

# INSPECTION REPORT

**LOWTON JUNIOR AND INFANT SCHOOL**

LOWTON

LEA area: Wigan

Unique reference number: 106421

Headteacher: Mrs S Wilkinson

Reporting inspector: Mrs V Farrow  
(OFSTED No: 22428)

Dates of inspection: 21 – 23 November 2000

Inspection number: 196418  
Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

|                              |  |
|------------------------------|--|
| Type of school:              | Community                              |
| School category:             | Primary                                |
| Age range of pupils:         | 4 – 11                                 |
| Gender of pupils:            | Mixed                                  |
| School address:              | Newton Road<br>Lowton<br>Nr Warrington |
| Postcode:                    | WA3 2AW                                |
| Telephone number:            | 01942 673213                           |
| Appropriate authority:       | Governing Body                         |
| Name of chair of governors:  | Cllr T Sherratt                        |
| Date of previous inspection: | 3 – 7 March 1997                       |

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Team members                      |                      | Subject responsibilities  | Aspect responsibilities  |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|--|
| Val Farrow<br>(OFSTED No: 22428)  | Registered inspector | Under-fives               | What sort of school is it?   |
|                                   |                      | Special educational needs | How high are standards?<br>a) The school's results and achievements              |
|                                   |                      | Information technology    | How well is the school led and managed?  |
|                                   |                      | Design and technology     |  |
| Daljit Singh<br>(OFSTED No: 9974) | Lay inspector        |                           | Attendance   |
|                                   |                      |                           | How well does the school care for its pupils?                                    |
|                                   |                      |                           | How does the school work in partnership with parents?                            |
| Tess Galvin<br>(OFSTED No: 21020) | Team inspector       | Equal opportunities       | How high are standards?<br>b) Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development |
|                                   |                      | English                   | How well are pupils taught?  |
|                                   |                      | Science                   |  |
|                                   |                      | Music                     |  |
|                                   |                      | Physical education        |  |
| David Price<br>(OFSTED No: 8534)  | Team inspector       | Mathematics               | Assessment   |
|                                   |                      | Art                       | How good are curricular and other opportunities?                                 |
|                                   |                      | History                   |  |
|                                   |                      | Geography                 |  |
|                                   |                      | Religious education       |  |

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The Registrar  
Inspection Quality Division  
The Office for Standards in Education  
Alexandra House  
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London WC2B 6SE

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Lowton Junior and Infant is a small primary school which caters for pupils aged 4 – 11 years. There is a total of 84 pupils on roll. Pupils' attainment on entry is below average. Eight pupils are identified as having special educational needs. This includes two statemented pupils.

The school draws its pupils from an area of mixed private and council housing. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals is above average. All pupils are from the white ethnic group. The school had seen a period of decline since the last inspection because of falling rolls. The local education authority has seconded an acting headteacher from a local primary school for one year. The fabric of the school building has recently been upgraded and pupil numbers have shown a steady increase this term. During the inspection one teacher was providing supply cover for a member of staff on post-operative sick leave.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

This is an effective school and overall the strengths outweigh the weaknesses. When compared to the national average pupils do not achieve as well as they should in writing, science, information technology and in mathematics by the age of eleven. When compared to similar schools results are above average in English but below in mathematics and science. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. There is a significant amount of good teaching and occasionally teaching is very good or unsatisfactory. Pupils behave well within a caring environment. Their personal development and relationships are good. The headteacher provides very good leadership and there have been rapid improvements this term. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- Pupils have good attitudes to school. They work and play well together
- Behaviour is good in lessons and around the school
- Provision for pupils' moral and social development is good. This impacts positively on their personal development and the relationships they have with each other and with adults
- Parents have a positive view of the school's work
- The headteacher provides very good leadership

#### **What could be improved**

- Standards are too low in writing, science and information technology at both key stages and in mathematics at Key Stage 2. Pupils are not making enough progress in these subjects
- There are weaknesses in the provision for children under five
- Assessments are not used consistently so that pupils know how they can improve
- Pupils' attendance rates are unsatisfactory

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

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

The school was last inspected in March 1997. The improvements since the last inspection have been satisfactory overall. The current headteacher was seconded to the school in September 2000 and the rate of progress has been much faster during this time, as a direct result of the very good leadership she has provided. The school is well placed to maintain these improvements and build upon them further. A key issue in the last inspection was to improve the coverage of the National Curriculum in mathematics. This has been suitably achieved through the implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy, but standards have declined since the last inspection in mathematics, science and information technology when they were judged to be satisfactory. In mathematics this can be explained by the small numbers of pupils moving through the school, which results in fluctuations in attainment from year to year. Progress in science has been unsatisfactory until this term and teachers do not build upon what pupils already know. Progress is unsatisfactory overall in information technology where teachers do not sufficiently plan for the subject. The school has satisfactorily implemented the recommendations of the audit report and the budget is now managed effectively. Governors and subject co-ordinators are soundly developing their roles. The headteacher has recently introduced effective systems for monitoring standards and the quality of teaching. The school development plan is a good tool for school

improvement. The school's strengths in pupils' attitudes and personal development have been maintained since the last inspection.

## 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 |
|                 | 1998          | 1999 | 2000 | 2000            |
| English         | D             | C    | D    | B               |
| Mathematics     | E             | C    | E    | D               |
| Science         | E             | E    | E    | D               |

| Key                |   |
|--------------------|---|
| Well above average | A |
| Above average      | B |
| Average            | C |
| Below average      | D |
| Well below average | E |

Inspection evidence indicates that current standards in English are overall in line with the national average but below in writing. In mathematics current standards are below the national average, but not well below as indicated in the 2000 National Curriculum tests. Results have fluctuated each year because of the small numbers of pupils taking the tests. Teachers have recently improved their planning for mathematics, which is reflected in the improved results. In science, inspection evidence shows that standards have declined since 1997 when they were average. They are now well below the national average unlike the national picture where results are improving each year. In science planning does not take account of what pupils already know and pupils do not cover a sufficient amount of work. Pupils' attainment in information technology is below that expected for their age because the work they are doing does not cover all of the National Curriculum.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

| Aspect                                 | Comment   |
|--|---|
| Attitudes to the school                | Pupils enjoy coming to school. They have good attitudes to their work and concentrate well in lessons                               |
| Behaviour, in and out of classrooms    | Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is good  |
| Personal development and relationships | Pupils have good relationships with adults and with each other. Their personal development is good                                  |
| Attendance                             | Attendance is well below the national average. The current level of unauthorised absence is very high. Attendance is unsatisfactory |

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

| Teaching of pupils:     | aged up to 5 years | aged 5-7 years | aged 7-11 years |
|-------------------------|--------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| 28 lessons seen overall | Satisfactory       | 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 is very good in 3 per cent of lessons, good in 29 per cent, satisfactory in 61 per cent and unsatisfactory in 7 per cent of lessons. The good or better teaching impacts positively on pupils' learning. The good teaching is often found in English and mathematics across the school and the

literacy and numeracy strategies help teachers to plan more effectively for these subjects. Teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good where this involves support assistants. The use of information technology skills does not effectively support pupils' learning.

Pupils achieve well when they fully understand what they have to learn and are involved in interesting activities. Their learning is not as effective when they do not cover enough work at the right level for their ability.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

| Aspect  | Comment  |
|---|--|
| The quality and range of the curriculum   | Unsatisfactory overall. The needs of the higher attaining pupils are not always well met. In science curriculum plans do not take account of what pupils already know. In information technology all of the National Curriculum is not covered. The provision for children under five does not meet all of their needs.  |
| Provision for pupils with special educational needs   | Provision for these pupils is satisfactory overall. It is good when they are working individually or in small groups with support staff.   |
| Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | Pupils respect the values and feelings of others. They mix well and make good use of opportunities to work together. Pupils understand what is right and what is wrong and the importance of caring for others.  |
| How well the school cares for its pupils  | There are satisfactory systems for ensuring pupils' welfare. Procedures for child protection are in place and pupils' behaviour is monitored well. The school promotes attendance satisfactorily, but is not well supported by a small minority of families. Assessments of pupils' progress are not always well used in helping them understand how to improve. |

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

| Aspect   | Comment   |
|--|---|
| Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff | The headteacher provides very good leadership and has had a positive impact in a short space of time. The senior management team is not as effective as it should be. The headteacher is addressing this. The role of subject co-ordinators is satisfactory. The school soundly applies the principles of best value.   |
| How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities             | Governors are committed to the school. They are soundly developing their role and working closely with the headteacher to secure improvement.   |
| The school's evaluation of its performance                       | The headteacher has a very good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and the action to be taken to secure improvement.  |
| The strategic use of resources                                   | Staffing is generous and class sizes are smaller than average. Accommodation is adequate overall although the lack of a library, and outdoor play provision for children under five, is unsatisfactory. Resources are adequate and funding is targeted to priority areas. The budget is currently supported by the local authority. Longer term financial planning needs to take account of this. |

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

| What pleases parents most   | What parents would like to see improved   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children like school</li> <li>• The children behave well</li> <li>• The good progress children make</li> <li>• The teaching is good</li> <li>• Staff are easy to approach with concerns</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed</li> <li>• The school helps children to become mature and responsible</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An interesting range of activities outside school</li> </ul> |

The inspection broadly supports parents' positive views of the school. There are plans to improve the provision of extra-curricular activities.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and achievements**

1. On entry to the school, local authority assessments show that children's attainment in reading and mathematics is below the national average. By the time they are five this has improved because adults pay good attention to the development of children's basic skills in communication, language and literacy and mathematics. Children make good progress in their personal, emotional and social development and adults provide good role models. By the end of the Reception year children are on line to meet the Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning, but their progress is not as rapid in knowledge and understanding of the world, creative and physical development. The curriculum in the mixed Reception/Year 1 class relates more to the National Curriculum and does not take sufficient account of the different ways in which the youngest children learn. There is no regular access to outdoor provision for these children.
2. In the 2000 Key Stage 1 national tests for seven-year-olds pupils' attainment in reading and mathematics was in line with the national average, but below in writing. In science teacher assessments of pupils' attainment were very high. In all of these subjects none of the pupils achieved the higher levels expected of seven-year-olds. When compared with similar schools, results in reading and mathematics were well above average and above average in writing. Taking the four years 1997 to 2000 together, results have fluctuated but have improved in reading and mathematics over the past two years. The number of pupils taking the tests is small and this can account for variations between one year and the next. A low score by one or two pupils can significantly affect the results. During this period there were no significant differences between the results of boys and girls.
3. Inspection findings reflect the Key Stage 1 National Curriculum test results in reading, writing and mathematics. Basic skills are soundly taught, but in writing the higher attaining pupils do not use a range of interesting words or punctuate their work accurately enough. In science pupils' attainment is below the national average for seven-year-olds. In the last inspection standards in English, mathematics and science were judged to be above the national average. These differences can be explained by the small numbers of pupils in each year group.
4. In the 2000 National Curriculum Key Stage 2 national tests for eleven-year-olds pupils' attainment in English was below the national average, with attainment in mathematics and science well below. In comparison with similar schools results in English are above the national average, but below in mathematics and science. Over the past four years standards in English and mathematics have fluctuated, but have declined in science. The school's overall performance during this period of time is below the national average.
5. Current inspection evidence indicates that overall standards in English are in line with the national average but remain below in writing. This is similar to the results of the 1999 national tests. In mathematics there has been some improvement but standards are still below the national average. In science standards reflect the results of the 2000 national tests. In the last inspection the attainment of most pupils was judged to be in line with the national average in these subjects. The small numbers of pupils in different year groups account for variations in the year-on-year results. The school has recently revised its planning for literacy and numeracy lessons. As a result teaching is more focused and lesson objectives are shared with pupils. A good deal of work is covered in lessons. In science teaching does not take enough account of what pupils already know and progress since the last inspection is unsatisfactory.
6. Pupils' attainment in art, design and technology, geography, history, and physical education is in line with that expected for their age. Pupils at the end of both key stages meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. It was not possible to observe lessons in music therefore no judgement can be made on standards. In information technology pupils' attainment is below average at both key stages. Overall teachers' subject knowledge is not secure and they do not plan for skills to be taught in a progressive way. This represents unsatisfactory progress since the last inspection when attainment was judged to be satisfactory.

During the last inspection pupils' attainment in art, history and religious education was judged to be above average. It is now in line. This can be explained by less time being given to the art curriculum and the greater emphasis placed on the development of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills over the past two years.

7. Pupils apply their literacy and numeracy skills well across the different subjects. The school has set more challenging targets for literacy and numeracy this year. Last year the target for literacy was very low at 30 per cent of pupils to achieve the expected level 4. The actual results were almost double this figure.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

8. Pupils' attitudes to the school, their behaviour and personal development are good. This was a strength of the school in the previous inspection and this standard has been successfully maintained. Pupils enjoy coming to school and are eager to be involved in all the activities which has a positive effect on their learning. Almost all parents feel that their children like school and that their behaviour is good.
9. Children's attitudes and behaviour in the Foundation Stage in Reception are good. They show good levels of concentration, initiative and independence for their age because this is encouraged by the staff. Children co-operate well with each other in sharing resources and are courteous to visitors. In a personal and social education lesson that the school calls Circle Time, the children listened attentively to their teacher and to one another and took turns patiently to speak during the discussion. These good attitudes continue throughout the school. In a mathematics lesson Year 1 pupils followed the teacher's instructions carefully and promptly when beginning their work in groups. Pupils in the Year 2/3 class worked co-operatively together in a literacy lesson to produce a poster giving instructions on how to make toast. In a science lesson in the Year 4/5 class, pupils were keen to answer the teacher's questions and helped each other to make decisions about the practical problem they were trying to solve. Across the school pupils show respect for equipment and one another's property, for instance they readily put litter into the frog-shaped bin in the playground.
10. Pupils' behaviour is good in lessons and around the school. They move around the school in an orderly manner, for example at lunchtimes and when they enter and leave the playground at breaktimes. Pupils play co-operatively together and are kind towards one another at playtimes; for example they readily include others in their play. Interviews with pupils show that they know the rules for good behaviour at playtimes and what to do if they are bullied. They are confident that the teachers would deal with any incidents effectively. There have been no exclusions from the school in the last year. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when there had been two exclusions.
11. Relationships within the school are good. Staff set a good example of caring, friendly behaviour and this fosters good relationships between pupils and teachers which has a positive effect on pupils' learning. Pupils show courtesy and respect when speaking to adults, such as parent volunteers, and politely open doors for visitors. Pupils are given many opportunities for personal development within and outside the classroom. These promote their sense of community and citizenship, and they respond well. Pupils of all ages respond positively to the opportunities that they are given to show initiative and responsibility in lessons; for example they readily access their own resources. There is a successful *Buddy System* in which Year 6 pupils take it in turns to help reception pupils at breaktimes. Year 6 pupils work the overhead projector in assemblies. They take turns to answer the phone at breaktimes and prefects from this year group take responsibility for selling snacks. Year 5 and 6 pupils take part in an annual singing festival. Pupils regularly raise funds for charity for instance, in the *Jeans for Genes Day*.
12. Attendance is unsatisfactory. Both unauthorised and authorised absences are a cause for concern and have increased since the last report. This is primarily due to a very small, but significant number of persistent poor attenders. This has an adverse impact on the learning, progress and personal and social development of the pupils concerned. However, headteacher is working closely with staff, the Education Welfare Officer and parents to raise existing levels of attendance. The introduction of morning toast has significantly improved punctuality across the school. Registers are taken on time and teachers ensure that all absences are pursued. The

headteacher rigorously monitors the attendance patterns of persistent poor attenders and has initiated and developed strategies to raise attendance across the school by rewarding individual pupils for full attendance.

## HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

13. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall but ranges from very good to unsatisfactory. The good and better teaching has a positive effect on pupils' learning and the progress they make. Teaching is very good in 3 per cent, good in 29 per cent, satisfactory in 61 per cent and unsatisfactory in 7 per cent of lessons. This is broadly similar to the previous inspection.
14. The quality of teaching for the Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall. A good lesson was seen in the teaching of personal, social and emotional development where adults acted as good role models, leading by personal example in taking turns and sharing their thoughts with others. An unsatisfactory lesson was seen in the teaching of knowledge and understanding of the world where discussions about past and present were too abstract and did not start from the children's own direct experiences.
15. At Key Stage 1 the quality of teaching is satisfactory, ranging from satisfactory to good. Good teaching was seen in English and mathematics. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 2 ranges from very good to unsatisfactory and is satisfactory overall. A very good lesson was seen in English and good lessons were seen in mathematics, history and religious education. In the unsatisfactory science lesson in Year 5/6 class the teacher did not encourage pupils to use technical vocabulary sufficiently. The work was too easy and the pace of the lesson was slow. This meant that pupils did not cover sufficient work at an appropriate level and their learning was unsatisfactory. At both key stages no lessons were observed in art and music, and insufficient lessons were observed in physical education to make a judgement.
16. Across the school teachers are conscientious and work hard to plan and prepare lessons. In most classes the planning clearly shows what is to be taught. A range of appropriate teaching methods is used. These include whole-class teaching, group and individual work, including practical, investigative and problem solving activities. Time, support staff and resources are used suitably. Strengths of the teaching are the good relationships between staff and pupils and the good management of pupils' behaviour. These make a positive contribution to pupils' learning. The introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies is working soundly.
17. The use of ongoing assessment of pupils' achievements in lessons is inconsistent. This results in work that is sometimes not matched sufficiently to pupils' needs and they make slower progress in their learning than they should. Marking is satisfactory. All work is marked and occasionally in the best practice, either through oral or written feedback to pupils, teachers place an emphasis on what pupils need to do next to improve their work further.
18. The quality of teaching and learning of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory in Key Stage 1. It is good in the Additional Literacy lessons in Key Stage 2. Pupils are well managed and the work is set to meet pupils' individual needs. They are encouraged to give oral responses and to work practically and they are given lots of praise for their efforts and achievements. This raises their self-esteem and confidence and enables them to achieve their goals.
19. The following are examples of how good quality teaching positively affects pupils' learning:
  - In a Reception lesson children made good progress in their speaking and listening skills and in personal development through Circle Time as adults joined in the activities, providing good role models.
  - In a Year 1 mathematics lesson about solving problems with coins the challenging work and interesting methods used (a bingo game) promoted pupils' good learning. Pupils worked with concentration and were keen to solve the mental mathematics problems, such as double three or what is one less than eight, in order to win the game. Pupils settled well to individual work because the activities were well organised and resourced.

- The teacher taught well in an English lesson in Year 2/3 about the sequencing of instructions for making toast. The lesson planning clearly showed what was to be taught and learned. This remained the focus of the lesson and ensured pupils' learnt what they needed to. The good questioning encouraged pupils to think carefully about their work. The organisation of the pupils into pairs to carry out the sequencing of instructions to make toast promoted pupils' co-operative working and personal development.
- An English lesson in Year 4/5 was very well taught and resulted in good learning. The teacher shared the lesson targets with the pupils. Skilful questioning encouraged pupils to think for themselves and offer their own ideas. Very good teaching about powerful verbs and adjectives in the guided writing session promoted pupils' effective learning in using words to create an effect.
- In good mathematics lessons in Years 4/5 and 5/6, teachers' good subject knowledge and detailed planning led to the sharing of lesson objectives with pupils who clearly understood what they were expected to learn.

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

20. At the time of the last inspection the curriculum was reported as being generally broad and balanced with some concern expressed about coverage of the National Curriculum in mathematics. This has been addressed by the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy and all areas of the mathematics curriculum are now covered. Presently the school's curriculum is sound overall, but some important shortcomings are evident. Pupils in the Foundation Stage are not receiving an appropriate curriculum based upon the areas of learning and Early Learning Goals recommended in national guidance. The organisation of the science curriculum in mixed-age classes does not meet the needs of all the pupils. Teachers do not sufficiently plan for information technology and the National Curriculum is fully not covered. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory overall with good individual help provided by support assistants. Concern in the previous report about policies and schemes of work for some subjects has been addressed. The school is following the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy and updating and developing policies and schemes of work. National guidelines are being used which take account of the recent revisions to the National Curriculum.
21. The curriculum for the Reception class children, who are taught in the same class as the Year 1 pupils is not appropriate for them. Insufficient account is being made of the recently published National Curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage. The curriculum at Key Stage 1 is satisfactory overall, with a reasonable balance of provision that gives due weight to the importance of literacy and numeracy, while also giving due support to the other subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education.
22. The curriculum for Key Stage 2, though sound overall, does not always build as well as it should on the work done at Key Stage 1. The need for whole school planning of the curriculum and to take particular account of the mixed age classes is being addressed by the headteacher.
23. The school's programme for personal and social development is good. There are valuable opportunities for pupils to consider important aspects of health, family life and the environment, including sex and drugs awareness education. There is a commitment to ensuring that all pupils are given equal access to the curriculum but this is compromised when the youngest children are withdrawn from key parts of the lesson to be heard read.
24. At the present time there is no provision for extra-curricular activities and this is a legitimate concern of parents. Plans are being developed to rectify this situation.
25. The school has satisfactory links with the community. The local police visit to speak to pupils about such things as not talking to strangers. Older members of the community are invited to share their experiences of the bombing in World War Two. Other people have been to the school to talk about safety in the home and the need to help support charitable organisations. There is a good link with local schools in the area; for example, they have published a useful, joint home/school agreement.

26. Overall provision for pupils' personal development is satisfactory, with moral and social development being good. This mirrors the judgement in the last report with the exception of spiritual development, which was described as good.
27. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. Young pupils have opportunities to think about life as they consider the passage of time from being a baby to being elderly. Older pupils reflect on the ways they can assist within the family by helping younger brothers and sisters to grow up. Older pupils also reflect on their own lives as they write about the worst and best days in their lives. Pupils consider the beauty of the world around them and think on this as they join in a prayer for autumn. They think of the needs of others around the world that are suffering as a result of climatic changes. Pupils are conscious of the beliefs of others as they study faiths such as Christianity, Islam and Judaism in religious education lessons.
28. The school's provision for moral development is good. The school promotes a clear understanding of right and wrong and pupils are aware of how they should behave. Pupils are appropriately praised and rewarded for their good behaviour and positive attitudes to work. Values are fostered through the caring, supportive and good relationships that exist between the staff and pupils and the good example set by those who work in the school.
29. Provision for pupils' social development is also good. Positive relationships are successfully promoted and pupils are encouraged to show consideration and sensitivity to the needs of others in the school and throughout the world. They collect money for charities such as sick children in hospital. In most lessons, teachers provide opportunities for pupils to co-operate as they work in the classrooms. Pupils, especially those in Year 6, are given a good range of responsibilities. Prefects perform their duties diligently, whether collecting money and issuing tokens for toast and milk, leading prayers in assembly or taking part in the Buddies scheme at playtime.
30. The overall provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. The school celebrates appropriate festivals such as Christmas and Easter. History lessons provide pupils with many insights into British culture and ancient civilisations and how they contribute to lifestyles and customs today. In religious education lessons, pupils are provided with opportunities to learn of how people live who belong to different faith groups such as Christianity, Islam and Judaism. Pupils learn more of the cultural heritage of this country as they visit local museums and art galleries. Music played at whole school assembly time contributes positively as pupils listen and learn of the music of such composers as Ravel. Collective worship is led by the headteacher three times each week. On the other days this is timetabled to take place in classrooms. These are very brief occasions that do not provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to reflect and share values and beliefs.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

31. Provision for pupils' care, their security and well-being is a positive feature of the school. The arrangements for child protection are in place and the learning environment is safe and secure. Health and safety are given priority and the school works diligently to promote all aspects of care. Individual care and pastoral support are good. Teachers listen and respond constructively to pupils' individual concerns. Parents appreciate this provision. Good levels of individual support for pupils with special educational needs complement the sound support provided in class. The school nurse provides a caring and sensitive programme to enhance pupils' personal and social education, which includes, drugs, health and sex awareness.
32. There are good procedures for monitoring pupils' attendance and the information is used to satisfactorily improve attendance. However, the impact of the existing programme is hindered by the lack of support from a small number of parents.
33. Procedures for monitoring and promoting positive behaviour are good. The existing policy is under review and good constructive strategies are in place to ensure teachers recognise individual achievements in order to raise pupils' self-esteem and confidence. This promotes good attitudes, behaviour and constructive relationships.

34. Procedures for monitoring and eliminating bullying are good and the school is developing strategies to monitor and record incidents of racist behaviour. Overall, the school is making satisfactory progress to eliminate anti-social behaviour. Since the last report the school has sustained the good overall progress for providing good levels of care, security and well-being. The headteacher, with support from governors, has successfully undertaken a risk assessment audit.
35. The school's procedures for assessing pupils' progress and attainment are sound, overall. Good baseline assessments are carried out on pupils' as they enter the school. Statutory national tests take place at the end of both key stages and non-statutory tests are taken by pupils in Key Stage 2. Since the recent appointment of the headteacher, assessments have now been introduced at 6 and 12 weekly intervals for all subject areas. There are individual pupil assessment files containing the test papers and results for English, mathematics and science.
36. The use of assessment information in guiding curriculum planning is unsatisfactory. Assessments that are made are not used to track pupils individually but the school has plans to address this. The results of assessments are not yet sufficiently used to plan work that systematically builds on pupils' prior knowledge and understanding. Some staff find difficulty in assessing pupils' attainment accurately in relation to National Curriculum levels particularly at the end of each key stage. The standard of marking is inconsistent and does not always provide pupils with information about how they can improve their work and make good progress.

### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

37. Most parents have reported that they enjoy a good and positive relationship with the school. They particularly appreciate the hard work of the headteacher. Parents' positive comments are supported by inspection evidence which indicate that many of the concerns of parents are addressed. Parents are pleased with the recent changes, which ensure the progress and well being of their child. However, some parents have rightly expressed concerns about the lack of provision for extra-curricular activity which is unsatisfactory.
38. The headteacher is working diligently to encourage the more active participation of parents. A number of parents have responded constructively by supporting learning in Key Stage 1. Some parent governors are particularly active and ably assist in providing a stimulating learning environment for pupils in Year 1. At present there is no parent teacher association and there two are unfilled vacancies for parent governors.
39. The school provides a satisfactory level of communication between the school and home. Parents are actively encouraged to attend parents' evenings and to work closely with teachers. Many parents bring their child to school and take this opportunity to meet class teachers. This offers them the chance to visit the classroom, acknowledge their child's achievements and understand the topics being taught. Parents receive clear, purposeful written information in a friendly style through the school prospectus and an annual report from governors. Both comply with statutory requirements. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are invited to regular reviews, whilst statemented pupils are given annual reviews to enable parents to understand the progress their child is making. Parents also receive an end of year pupils' report. The content of these reports is appreciated by parents, but the information provided by teachers does not include individual targets pupils to help them make progress.
40. Most parents have agreed to support the school by signing a home school agreement, but a few parents are not supporting the school because they fail to send their child to school regularly.
41. Since the previous report the school has appointed a headteacher, who is working diligently with staff and governors to further raise standards by ensuring a consistent involvement of parents, making effective use of parent governors to re-establish a parent teacher association.

### **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

42. The headteacher has been in post since the start of this term. She has been seconded from a local primary school for a period of one year. In this short period of time she has successfully gained the confidence of governors, parents and staff, and has made a very good start on leading school improvement. The headteacher has undertaken a thorough evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. She has correctly identified appropriate priorities and has a clear vision for future developments and how they will be taken forward. Following a period of decline when pupil numbers were decreasing, staff morale is higher and there is a shared commitment within the school and governing body to bring about further improvement. There has been rapid progress this term and the school is now well placed to build upon the sound overall improvement since the last inspection.
43. Despite these strengths, there are weaknesses in leadership and management. The senior management team is not as effective as it should be and senior managers do not have a sufficient overview of quality and standards across the school. The headteacher has taken various steps to address this and the deputy headteacher now has the opportunity to become more closely involved in the leadership and management of the school. Regular meetings are scheduled to discuss priorities in the school development plan and the deputy headteacher has been allocated weekly non-contact time to work on specific areas. The headteacher has established strategic teams to drive forward school targets in English, mathematics and information technology on a rolling programme. This means that key members of staff with interest and expertise are more greatly involved in school improvement and co-ordinators are supported in further developing their role.
44. The headteacher has introduced effective systems for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning. She has been well supported by advisory staff from the local authority. As a result teachers' planning has been revised so that it is more focused and consistent across the school. This has impacted positively on the teaching of literacy and numeracy and ensured suitable coverage of the national strategies. A new assessment cycle has been recently introduced to measure pupils' progress. This will be used to form an evidence base to set targets for individual pupils. The headteacher is supporting co-ordinators well in the development of their roles. They are now aware of the key priorities, what should be done and how it will be measured. Their leadership role is developing and the literacy co-ordinator has monitored the quality of teaching across the school. The role of co-ordinators is now satisfactory overall.
45. The school's aims have recently been reviewed to take account of its increased commitment to striving towards excellence for all pupils. There is a positive ethos that reflects the good relationships, caring environment and commitment to equality of opportunity.
46. The governing body is committed to the continuing development of the school, and supportive of its work. The headteacher has shared the outcomes of recent evaluations in relation to standards and quality, and governors now have a greater understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. With the support of the newly appointed chair, they are beginning to act as critical friends. Suitable committees are established and appropriate terms of reference are agreed at the first meeting. Some governors are able to visit the school and gain first hand experience of how it runs. The budget is currently being supported by £15,000 so that staffing levels can be sustained. Governors will need to work closely with the LEA in identifying future contingency plans, to inform their long-term financial planning. Although pupil numbers have risen this term, there will still be more pupils leaving at the end of Year 6 than entering into Reception where the standard number is 17.
47. A key issue from the last inspection was to extend the scope of the school development plan. The current plan is a useful tool for school improvement. It identifies in detail areas to be developed during the next three years and is based on a comprehensive audit of the school's present position. Priorities are sequenced and show effectively how standards will be raised in the key areas of English, mathematics, science and information technology. The plans to effectively deliver the information technology curriculum will need to be brought forward to address the current low standards. Since starting at the school the headteacher has readjusted co-ordinator budgets to more appropriately reflect the current priorities of the school. The school ensures it allocates the grant for staff training to support targets in the school development plan. The system for appraisal is being implemented in line with national guidance.

48. The friendly, helpful secretary carries out the school's day-to-day administration efficiently. Since the last inspection the school has implemented the recommendations of the audit. A recent monitoring visit by the local authority confirmed that the current systems are appropriate.
49. The school has a generous number of suitably qualified staff to meet the needs of the curriculum. All classes in the school contain two age groups and two classes have pupils from different key stages. Given the higher than average staffing levels, class sizes can remain smaller to support teachers in meeting the different needs of pupils. The school has 4 part-time teachers on a job-share basis. This means that responsibilities for curriculum areas can be suitably shared amongst staff. The headteacher is currently the special educational needs co-ordinator and the non-teaching assistant provides good support to children with special educational needs in meeting the targets in their individual education plans. Lunchtime supervisors have good relationships with pupils.
50. The provision of learning resources is satisfactory overall but there are insufficient information books or those that reflect the richness of cultural diversity. The school satisfactorily applies the principles of best value.
51. Accommodation is satisfactory. Classrooms are adequate to support the learning needs of the school community. There is no library or information technology suite, but there are plans to address this through additional grant funding. The interior of the school is enhanced by colourful displays of pupils' work, which brighten and support the learning environment. Budgetary constraints adversely affected the maintenance and decorative state of the main school building, but recent initiatives have secured suitable improvements. Outdoor facilities include a playground and playing fields. Both are adequate and pupils and staff make good use of them, but there is no outdoor play area for children under five. The hard working caretaker ensures the interior is clean and tidy and made welcoming.

## **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

52. The headteacher, staff and governing body should:
- (1) Raise attainment in writing, science and information technology at Key Stages 1 and 2 and in mathematics at Key Stage 2 by:
- a in writing:
- clearly identifying the skills pupils are to achieve and sharing these with them
  - assessing pupils' achievements in these skills
  - developing pupils' written vocabulary so that they use a variety of interesting words more effectively;
- (Paragraphs 5, 64, 68)
- b in mathematics:
- analysing results so that areas of weakness can be targeted
  - sustaining the recent improvements in teachers' planning;
- (Paragraphs 5, 74)
- c in science:
- planning the curriculum so that work is more closely matched to pupils' needs
  - providing more opportunities for practical work at the upper end of Key Stage 2
  - raising teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve;
- (Paragraphs 5,15, 17, 85, 83)
- d in information technology:

- implementing the scheme of work so that the National Curriculum is fully covered and skills are progressively taught
- ensuring that teachers planning clearly identifies what is to be taught and how it will be assessed
- improving teachers' confidence and subject knowledge;

(Paragraphs 6, 111)

(2) Improve assessment by:

- agreeing and implementing consistent systems
- sharing best practice
- improving teachers' skills at the end of both key stages;

(Paragraphs 17, 36, 39, 72, 79)

(3) Improve the provision for children under five by:

- mapping out the Foundation Stage curriculum for all the areas of learning, matched to the Early Learning Goals
- planning activities which take more account of how young children learn;

(Paragraphs 1, 14, 21, 55, 56)

(4) Improve pupils' attendance by working closely with the minority of parents involved.

(Paragraphs 12, 32)

English, mathematics, science, ICT (information and communications technology) and target setting and assessment are currently priorities within the school development plan.

53. Other issues which the school should consider:

Ensure that collective worship which takes place in classrooms provides sufficient opportunities for pupils to reflect and share values and beliefs.

(Paragraph 30)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Number of lessons observed   | 28 |
| Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils | 36 |

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

| Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|-----------|-----------|------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| 0         | 3         | 29   | 61           | 7              | 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) | 0       | 84     |
| Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals        | 0       | 30     |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

|   | Nursery | YR– Y6 |
|---|---------|--------|
| Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs       | 0       | 2      |
| Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register | 0       | 8      |

#### 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 | 0            |
| Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving           | 0            |

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

|                           | %   |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data               | 5.6 |
| National comparative data | 5.4 |

#### Unauthorised absence

|                           | %   |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data               | 1.4 |
| 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 2

| Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year | Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
|--|------|------|-------|-------|
|  | 2000 | 12   | 8     | 20    |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results       |          | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
|   | Boys     | 7       | 5           | 6       |
|   | Total    | 14      | 10          | 12      |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above | School   | 70 (69) | 50 (69)     | 60 (63) |
|   | National | 75 (70) | 72 (69)     | 85 (78) |

| Teachers' Assessments                       |          | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
|   | Boys     | 6       | 6           | 7       |
|   | Total    | 12      | 11          | 13      |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above | School   | 60 (69) | 55 (69)     | 65 (63) |
|   | National | 70 (68) | 72 (69)     | 80 (75) |

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

Data relating to pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 and the attainment of girls at Key Stage 2 is omitted because of the small numbers of pupils in these particular groups.

## Ethnic background of pupils

|                                 | No of pupils |
|---------------------------------|--------------|
| Black – Caribbean heritage      | 0            |
| Black – African heritage        | 0            |
| Black – other                   | 0            |
| Indian                          | 0            |
| Pakistani                       | 0            |
| Bangladeshi                     | 0            |
| Chinese                         | 0            |
| White                           | 84           |
| Any other minority ethnic group | 0            |

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

## Exclusions in the last school year

|                              | Fixed period | Permanent |
|------------------------------|--------------|-----------|
| Black – Caribbean heritage   | 0            | 0         |
| Black – African heritage     | 0            | 0         |
| Black – other                | 0            | 0         |
| Indian                       | 0            | 0         |
| Pakistani                    | 0            | 0         |
| Bangladeshi                  | 0            | 0         |
| Chinese                      | 0            | 0         |
| White                        | 0            | 0         |
| Other minority ethnic groups | 0            | 0         |

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

## **Teachers and classes**

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

|  |      |
|--|------|
| Total number of qualified teachers (FTE) | 5.2  |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher   | 16.0 |
| Average class size                       | 20.8 |

### **Education support staff: YR– Y6**

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Total number of education support staff | 2  |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week   | 50 |

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## **Financial information**

|  |        |
|--|--------|
| Financial year                             | 1999   |
|  | £      |
| Total income                               | 251496 |
| Total expenditure                          | 247145 |
| Expenditure per pupil                      | 2630   |
| Balance brought forward from previous year | 20871  |
| Balance carried forward to next year       | 25222  |

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

|                                   |    |
|-----------------------------------|----|
| Number of questionnaires sent out | 74 |
| Number of questionnaires returned | 47 |

### Percentage of responses in each category

|  | Strongly agree | Tend to agree | Tend to disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know |
|--|----------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|------------|
| My child likes school.   | 69             | 27            | 4                | 0                 | 0          |
| My child is making good progress in school.  | 75             | 43            | 2                | 0                 | 0          |
| Behaviour in the school is good.   | 56             | 40            | 0                | 0                 | 4          |
| My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.                              | 47             | 49            | 4                | 0                 | 0          |
| The teaching is good.  | 60             | 38            | 0                | 0                 | 2          |
| I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.                          | 52             | 44            | 0                | 2                 | 2          |
| I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem. | 65             | 29            | 4                | 2                 | 0          |
| The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.              | 67             | 31            | 0                | 0                 | 2          |
| The school works closely with parents.   | 38             | 58            | 0                | 2                 | 2          |
| The school is well led and managed.  | 51             | 47            | 0                | 0                 | 2          |
| The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.                      | 63             | 33            | 2                | 0                 | 2          |
| The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.            | 7              | 27            | 22               | 22                | 22         |

## **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**

54. Children enter the Reception class at the beginning of the school year in which they are five. The local authority's assessment of their achievements on entry to school confirms that they are working below the level expected of children of this age in reading and mathematics. Staff make effective use of these initial assessments in planning the children's work. High priority is given to children's personal, social and emotional development and the teaching of speaking and listening, reading and mathematics. Overall they make good progress in these areas and by the time they are five most children should attain in line with the expectation for their age. Although children's attainment in creative development, knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development is likely to be in line with that expected nationally when they are five, their progress in these areas is slower.
55. Reception children are grouped together with Year 1 and the curriculum is delivered in discrete subjects. This does not sufficiently allow for the youngest children to make links across the different areas of learning. Planned activities do not take enough account of the many different ways in which young children learn. In the last inspection children were judged to be making good progress in all subjects, with most working on the National Curriculum by the time they are five. The new Foundation Stage is a key stage in its own right and the Early Learning Goals establish the expectations for most children to achieve by the time they are five. The National Curriculum applies to those pupils in Key Stage 1. As part of the Foundation Stage Reception children are expected to have regular access to both indoors and outdoors. Although the school plans to address this in the future, this aspect of provision is unsatisfactory.
56. Reception children are taught by two part-time teachers, one of whom was absent during the inspection. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. It is good in one in five lessons. It is occasionally unsatisfactory when the children do not know their temporary teacher very well, and do not respond as quickly as usual to what they are asked to do. This impacts adversely on their learning and concentration. Planning for communication, language and literacy and mathematics is thoroughly undertaken. Children make good progress in the initial part of the literacy and numeracy whole class lessons, which take place most mornings. They benefit from clearly focused teaching and the use of relevant learning resources. On occasions they are expected to sit too long and find it difficult to sustain their good levels of concentration. In the middle part of these lessons, activities tend to be adult directed and do not provide enough opportunities for children to initiate their own learning as part of sustained play. In the afternoons, planning is geared to the needs of Year 1 pupils and activities are not always sufficiently matched to the needs of the youngest pupils. This causes slower progress in the other areas of learning.

### **Personal, social and emotional development**

57. The quality of teaching is good. Children enjoy positive relationships with each other and adults. Teachers and support staff work well together as a team and are good role models. They lead by example, show care and consideration to children, and are quietly encouraging in their use of praise. This boosts children's confidence and self-esteem and they are not afraid to have a go. For example in Circle Time, adults join in with the song 'take the shell and pass it round' and take their turn in sharing experiences with the rest of the class. The morning class teacher made good use of this time to express her disappointment with the less than usual good behaviour of a small number of children on the previous afternoon with a temporary teacher. She visualises this well for children, by drawing of a face with the corners of the mouth turned down. This is gradually turned into a smile as the children continue to behave well. Children are able to work independently and are developing their co-operation skills as they work and play with others.

### **Communication, language and literacy**

58. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. During shared sessions at the beginning of whole class literacy lessons it is good and staff provide children with good opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills. They enjoy stories and link sounds and letters. For example in the story 'Walking Through the Jungle' they show interest in the sounds made by animals such as 'grrrr' and 'ssss' and are aware that words have rhythm. They enjoy listening to themselves as they act out the story onto tape. In Circle Time children speak with confidence about places they like to go. Most children make recognisable letters and some are beginning to write their own name. The most able use their knowledge of letter sounds when trying to spell new words. In class lessons children enjoy retelling stories from pictures. Their reading books are narrower in range than those for pupils in Year 1 and there is an overemphasis on learning words from lists or cards out of context.

### **Mathematical development**

59. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. During whole class lessons for numeracy teaching is good in the initial shared sessions. Children make good progress in saying and using the names of numbers up to 10. They are beginning to count in twos as they look at the number of pegs on the coat hanger. They enjoy singing number rhymes such as 'Five Little Ducks' and are able to identify how many ducks are missing. Children are developing confidence in using mathematical language such as 'cube, sphere, cylinder and cuboid'. They group sets of like shapes together and recognise and recreate simple patterns when threading beads. In the middle part of these lessons children's progress is slower because the activities are narrower and not as purposeful; for example when they are asked to make shape pictures by sticking pre-cut shapes onto paper.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

60. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is enhanced by visits to the local and wider community. They know about where they live by going out to the local shops and nearby outdoor market, drawing pictures of their observations. Staff make good use of resources within the Wigan area to provide relevant experiences for children, including trips to Haigh Hall and pond dipping activities at Pennington Flash. Children's interest and learning about the local community are enhanced by visitors to the school including the local police, fire service, dental nurse and people who talk about days gone by. Children have regular access to computers which they use independently. They control the mouse accurately and know how to use the keyboard to wordprocess their work. Teaching is unsatisfactory on those occasions where lessons are planned within discrete subjects and activities are too adult directed. There are too few opportunities for children to develop their problem solving skills through exploration and investigation on a regular basis.

### **Physical development**

61. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. In physical education lessons children move with confidence and are developing their awareness of space, speed and direction and can travel in different ways across mats. They are less controlled when working with a teacher they do not know well. Children can handle small tools safely and show control in their use of equipment such as paint brushes and glue sticks.

### **Creative development**

62. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Children are able to sing simple songs and rhymes from memory and are developing a sense of rhythm. In role play they act out the parts of family members in caring for the baby and washing the dishes. They play imaginatively with small world toys such as jungle animals in the water tray. When asked to create a jungle with small blocks, one child built a tower and shouted excitedly 'look at my tree'. There are however, insufficient opportunities for spontaneous free play so that children can express and communicate their own ideas and feelings since most activities are planned by adults to a specific theme. For example painting is confined to reproducing pictures of animals from the jungle because it relates to this week's big book.

## ENGLISH

63. In the 2000 national tests for seven-year-olds, standards in the school are in line with the national average in reading and below the national average in writing. In both these subjects all pupils reach the expected standard but none of the higher attaining pupils achieve the higher level. When compared with similar schools, pupils' performance is well above average in reading and above average in writing. In the 2000 national tests for 11-year-olds, standards in English are below the national average but well above when compared with similar schools. Most pupils reach the expected standard but fewer pupils than expected reach the higher level. The achievement of most pupils is low in relation to their prior attainment. The school's national test results vary from year to year. This is because the numbers of pupils taking the tests varies and is generally smaller than in most schools. As a result of this a low score by one or two pupils significantly affects the results. The overall trend in improvement in the tests is below the national trend.
64. Inspection findings show that by the age of seven standards in reading are in line with those found in other schools. Standards are below in writing. This reflects the results of the 2000 national tests. By the age of eleven standards in English are in line with those found in other schools. Standards in reading are in line and in writing they are below. This judgement does not reflect the results of the 2000 national tests but is similar to the 1999 test results. In writing at the age of seven and eleven the number of pupils reaching the higher level is below that in other schools. This could be improved by teachers focusing more closely on what pupils need to achieve in their writing, sharing these targets with the pupils and assessing whether the targets have been achieved.
65. By the ages of seven and eleven pupils' speaking and listening skills are similar to those found in other schools. Pupils listen carefully to teacher explanations and instructions, and to the views of others. Most teachers place a good emphasis on the use of the correct technical vocabulary in all aspects of English and encourage pupils to use it. This leads to them making sound progress in this area; for example Year 2 pupils use the terms *rhyme and verb*, and Key Stage 2 pupils *alliteration and simile*. By the ages of seven and eleven most pupils have a suitable range of words and express themselves clearly in conversations, in answering teachers' questions, and expressing their ideas. Teachers provide many opportunities for discussion in small and larger groups in English lessons and in other subjects. In a Year 2/3 lesson, groups of pupils discussed the sequencing of the instructions for making toast before they produced a diagram for it. In a Year 4/5 science lesson pupils worked in pairs discussing and making decisions about the practical problem they had to solve.
66. There is sound teaching of basic skills, such as phonics and rhyme in Key Stage 1, and reading for meaning in Key Stage 2. By the age of eleven many pupils discuss what they read, showing that they understand it well. By the age of seven average attaining pupils read aloud confidently and accurately, and higher attaining pupils read with suitable fluency and expression. Lower attaining pupils are beginning to use a range of reading strategies independently in order to read the new words they encounter, such as letter sounds and picture cues. Reading interviews with pupils, and lesson observations, show that in both key stages pupils enjoys reading. In Year 2 pupils of all abilities are often capable of reading more challenging texts than the reading scheme book that they are using. For example, a lower attaining pupil read a simple fiction book competently and with understanding.
67. In Year 6 average and lower attaining pupils are still using the reading scheme when they are capable of reading a wider range of material. When pupils choose books for themselves these are not monitored sufficiently by the teacher. This means that some pupils are reading books that are too easy for them. Year 6 pupils have satisfactory skills for finding information from books, such as using the index, heading and subheadings because these are taught as part of the literacy strategy. However, their knowledge of how to locate books in a library is underdeveloped. This is because the school does not have a central library, the information books in their classroom are not labelled appropriately and most pupils do not use a public library outside school time. The school has plans to adapt the accommodation to include a library later this

academic year. Across the school reading standards could be improved further by teachers making regular assessments of pupils' achievements during group reading in the literacy hour and using these to plan future work for them. The recently introduced home-school reading diaries could be further developed to communicate more effectively with parents about their child's progress.

68. Work on display and in pupils' books shows that teachers provide a broad writing curriculum for example, pupils are given opportunities for original story writing and poetry. This leads to pupils making satisfactory progress in writing in a range of different styles in English lessons. Pupils' literacy skills are promoted effectively in other subjects. For example, a pupil in the Year 2/3 class writing in history as an evacuee in the Second World War wrote 'It was very hard to say goodbye to my mum because I loved her a lot'. In Key Stage 2 there is good teaching of basic skills, such as punctuation and joined handwriting. This leads to pupils making good progress in these aspects of their writing. Most Year 2 pupils are beginning to use full stops and capital letters, and sequence their writing correctly. Pupils do not join their writing. Lower attaining pupils need and receive more help; a few do very well and reach the required standard for their age. In the Year 2/3 class higher attaining pupils do not use a variety of interesting words or punctuate sentences with sufficient accuracy. In the Year 5/6 class higher attaining pupils do not write using the richness of vocabulary that is expected for their age.
69. Lesson observations show that pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress towards the targets in their individual education plans in Key Stage 1 and good progress in Key Stage 2. This difference is because pupils in Key Stage 2 receive good additional teaching for example, in the additional literacy strategy lessons. In one of these lessons pupils were constantly given praise and encouragement and this promoted their self-esteem and confidence. They worked enthusiastically and made good progress in speaking clearly, and in making words from individual letters.
70. The quality of teaching in the lessons seen is satisfactory. One lesson in the Year 4/5 class was very good. A feature of all the lessons is the effective management of pupils' behaviour. This is the result of the interesting work pupils are given and of the high expectations that teachers have of pupils' behaviour. This promotes pupils' good behaviour and positive attitudes to their work. Pupils listen courteously and attentively when other pupils and teachers are talking and are keen to learn. They get on well together when working in pairs or groups. Pupils with special educational needs have equally good attitudes and try their best. Most pupils have equal access to the curriculum, except for the higher attaining pupils in writing who are not receiving the appropriate curriculum for their ability. Pupils are sometimes withdrawn from lessons to read to an adult and this affects their curriculum entitlement. For example, pupils in the Reception/Year 1 class were taken out of the classroom to read to an adult during the introduction of a literacy lesson about sequencing the story *Walking through the Jungle*. This adversely affected their learning.
71. In the most effective lessons time for the different parts of the literacy hour, and organisation of the group work, are managed competently. This means that pupils cover a good deal of work during the lesson. In the very good lessons the effective teaching about the powerful use of verbs, adjectives, characters and setting led to very good learning in the guided writing group. Marking is satisfactory. Across the school all the work is marked and occasionally in the best practice, either through oral or written feedback to pupils, teachers place an emphasis on what pupils need to do next to improve their work further. There are areas for improvement in some lessons that are otherwise satisfactory. For instance, in a Reception/Year1 class lesson the discipline of not disturbing the teacher when she is working with a group needs to be more securely established so that pupils' learning is not interrupted. In the Year 5/6 class the work of pupils who are not working under the direct supervision of the teacher needs to be monitored occasionally to check pupils' understanding.
72. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory. Since then teachers have worked hard to implement the literacy hour and this has been soundly achieved. Standards in reading are now lower in Key Stage 1 and the standards that higher attaining pupils achieve in writing are lower in both key stages. However, the inspection process and the methods for calculating pupils' performance in national tests have changed since then. Some of the teaching is now very good. The school's curriculum and assessment procedures have improved. These assessments are not

yet being used sufficiently to match the work to pupils' needs. Book resources are mainly satisfactory. Fiction books are good in quality and range, except in the Year 5/6 class. Across the school there are insufficient information books, and books that reflect other cultures within the school and the diversity of cultures within the wider community.

73. The co-ordinator gives useful advice and support to staff about lesson planning. She is involved in monitoring the quality of teaching. English is given a high priority in the recent school development plan and good progress has already been made in implementing the targets that have been set for the subject. The school is now well placed to bring about further improvements in the subject.

## **MATHEMATICS**

74. The results of the 2000 National Curriculum tests show that standards at the age of seven are in line with the national average. The size of the cohort was very small. The work seen during the inspection supports the view that standards are in line with the national average. The results of the 2000 National Curriculum tests for eleven-year-olds show that standards were well below the national average with only 50 per cent of pupils attaining level 4 or above. Again the cohort was relatively small with only 15 pupils taking the tests. From the work seen during the inspection the standards are below that expected for pupils of this age. The last inspection report indicated that standards of the majority of pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 were above the national average and at the end of Key Stage 2 similar to those found in many other schools. This apparent decline in standards can be explained by the small cohort size moving through the school. The results of national tests, at the end of both key stages and over time, show marked variations in standards from one year to the next.
75. By the age of seven, most pupils can work out correct answers to simple sums, using pencil and paper methods. They know how to add, subtract, multiply and share, using numbers up to one hundred. Some higher attaining pupils work confidently with addition and subtraction using numbers up to one thousand. They count in twos, fives and tens up to one hundred. They understand and record simple fractions such as quarter and half. The majority of pupils are making satisfactory progress including those with special educational needs. In lessons observed, many pupils are making good progress. Nearly all pupils apply simple rules of number to sums of money up to one pound and in some cases beyond that. In work on shape, space and measures, seven-year-olds know the names of many common two and three-dimensional shapes, and they understand terminology such as 'left and right' and 'right-angle'. They estimate the length of objects in the classroom and then measure them using standard units. Pupils are beginning to understand simple data handling as they count coloured spots on a body shape and record their results in columns.
76. By the age of eleven, the majority of pupils, including those with special educational needs, have a fairly accurate grasp of addition, multiplication, subtraction and division and record results using a variety of methods. Most are reasonably successful in picking which is the appropriate one to solve problems in different circumstances. They understand how square numbers are made and the majority can record square numbers up to one hundred. Most pupils understand simple percentages and link them with related fractions and decimal quantities. In work on shape, space and measures, pupils recognise many two and three-dimensional shapes and can record some of their properties such as the number of corners and faces. They plot some two-dimensional shapes using simple co-ordinates. They understand the use of money as they work out the cost of materials and then find the total cost. In data handling they draw line graphs from information given and interpret their results. They understand the idea of probability in simple terms such as 'impossible and 'certain'.
77. Mathematical skills are used satisfactorily in other areas of the curriculum. In history, pupils use a timeline to chronicle events of the past such as the Second World War. In science pupils record temperatures in their work on thermal conductors. In design and technology pupils measure and cut out vehicle shapes from card.
78. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good. The majority are keen to answer questions and they settle well to the activities they are given. They work co-operatively when asked to do so and

willingly share any equipment they have. The majority concentrate on the work given to them for reasonable lengths of time.

79. Teaching, at both key stages, is at least satisfactory and in many lessons seen is good. This accords with the findings of the last report. Lessons are now generally well planned and based firmly upon the National Numeracy Strategy that is fully in place. Lesson objectives are shared with the pupils. In the majority of lessons the oral 'starter' moves at a good pace and fires the pupils' imagination and prepares them for the work later in the lesson. Teachers manage their classes well and have good relationships with pupils. Wherever possible, teachers ensure that pupils get the help that they need. The best teaching is clear and sequential. In these lessons the pupils understand what is required of them and they respond well. Generally teachers make good use of time and resources. In some classes assessments that take place do not always indicate pupils' attainment. This is presently being addressed by more detailed assessments taking place on a regular basis and these being more rigorously analysed.
80. The mathematics curriculum is satisfactorily balanced and meets the statutory requirement, although pupils need more time to apply their learning to solving simple problems. The subject co-ordinator has soundly led the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy. There is a need for more monitoring of standards through more rigorous assessment and the moderation of pupils' work so that weaknesses in pupils' knowledge and understanding can be identified and dealt with.

## **SCIENCE**

81. In the Year 2000 teacher assessments for seven-year-olds pupils attain above average standards. The number of pupils reaching the required standard is very high when compared with schools nationally and with pupils in similar schools. This was a considerable improvement on the previous year when the results at this level were below average. However, none of the higher attaining pupils reach the higher level that is expected of them. In the year 2000 national tests for eleven-year-olds the number of pupils reaching the required standard and the higher standard is well below when compared with schools nationally. The standard is below that for pupils in similar schools. There is no difference in the attainment of boys and girls. The achievement of most pupils is very low in relation to their prior attainment. Since the previous inspection the school's results for eleven-year-olds have declined unlike the national picture where science results are improving each year.
82. Inspection findings show that by the age of seven pupils' attainment is below the level expected for their age. This does not reflect the 2000 teacher assessment results. This is because the number of pupils reaching the required standard is lower than last year and too few of the higher attaining pupils achieve the higher level. The main reason for the difference is that the curriculum is organised differently this year to last year. Throughout the school there are two year-groups in each class. Before the headteacher was appointed, a decision was taken to plan the curriculum so that the pupils covered some topics for each year group during the year. For example in the Year 2/3 class pupils cover three topics at the Year 3 level, such as the work on materials in the autumn term, and two at the Year 2 level later in the year. The Year 3 work is too difficult for Year 2 pupils when they have just moved up from the Year 1 class, particularly for the lower attaining pupils. This adversely affects their understanding and progress. The Year 2 work planned for later in the year is too easy for the higher attaining Year 2 pupils and for most of the Year 3 pupils and this leads to them making unsatisfactory progress in their learning. This pattern is repeated in classes throughout the school.
83. The lesson observation and the work in pupils' books show that all the pupils in the Year 2/3 class are using the same worksheets and working at the same level. Lower attaining pupils are helped to complete the worksheets through additional teacher support but are unable to carry out the work independently. This was evident from some of the work in their books that was incorrectly completed. Interviews with pupils and the work in their books show that average attaining Year 2 pupils' have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of all aspects of science at the expected level for their age. Higher attaining pupils show a sound understanding of materials at the higher level. Their understanding of other aspects of science is only at the

average level, for instance in physical processes and life processes and living things. This means that they are not making the progress that they should in these areas.

84. In the Year 2/3 and Year 4/5 classes the practical aspect of science is taught effectively. Pupils enjoy this work; it motivates them to work well together and their levels of concentration are good. This approach successfully promotes pupils' practical enquiry skills. For example, in the Year 2/3 class lesson pupils worked together, observing different types of paper with magnifying glasses and decided whether these were suited to their use. In a following lesson pupils tested the absorbency of different types of paper. Pupils' progress in the use of technical terms is good for example; higher attaining pupils are beginning to describe different types of paper using terms such as 'translucent' and 'absorbent'.
85. In Year 5/6 the good approach to practical work that is evident in the other classes does not continue. Discussions with pupils show that they are given few opportunities to carry out this work independently and the level of their scientific knowledge and vocabulary is lower than that expected for their age. This is directly related to the unsatisfactory teaching in this class. All the pupils carry out the same level of work and the teacher sets it at too easy a level for them. For example, pupils were asked to predict what might happen if they placed substances on a radiator, such as chocolate. The pace of the lesson was slow and this meant that pupils produced an insufficient amount of work in the lesson. Additionally the teacher did not encourage pupils to use subject vocabulary sufficiently. Pupils' work in books shows that they have covered an insufficient amount of work this term. These factors lead to a decline in pupils' achievements from the Year 4 /5 to the Year 5/6 class. Discussion with pupils confirms that they do not have the level of knowledge or technical vocabulary expected for their age.
86. The quality of teaching in the other classes is satisfactory overall. A feature of all the lessons is that teachers manage pupils' behaviour well, for example they consistently implement the school rules, such as pupils should take turns to speak. Pupils respond positively and their behaviour is good. In the most effective lessons teachers give clear explanations so that pupils understand what they are to do, start work promptly and complete a good amount of work. In the group work they check, support and extend pupils' learning well, for example in the Year 4/5 class skilful questioning of pupils was used to assess their knowledge of materials that were good conductors of heat. This promoted their learning successfully. The teacher used this information to reinforce and extend pupils' understanding soundly during the lesson. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress through the additional support they receive from teachers. There are no pupils with English as an additional language.
87. Throughout the school, marking is used to reward effort and achievement and it is most successful when teachers point out to pupils ways in which they can improve their work. Literacy skills are promoted effectively for example, through pupils recording their work independently. Greater use could be made of numeracy skills, and information and communication technology, to support pupils' learning, for example through a range of graph work. In the Year 2/3 and Year 5/6 classes the teachers' knowledge of assessment is not secure. This affects the accuracy of teacher assessments and their ability to match work to pupils' capabilities. This also means that the accuracy of teacher assessments is not secure.
88. The enthusiastic co-ordinator gives useful advice and support to staff about lesson planning. A national scheme of work has been introduced this term and this forms a good basis for teachers' lesson planning. This is to be reviewed during the year. A system of regularly assessing pupils' achievements has also been introduced recently and it is not yet being used to match the work to pupils' needs. Science is given a high priority in the recent school improvement plan and good progress has already been made in implementing the targets that have been set for the subject. Standards were judged to be good in the previous inspection and unsatisfactory progress had been made since then until this term when the acting headteacher was appointed. The school is now well placed to bring about further improvements in the subject.

## **ART**

89. No discrete art lessons were seen during the inspection because art and design is now taught through other subjects of the National Curriculum. It is not possible therefore to make a judgement on the teaching of the subject.
90. The quality of work seen from displays and photographs indicates that standards of attainment at the end of both key stages are broadly typical for seven and eleven-year-olds. The last inspection report indicated that the attainment of pupils in both key stages was above that found in many other schools. The time spent on art has been reduced since then and this accounts for the lower standards now seen.
91. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils use both pencil and charcoal successfully, for their observational drawings of older pupils who act as models. They use paint for hand printing, making colourful patterns. This is further developed as pupils use a variety of objects to dip in paint and print more colourful patterns. Some pupils show fine motor control and good choice of colour as they design flowers using paint on the tips of their fingers. There is a good link here with science as pupils' art work shows the difference between stem and leaves and the flower head. Another medium used is clay, as pupils mould it to make models of themselves.
92. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils are further developing links between subjects. They listen to music and then use their imagination to draw and colour pictures evoked by the sounds they hear. Having learned about weaving in Victorian times through their history lessons, pupils have made their own attempts at weaving. They have used small hand looms and wool to produce some colourful pieces of work. During this process they learned appropriate vocabulary such as 'loom', 'weft', 'warp' and 'shuttle'.
93. The co-ordinator has organised the curriculum well. Now that there have been changes in the way the subject is taught, linked to other areas of the curriculum, she has planned out a useful rolling programme with the introduction, this term, of National Curriculum guidelines for the subject. This is a good strategy which shows forethought. She is now reviewing the new procedures. Previously there had been no formal assessment of the subject, but now the school has introduced regular assessments for all foundation subjects. This is at an early stage of development.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

94. Only one lesson took place during the inspection. Additional evidence gained from discussions with Year 6 pupils, analysis of work samples, teachers' plans, displays and photographs indicates that pupils attainment is broadly in line with that expected nationally for seven and eleven-year-olds.
95. In the lesson observed pupils in Years 2 and 3 show sound skill in making vehicles from a plan. They join corners securely and know that the use of card makes them stronger. Pupils use hacksaws safely and measure parts with accuracy. A higher attaining Year 2 pupil knew to adjust the size of the axle to make the wheels spin more freely. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 design logos and posters linked to their project on environmental issues. They are aware of the key features of money containers. Year 6 pupils make biscuits and evaluate their characteristics. They design their own recipes and consider what will make the finished product attractive.
96. In the lesson seen, pupils' attitudes to learning are good. They work well collaboratively and independently. Pupils showed good concentration in trying to improve their design. Teaching is satisfactory. Lesson objectives are clear and pupils are supported individually as help is required. Good support is given by the classroom assistant in ensuring that health and safety requirements are suitably met.
97. Since the beginning of term the school has been following a nationally recommended scheme of work that has been mapped out across both key stages and a two-year planning cycle of topics introduced. The subject is adequately resourced.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

98. Only one geography lesson was observed and it is not possible to make a firm judgement on the teaching of the subject. Evidence is taken from analysis of pupils' work, teachers' plans and discussion with the co-ordinator and some pupils. The attainment for seven and eleven-year-old pupils is typical of that found in most schools. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, learn and make progress at a satisfactory rate. This accords with findings in the last inspection report where attainment was described as broadly in line with national expectations.
99. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils know many geographical features of the locality. Pupils go for walks near the school and then draw the routes they have taken. They consider the buildings they pass and what they are used for. They go further afield and visit the nearest town and look at features such as the outdoor market. Learning is made relevant as pupils look for the roads and streets and houses in which they live, on a map. Pupils' mapping skills are developed as they produce keys to maps using various colours to indicate houses, shops, factories and the library. They develop their sense of direction as they draw routes on maps from such places as home to school or school to post office. They then write these directions down in sequential order.
100. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils develop an awareness of environmental issues, including rivers, the study of climates, pollution and natural hazards. When studying water in the north west, pupils use appropriate vocabulary such as 'reservoir', 'canal', 'estuary' and 'bay'. They consider the use of water in the home. In one class pupils link their geography to topical events as they consider the effects of prolonged and heavy rain causing extensive flooding and the effect that this has on people and their homes. In extending their geographical knowledge to include other parts of the world, they study the irrigation of land around the River Nile in Egypt. Mapping skills are further developed as pupils look at maps of the British Isles and colour in and name the countries that make up these islands using the colours as the key. Pupils consider the subject of pollution as they look at rubbish in the local environment and the possibility of having a landfill site nearby. Pupils express their concern about the effects of a landfill site on wild-life in the area.
101. The co-ordinator for the subject has developed a scheme of work, making use of national guidelines. This scheme involves a two-year rolling programme as all classes have two age groups in them. The curriculum is planned well to provide good breadth within the requirements of the National Curriculum. Resources are sufficient for the satisfactory delivery of the curriculum and the co-ordinator is keen to ensure these are up-to-date and relevant. Good use is made of visits to the local area; this gives pupils an opportunity to practise mapping skills and develop their geographical enquires. There have been no obvious assessment procedures built into the planning schedule and therefore assessment has not been used to inform future planning. This problem has just been addressed and assessments are now taking place at the end of each topic period. The co-ordinator does not have the opportunity to monitor teaching.

## **HISTORY**

102. During the inspection only two lessons in history were observed. Judgements are based on those lessons, pupils' previous work, displays of pupils' work around the school and teachers' planning documents.
103. From the available evidence it is clear that standards in history are in line with those expected for pupils of this age and that the rate of progress in their learning is satisfactory. This contrasts somewhat with the findings in the last inspection report where overall standards attained by most pupils were given as better than those found in many other schools. This apparent decline in standards can be attributed to the concentration of the school over recent years on the development of literacy and numeracy and the lack of any rigorous assessment of pupils' attainment in history.
104. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are developing a sense of the past. They appreciate that some events took place a long time ago and that life then was very different from their own. They record how people change over time from being a baby to being an elderly person. Pupils increase their understanding of the past by considering old shops as they visit a local museum and record what

they can see. They visit local shops and can see how shops have changed over time. They also study old objects such as toys and note how these have developed over time. Pupils in one class consider how dolls have changed between the 1900s and the 1950s.

105. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils develop a satisfactory knowledge of a range of historical periods. They develop an understanding of life in Ancient Greece with studies of domestic life, the Greek theatre, and Greek gods. Other pupils know of the problems poor people faced in Victorian times as they laboured in mines, built railways and worked in factories. Pupils know about the Second World War and its impact on the children of the time as they listen to people who experienced those events and are able to ask them questions. Pupils have a satisfactory range of skills although there is little evidence of personal study.
106. It is not possible to give a judgement on the teaching of history in Key Stage 1 as no lessons were observed. In the lessons observed in Key Stage 2, the teachers have good subject knowledge. They make good use of a variety of resources such as videos, books and CD-ROM's. The level of teachers' questioning and discussion was satisfactory and used well to both revise pupils' knowledge and further challenge and extend their understanding. The tasks given to the pupils, such as using a CD-ROM for research promoted good standards in developing enquiry skills.
107. The co-ordinator is very enthusiastic. The history policy was updated this year. She has recently organised a two-year plan of topics based on national guidelines. The question of assessment is being addressed as a new scheme for assessing pupils' attainment, at the end of topics, has just been introduced. Resources are adequate and the co-ordinator is always looking to update these. Good use is made of the local area to bring relevance to pupils' learning.

## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

108. No direct teaching of information technology (IT) skills was observed during the inspection. Pupils were seen using computer programs to support their work in other curriculum areas and for wordprocessing. Discussions with pupils and an analysis of their work indicates that their attainment is below that expected for their age at the end of both key stages.
109. Year 2 pupils know how to save, print and retrieve their work when using wordprocessing packages. They know how to correct their writing and can make the text bold and underline it. They use the computer both independently and collaboratively, to reinforce their mathematical skills. Year 4 and 5 pupils can confidently edit their work by changing the font, style and colour in wordprocessing. They have input specific data into the computer to produce graphs about their body parts. Year 6 pupils are able to use the CD-ROM to research projects in other subjects such as history.
110. Teachers do not currently plan for IT and the National Curriculum is not fully covered. They currently rely on IT being taught through other subjects and this has resulted in pupils' below average IT skills. Overall teachers' subject knowledge is not secure and their expectations of what pupils can achieve are too low. Currently there are no procedures in place to monitor or evaluate this subject.
111. The school has recently adopted a national scheme of work so that skills can be taught in a progressive way. This is not yet being implemented. The school is linked up to the Internet but pupils do not currently access it because an Internet policy has yet to be agreed. The headteacher has successfully secured additional funding to create an ICT (information and communications technology) suite at the school. Work on this will begin at the beginning of next term. Staff training is scheduled to commence in September 2001. This will need to be brought forward in view of the unsatisfactory progress since the last inspection when inspectors judged attainment to be satisfactory. It was identified however, that there were too few opportunities for pupils to model and control, and that their skills in the interrogation and use of information were less well developed. This has not improved. The headteacher has identified this subject as a priority in the school development plan and is currently supporting the co-ordinator in this role.

## **MUSIC**

112. The organisation of the inspection timetable meant that it was not possible to observe any lessons during the inspection so no judgement can be made on standards. Further evidence was gained from assemblies, a discussion with Year 6 pupils and documentation provided by the school.
113. Across the school pupils sing tunefully in assemblies and they show enthusiasm for some of the new hymns they have learned. The headteacher makes effective use of the music in assemblies to extend pupils' knowledge of famous composers and their compositions. For example, in an assembly observed during the inspection she encouraged pupils to listen to the rhythm, the instruments and how the music from Ravel's Bolero made them feel. This has a positive effect on pupils' learning; for instance Year 6 pupils have a sound knowledge of orchestral instruments. Discussion with Year 6 pupils shows that they have frequent opportunities to sing in lessons and they have a sound understanding of rhythm and pulse. They have had few opportunities to create their own compositions using percussion instruments and their knowledge of these and the technical vocabulary for the subject are underdeveloped. In Key Stage 2 a few pupils benefit from the lessons in flute and clarinet that are taken by a visiting specialist. Year 5 and 6 pupils take part in an annual singing festival.
114. The school has plans to implement a system for assessing pupils' achievements. There is no policy but a nationally recommended scheme of work has been introduced recently. Teachers, who are not specialists in the subject, would benefit from supplementary teaching materials, or further training. Some additional good quality instruments would improve the subject further. A policy and system for assessing pupils' achievements are being introduced. Staff have had some training and some instruments have been purchased. Further training and more instruments are still required.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

115. Pupils attain similar standards to those found in other schools in gymnastics by the age of seven and in games by the age of eleven. They make satisfactory progress in their learning, including pupils with special educational needs. It was possible to observe only two lessons during the inspection so no judgement can be made on the quality of teaching or on attainment in physical education overall.
116. The teaching is satisfactory in the two lessons seen. A positive feature of both lessons is the good management of pupils' behaviour. This is promoted through the good relationships between teachers and pupils, the good structure and organisation and the variety of activities. This maintains pupils' interest, fosters their good behaviour and attitudes to the work and ensures that they are continuously active. In the Year 5/6 class rugby lesson these features led to a sound improvement in pupils' throwing and catching skills. However, the teacher was not suitably dressed for a lesson in physical education and this reduced his ability to demonstrate skills safely himself or participate actively in the lesson.
117. Good use is made of pupils to demonstrate teaching points and improve their movements. In the gymnastics lesson that was seen in the Year 2/3 class this led to pupils making a smoother transition from one movement to the next. They successfully joined rolling, balancing and jumping movements into a sequence showing a sound awareness of space and of each other. In both lessons pupils' personal development and social skills are developed well through the opportunities they are given to work together in pairs and in groups and to independently access the equipment, such as pupils in the Year 2/3 class safely putting out the equipment in the gymnastics lesson.
118. Useful support and advice by the co-ordinator, recent training for all staff and good games resources have a positive effect on teaching and learning. Swimming is provided for in Years 3 and 4. Assessment systems are being devised and are not yet being used to plan future work. Sound improvements have been made since the previous inspection. The equipment for games

has been upgraded from unsatisfactory to good and outdoor adventurous activities are now provided for in Years 4 and 5.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

119. Pupils at the end of both key stages meet the expectations of the new locally agreed syllabus. This does not match with the previous inspection report which indicated that pupils' attainment in religious education is good. This lowering of attainment could be accounted for in that the new locally agreed syllabus has only been in place for a short time.
120. Pupils develop a sound knowledge of the practices of major world religions with an appropriate emphasis given to the study of Christianity. Pupils of all ages, including those who have special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in religious, moral and social understanding.
121. Pupils' work reflects that the school is continually developing positive attitudes towards relationships and values through discussion about friendships and how to live and work together. They are acquiring a suitable understanding of similarities and differences among religions. Younger pupils are beginning to understand the Christian principle of forgiveness as they follow the well-read story of 'The Prodigal Son'. They understand the idea of miracles performed by Jesus, as in one class they record the account of Jesus walking on the water. Older pupils are familiar with the Christian festivals of Christmas and Easter and can explain their significance in terms of the uniqueness of Jesus. They understand the differences that there are between a Christian church and a Muslim mosque and the differences in the rituals that take place in these places of worship. Their work is enhanced by visits to such places of worship. Older pupils are studying Judaism and beginning to understand how the Old Testament of the Christian Bible is a useful tool for this study. They read verses from the Book of Leviticus to find out about the food that followers of Judaism can and cannot eat. Pupils understand the idea of prayer as they learn prayers to say in class and in assembly.
122. Pupils are well behaved and attentive in lessons when they listen well to the story telling. They usually show respect for other people's beliefs and culture as they study the major world religions. Most pupils are willing to answer questions and offer opinions during religious education lessons. The relationships with teachers are good and pupils recognise that the answers they give to questions will be valued.
123. Overall the quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teachers have sound subject knowledge. They have good interactions with pupils and make thoughtful use of questioning to encourage them to develop their thoughts and keep them focused and interested in what is being discussed. The use of whole school collective worship and lessons involving personal, social and health education, reinforce pupils' understanding and their spiritual, social and moral development. These make a satisfactory contribution to religious education. Pupils' individual needs are met and the teachers' caring approach builds up pupils' confidence and self-esteem. The teaching of religious education makes a sound contribution to pupils' literacy skills. Recording of information in lessons often involves sequencing events in the story for younger pupils, while older pupils are encouraged to record their knowledge through writing their own accounts.
124. The subject co-ordinator was not present during the inspection. Teachers plan their work from the themes suggested in the locally agreed syllabus. The co-ordinator does not monitor the teaching of the subject. Assessment is in the early stages of development for this and all other foundation subjects. Good provision is made for pupils to visit places of worship.