taught in English and history very well. 'Moving Toys' has been the topic in years 4 and 5 and the display in the classroom clearly shows facts they have learned about 'cams' and their place in mechanisms. Years 5 and 6 are beginning their topic on fairgrounds they have made designs from Lego to reinforce and develop their understanding of 'gears', 'cams', 'levers' and 'pulleys'. Pupils use vocabulary that is specific to the subject with growing confidence, which demonstrates satisfactory understanding. They know about the importance of planning and then evaluating their designs. All pupils have good attitudes to the subject and enjoy what they do.

129 Teaching is satisfactory. Words, which are related to the subject such as 'linkage' and 'popup', are introduced and social skills are promoted when pupils are given opportunities to work together sharing materials and tools. Pupils confidently use measuring skills, which they have previously been taught as they make their 'pop-up' cards. Speaking skills are promoted well as when the teacher in years 5 and 6 asked the class to explain words such as 'pulley', 'belt', 'axle' and 'driving wheel'. However when they were asked to record what they had done, lower ability pupils had difficulty because the task was too difficult. They needed more guidance when writing this new vocabulary they had learnt.

130 Resources are satisfactory and work in design and technology links well with other subjects such as English, history and mathematics. However there is no evidence that ICT is used to support this curriculum area. The subject is well led by an enthusiastic, newly appointed co-ordinator who has developed assessment procedures in the subject; these are to be used next term and this is an improvement since the previous inspection. Teachers use the national guidelines to plan for the subject and these enable all pupils to be taught relevant skills, knowledge and understanding progressively.

GEOGRAPHY

131 Attainment was found to be satisfactory at the time of the last inspection both for seven and eleven-year-olds. Only one lesson was observed in the Key Stage 1 during this inspection and geography is not being taught in Key Stage 2 this term. Scrutiny of work, much of it done in Key Stage 2 last year, and informal conversations with pupils and teachers indicate that standards remain satisfactory in spite of the present need to teach pupils in mixed age classes.

132 By the age of seven, pupils draw clear plans of their route to school, use simple geographical symbols and start to read maps of the locality. They state their likes and

dislikes about local features and amenities, and compare them knowledgeably with those on an imaginary Scottish island.

133 By the end of summer term in 2001, pupils in year 6 had developed their geographical skills steadily. Having done a traffic census, they used their map skills to look at the local traffic problem. They discussed the benefits of the Clayton bypass and proposed the route for another one round the town. This raised their awareness of the problems of the best place to site the bypass and of the resulting changes in the neighbourhood. Good use was made of both primary and secondary sources of evidence. Pupils in years 3/4 studied weather and made their own weather forecasts using maps and appropriate symbols. In addition, they used atlases and looked at weather problems around the world. This year pupils in years 4/5 and 5/6 have studied maps of Greece in connection with their history topic and show good levels of awareness of where the cities of Athens and Sparta were and where the battle of Marathon took place.

134 The one lesson observed was of good quality. Distinct tasks were planned for each year group within the class, year 1 pupils looked at land use and leisure facilities using sketch maps. The interesting activities ensured that pupils maintained their concentration well and made good progress in their understanding during the lesson. The teacher used questions skilfully that made pupils think hard and enabled them to extend their understanding. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, were fully included in the activities. This was particularly noticeable towards the end of the lesson when pupils from both year groups listened well to what the other groups had learned. Evidence from work done last year indicates that teaching and learning in Key Stage 2 are at least satisfactory.

135 To promote numeracy skills pupils used their knowledge of co-ordinates when doing map work last year, and of number when studying temperatures and weather. They use literacy skills to record facts in geography but there is scope to extend this further. There was no evidence that pupils have used ICT in their work.

136 There is sound leadership from the co-ordinator who has carefully adapted the new national guidelines to plan topics that fit the school's needs. She does not monitor teaching at present but regularly sees teachers' plans and samples of pupils' work. She has recently devised a good, concise form of assessment which clearly records the development of pupils' skills. Resources are satisfactory and in good condition.

HISTORY

137 At the time of the last inspection, standards of attainment were judged to be satisfactory at the end of year 2 and year 6; the school has maintained these standards and pupils make steady progress in acquiring new skills and understanding as they move through the school. They are interested and enthusiastic about history, and all pupils, including those with special needs, are well included in lessons.

138 By the end of year 2, pupils have a sound understanding that life in the past was very different to today. For example they are able to describe differences between Victorian classrooms and their own. They know about a range of events such as the gunpowder plot. Pupils become aware that they can find out about the past by looking at pictures, photographs and historical objects as well as by reading simple books. They learn to sequence events like the gunpowder plot and begin to acquire an idea about the passing of time and can place some events in correct order on a time line.

139 By the end of year 6, pupils have built steadily on these skills. They have a wide range of knowledge about facets of everyday life in, for example, Ancient Greece. They distinguish between evidence that is probably reliable and that which is not when looking at facts about Romans as invaders. They explain how it was initially the strength of the Roman army that spread the influence of Rome across so much of Europe and changed people's way of life wherever they settled. Pupils use a wide variety of sources when conducting research and understand the difference between primary and secondary sources.

140 Pupils use their literacy skills when recording information about their history topics, but in most classes there is scope to expand this further so that opportunities are carefully created to improve their literacy skills. Pupils are all aware of time lines and the oldest pupils begin to use dates when writing. Pupils, particularly in Key Stage 2, are accustomed to using the Internet to help them find a range of information.

141 No lessons were observed in Key Stage 1, but scrutiny of work indicates that teaching and learning are at least satisfactory. Teachers plan clearly for their mixed age classes and, by careful organisation, teach different historical topics to each year group. Teaching in Key Stage 2 is satisfactory with good teaching in one class. Teachers plan carefully and ensure that pupils build broadly on their skills and knowledge, but throughout the school there is limited evidence to show that teachers systematically plan work that challenges pupils who have different levels of ability within their class. Teachers use questions well both to check what pupils already know and to extend their thinking further, and pupils are confident to volunteer because they know their answers are valued. Teachers provide a good range of evidence in the form of objects, pictures, information books, videos and access to the Internet, and pupils use them well for research. Where teaching is good pupils have tasks that match their abilities and also develop their literacy skills well. For example, one group of high attaining pupils in year 4/5 researched facts about the Olympic Games and prepared a talk about it, suitable for year 2/3 pupils. Another pupil did the same, but at a level suitable for year 5/6 pupils to hear. Other pupils did simple research independently while the class teacher supported slower learners. Everyone was absorbed and made good progress in their learning. Teachers use the final part of lessons well. Either pupils share their learning as when the year 4/5 pupils read their talks and practise their speaking skills well in front of an audience, or teachers ask further questions to assess how much learning has taken place. Where teachers make learning interesting, pupils are alert, interested and concentrate well on their tasks.

142 The subject is well led by an experienced and knowledgeable co-ordinator. New guidelines have been adopted and adapted to fit the school's specific needs. The co-ordinator has recently completed a detailed and comprehensive system to assess the progress that pupils make in acquiring and developing skills. She has monitored some teaching, sees teachers' plans each half term and regularly scrutinises samples of pupils' work. Resources for the subject are satisfactory and are used well.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

143 At the time of the last inspection standards were judged to be in line with national expectations. Since 1997 the expectations of schools and pupils in ICT have moved forward significantly and though standards have not fallen at Buglawton they have not kept pace with all the changes in expectation and are below those found in most schools. The school has put the majority of its resources and effort into developing a computer suite that is used regularly by all classes. This perfectly sensible approach to developing ICT in the school, and moving over to a new generation of computers, has meant that the school had to establish priorities, leaving outdated software and equipment behind. The result is that the

school has a shortage of resources in some areas of the ICT curriculum that limits progress and attainment.

144 Pupils in Key Stage 1 use computers to write words and sentences, but they have had insufficient opportunity to write longer pieces. Work on handling data to create graphs, beginning to build and interrogate data bases and controlling devices, though begun, has not yet reached standards achieved in most schools, though year 2 pupils can control devices by typing in instructions. In Key Stage 2 pupils use computers to write longer pieces of text, but have not yet developed the higher order skills of merging pictures with text and sound. Pupils choose from different typefaces and are able to correct and amend their own writing. Pupils in years 5/6 carry out a search of a database using two fields; they identify birds by entering their colour and size or normal habitat and feeding habits. Overall, pupils have insufficient opportunity to develop their skills in communicating and handling information in a range of contexts.

145 Opportunities for pupils to use ICT to control equipment and outcomes by giving series of instructions are limited largely to computer based programs rather than independent or linked equipment because apparatus is now out of date and redundant. The acquisition of new resources in the area of control and measurement is in the development plan. The pupils use ICT to compose music and all pupils are familiar with the Internet as a source of information and method of communication.

146 ICT is sometimes used in other areas of the curriculum, Music centres and digital cameras are used in physical education and science for instance. In mathematics pupils were observed reinforcing their understanding of number using the class-based computer in the year 4/5 class as part of their numeracy sessions and again for writing about a football match in literacy, but opportunities, particularly involving the computer suite, are not fully exploited.

147 Teaching in ICT is satisfactory. It takes place in normal classrooms sometimes and regularly as a specific lesson for all classes in the computer suite. Teachers demonstrate sound understanding of the skills and knowledge they are teaching. However the most efficient use of the suite is not always achieved. There are not enough computers to service whole classes comfortably, so there is a need to split classes and for pupils to take turns. Not all teachers appreciated this and as result pupils were squashed and did not have proper access to the learning experiences on offer. Teachers sometimes rely too heavily on oral instruction that, in the suite is hard to deliver, instead of preparing written instructions for pupils to follow to get started.

148 In the better lessons the classes are split to give pupils good quality access to equipment. For instance in year 1/2 some pupils worked with computers while another group worked with a 'Roamer', a free standing device that can be programmed. In a year 5/6 lesson half the class had a paper-based activity related to the computer work on searching databases. Teachers have received part of the national training for ICT, but they are quite late in the cycle and this to some extent explains why the school may not be as far forward in ICT as some other schools that have been fortunate to receive training early in the cycle. Helping teachers to recognise the potential to use ICT across the curriculum would be a useful element of future training.

149 The curriculum for ICT is clearly planned with appropriate skills highlighted and clear progression for pupils' learning. The school has identified the need to improve the furniture in the ICT suite to create more space and extend the number of computers. Both these developments will help to make teaching and learning more effective and help to raise standards. The school has introduced satisfactory systems for monitoring pupils' attainment and progress.

MUSIC

150 The last report found standards to be in line with those found nationally for both seven and eleven-year-olds. The school has maintained these standards despite pressures created by the introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. All aspects of music are carefully planned so that pupils sing, listen to a wide range of music and compose their own patterns and tunes using a mixture of tuned and untuned instruments. They are accustomed to record them in a variety of ways either on tape or using written methods and different symbols.

151 By the age of seven, pupils have developed good listening skills. They enjoy a range of music, which includes 'diddy bow' tunes that are derived from African music and the 'Carnival of the Animals.' Pupils write their own tunes using picture symbols for the notes and numbers to show the rhythm. They also read long and short sounds with ease from a variety of simple symbols and make tuned stringed instruments showing good understanding of how to raise or lower the pitch of a rubber band.

152 By the age of eleven, pupils have extended these skills well. They recognise music from a wide range of cultures including India and Greece. Pupils in year 5/6 are starting to use computers for composing. In year 4/5, pupils compose effective music in either tragic or comic vein using both tuned and untuned instruments, which they then write down using their choice of non-standard symbols. Pupils are accustomed to practise and improve their performance and to listen to and appreciate each other's music.

153 Singing in assemblies is enthusiastic and usually tuneful. The junior choir sings well and enunciates very clearly. Pupils listen carefully and work hard to improve the quality of their singing of the 'Twelve Days of Christmas' during their lunchtime practice.

154 Pupils enjoy music. They are interested, keen to listen and to do. All pupils, including those with special educational needs are well included in lessons and choir sessions and they make steady progress through the school.

155 Teaching is at least satisfactory and sometimes very good. Very good elements include good subject knowledge and very good planning so that pupils are interested and constantly challenged to think and experiment. Very good teaching of new skills is characterised by clear explanations and questions that help pupils to understand easily and to make very good advances in their learning. This happened in the year 4/5 lesson when pupils listened to Greek dance music, were encouraged to say what mood it put them in, and to try to explain why the music did this. The teacher then led them to consider what would make music happy or sad, and from this pupils chose their theme and, in groups, worked out short atmospheric tunes. One group composed a strongly rhythmic piece and counted carefully to maintain the beat accurately. A tune composed by another group was of particularly high quality. Teachers are becoming aware of the need to group pupils by musical ability at some times in order to set tasks that challenge them appropriately and allow more talented pupils to achieve at higher levels.

156 The subject is well led and managed. The co-ordinator has written a programme of ideas for non-specialist teachers to follow and this is resulting in standards that are in line with expectations overall, but with strengths in composing and writing music. Careful attention is paid to ensuring that pupils in all classes build their skills steadily. A new system of assessing pupils' attainment and progress has just been completed which is clear and comprehensive. The co-ordinator is well aware of what each class does. She visits lessons as often as possible and is compiling tapes of pupils' achievements in composition and singing. Resources are satisfactory and are used very well to promote the pupils' learning.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION (PE)

157 At the time of the last inspection standards in PE were judged to be above expectations in Key Stage 1, where progress was good and in line with expectations in Key Stage 2 where progress was unsatisfactory. Current standards are at least in line with expectations throughout the school and progress is satisfactory. Standards in swimming exceed the national expectation with the most able swimmers in year 6 being well beyond the expected levels of competence. The more able swimmers in year 6 demonstrate mastery of several strokes. They have very good techniques that employ advanced breathing methods. Pupils who are middle ability at Buglawton can swim further than the required 25 metres. The small group of about six less able pupils can swim, and most, if not all, will reach the basic requirement by the end of the school year. No gymnastics was observed during the inspection, but teachers' planning indicates activities that are of an appropriate standard.

158 In the year 2/3 class pupils respond to music, using their bodies to make shapes and taking the role of witches. Pupils work independently at first, before moving into pairs, to mirror each other's movements and then into small groups. This lesson structure is good in moving pupils' learning forward and applying the techniques and responses they have created individually. In another dance lesson in the year 3 /4 class, pupils demonstrate good gymnastic ability in the warm up with some pupils able to perform full splits as part of their stretching regime. In games in the 4/5 class pupils can hit balls to each other, the more able developing rallies of ten shots or more.

159 Teaching is at least sound and sometimes good. The good teaching in games led from pupils throwing balls to each other, to one child hitting the ball and then eventually both pupils playing short rallies. This sequenced development of the lesson was good as it enabled all pupils to perform at an appropriate standard and, by using targets, ensured that they improved their skills and techniques. In swimming the teaching was good because pupils were divided into groups based on their ability and activities were chosen that matched these abilities closely. The session was very demanding physically, but also enjoyable. Good use was made of assistants who took groups and worked skilfully with them. The resources and facilities were of high quality, with a shallow training pool and range of floats that were used to improve pupils' stroke technique by focusing on legs and arms independently.

160 In the satisfactory lessons, not enough time was devoted to warm-up activities to make them effective. Pupils were not challenged physically to the point where they became breathless and prepared for later activity. Not enough use was made of pupils as exemplars to share their work and teachers lacked precision in helping pupils to move on and improve their movements and sequences.

161 The curriculum for PE is well planned, with good balance between the various components. One of the strengths of the school is the staff's commitment to extra-curricular activities. Pupils engage in football, netball, rugby, cross-country running, table tennis in the winter and cricket rounders and athletics in the summer. The hard work of staff has led to considerable sporting achievement for a small school who are currently town champions in athletics. The school hosts several sporting events such as the town netball tournament and employs a very good range of outside coaches and specialists in dance, football and tennis.

162 Adventurous activities are carried out as part of a residential course in Wales and the school ensures that all pupils have access to this experience. The school has developed a system to monitor pupils' progress and attainment in PE. Resources are satisfactory.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

163 By the ages of seven and eleven pupils' achieve standards that are similar to the expectations of the locally agreed programme of work. Progress is satisfactory for most pupils, including pupils with special educational needs. The issues that formed part of the school's action plan have been addressed and improved. The school now fully complies with its legal requirements regarding the curriculum, and teaching is satisfactory.

164 By the age of seven, pupils have experienced a range of religious stories such as Noah's Ark, Rama and Sita. They have heard some parables including The Prodigal Son and have learnt about different festivals, including Harvest, Diwali and Christmas. They learn about Jewish family life and some religious customs. From discussion with year 2 pupils, most know that saying a prayer is 'a way of talking to God' and understand that religions have holy places for worship. Some understand that a parable 'is a story by Jesus'. Most know that some people worship at home as well as in a holy place. Most explain aspects of Diwali such as Rangoli patterns and divas and have some understanding that different religions have celebrations where people might wear special clothes, make special food and use holy objects. However many pupils do not use religious terms with confidence.

165 Year 6 pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of the major religions, based on some in-depth work of each religion. Discussion with year 6 pupils shows they have retained their factual knowledge and can make comparisons between customs and beliefs. Most can explain with interest and accuracy the basic requirements of belonging to the Jewish, Muslim or Christian faith. Older pupils discuss more complex issues such as aspects of faiths that can that can bring people together or divide them. Pupils generally have positive attitudes to religious education. However, lower attaining pupils struggle to recall or use the correct religious terms, despite the school's emphasis on using correct terminology.

166 Based on the lessons seen and evidence from pupils' work, teaching is satisfactory and teachers have appropriate subject knowledge. The school delivers religious education for younger pupils successfully through a mixture of drama, class discussion and attractive school displays. This approach contributes effectively to pupils speaking and listening skills. The school's policy of older and younger pupils recording work through the use of diagrams and drawings uses time effectively as it ensures pupils who have difficulty with writing are not held back in their religious learning. This motivates the pupils, who present their work with care. While marking is generally positive there are not always detailed enough comments to help pupils improve their work. In both lessons seen, the pace of teaching was at times slower than necessary and teachers' questions did not always challenge the more able pupils. This prevents them making better progress. Limited use is made of ICT for research purposes.

167 The mixed age classes present particular challenges for the school to overcome. Although the planning and organisation of the curriculum provides appropriate learning opportunities, the work in pupils' books indicates that the more able, older pupils in each year group sometimes miss out because the work does not challenge them sufficiently. Pupils display pride in their written work, which is usually neat and well presented and most show an interest in the lessons.

168 The co-ordinator monitors planning and has had some opportunities to check work in books. However there is no monitoring of teaching and learning as yet. This limits her ability to identify what needs to happen to extend the pupils' learning. The school is introducing a system for assessing pupils' progress. Resources are satisfactory; the number of attractive religious displays shows that different religions are valued. Younger pupils visit a local

church, older pupils have visited a Jewish museum and year 6 pupils are about to visit a mosque. There are good opportunities to develop pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural understanding. For example older and younger pupils are taught to respect other people, animals and the environment; they learn about special people like Mother Teresa and Gandhi. There are good links between religious education and the school's programme for personal, social, and community education.