

INSPECTION REPORT

HINDLEY JUNIOR & INFANT SCHOOL

Hindley, Wigan

LEA area: Wigan

Unique reference number: 106415

Headteacher: Mrs A Aykroyd

Reporting inspector: Mrs D Bell
16413

Dates of inspection: 5 – 8 November 2001

Inspection number: 196595

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Argyle Street
Hindley
Wigan

Postcode: WN2 3PN

Telephone number: 01942 255339

Fax number: 01942 525157

Appropriate authority: Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs L Worthington

Date of previous inspection: April 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
16413	Mrs D Bell	Registered inspector	Foundation Stage Equal Opportunities Special educational needs Art and design Music	What sort of school is it? The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
31713	Mr S Roberts	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
23276	Mrs M Mann	Team inspector	English as an additional language English Science Design and technology Religious education	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
30834	Mrs A Lowson	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Geography History Physical education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

The inspection contractor was:

Nord Anglia School Inspection Services
Strathblane House
Ashfield Road
Cheadle
Stockport
SK8 1BB

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	7
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	12
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	16
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	19
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	22
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS	23
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	24
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	26
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	27
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	31

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Hindley Junior and Infant School has 200 pupils aged 4 to 11 on its roll, 106 boys and 94 girls. The number of pupils has fallen in the last three years due to a lower birth rate in the area. At the present time, the school is considerably below its standard admission number of 30 pupils in the reception and Year 1 classes, although it has continued to maintain seven single age classes. Most pupils come from the school's immediate area, which suffers considerable social deprivation. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals (24%) is above the national average. There are six pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, two of Asian origin and four of Chinese origin. Four of the pupils (2%) come from homes where English is not the first language spoken and two of them are at the early stages of learning English in addition to their mother tongue. A higher than average proportion of pupils (28%) is on the register for special educational needs (SEN), although the proportion with statements of SEN (1.5%) is similar to that found nationally. There is a wide range of SEN in the school but most are to do with difficulties in speech and communication, or emotional and behavioural difficulties. On entry to the school, the attainment of the majority of children is well below average for their age. The school's main priorities are to continue to raise standards in English (especially writing) and in mathematics; to establish good provision for information and communication technology; to improve further the quality of teaching and learning; and to use assessment information well in all subjects.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective and improving school that celebrates its strengths and works very hard to address its weaknesses. The headteacher takes firm and decisive action to bring about school improvement, and leads the school very well in a shared and determined commitment to raising standards in all areas of school life. The quality of teaching is good and contributes in great measure to the pupils' positive attitudes to school, and to ensuring that, through well-structured learning, they reach the highest standards of which they are capable. The school is rigorous in ensuring that all pupils participate equally in a good range of worthwhile learning experiences that help them to achieve well both personally and academically. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards in mathematics are well above average by the time the pupils are in Year 6.
- Children in the reception class are given a very good start to their education.
- Good teaching ensures that the pupils learn and behave well and become mature and responsible.
- Very good assessment procedures contribute in great measure to the pupils' good achievement.
- Very good leadership and management foster effective teamwork amongst the staff and contribute very effectively to the improvement in standards.
- The school takes very good care of its pupils and provides an attractive and stimulating learning environment in which they feel valued.

What could be improved

- The pupils' incorrect use of grammar, punctuation and spelling in their writing, and the quality of their handwriting.
- The role of most co-ordinators in evaluating teaching and learning in the classroom.

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 April 1997, and there has been good improvement since that time. Despite the dip in the National Curriculum test results for English in 2001, standards are rising satisfactorily in that subject and in science. There has been very good improvement in mathematics and good improvement in the provision for information and communication technology and for design and technology. All subjects now have schemes of work based on national guidance. There is full coverage of the National Curriculum programmes of study and of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. Carefully considered curricular planning ensures that the pupils' learning is continuous from

the reception class through to Year 6. Curriculum co-ordinators understand and effectively evaluate teachers' planning and pupils' work. They use their non-contact time well to do this and to plan improved provision in their subjects. However, with the exception of English, mathematics and history, they do not yet evaluate teaching and learning in the classroom. The school's thorough assessment procedures are used very effectively to determine and address weaknesses in learning in English, mathematics and science, and procedures are well under way to enable this to happen in all other subjects. The detail in the school development plan now shows clearly what the school needs to do to improve further, and the ways in which it will measure how well it is progressing towards its stated priorities. There has been particularly good improvement in the quality of teaching and learning since the last inspection. The school has worked hard to reach the current point in its development and with the effective teamwork now evident amongst the staff, it is well set to improve further.

STANDARDS

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

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

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

The National Curriculum test results for English in 2001 were well below both the national average and the average for similar schools. This was because a significant number of pupils in the year group had special educational needs, and the pupils were not well enough prepared for a question in the writing test paper, which many chose to answer. In addition, the pupils' learning had suffered from well-documented disruption due to staffing problems in the school in the previous year. The school has taken effective measures to avoid such issues in the future. Reading continues to be better than writing due to the pupils' inconsistent use of correct grammar, and because their handwriting is often untidy. The test results for mathematics were well above both the national average and the average for similar schools and very much improved over the results for 2000. This is due to the school's involvement in the pilot for the National Numeracy Strategy that has led to some very effective teaching. This was further enhanced by the appointment of a leading mathematics teacher, now the mathematics co-ordinator, who constantly checks teaching and learning in the subject. The science test results were below the national average in 2001, but matched the average for similar schools. **The standards seen in the work of the pupils currently in Year 6 match the national expectations for their age in English and science, and are well above the national expectation in mathematics. The pupils achieve well in English and science, and very well in mathematics.** Because of the dip in English, the improvement in the school's results is currently below the national trend. However, it is above the national trend in mathematics and matches the national trend in science, and standards are continuing to rise in all three subjects. The school sets challenging targets and works very hard to reach them. The children in the Foundation Stage achieve very well. By the time they reach the end of their reception year, while the majority of children are unlikely to meet the early learning goals in all six areas of learning, they are well on their way to doing so. The National Curriculum test results for pupils in Year 2 in 2001 match the national average in reading and mathematics and are above the national average in writing. They are well above the average for similar schools in all three areas. The work of the majority of pupils currently in Year 2 matches the national expectation for their age in reading and writing, and is above the national expectation in mathematics. The teacher assessments for science show that the pupils reach the nationally expected levels in that subject. In reading, writing and science, the pupils achieve well, and in mathematics, very well. The majority of pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 reach the nationally expected levels for their age in art and design, design and technology, geography, history, information and communication technology and physical education. In religious education, their attainment matches that expected in the locally agreed syllabus. There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement on attainment or achievement in music. Taken across all subjects, and given the pupils' well below average

attainment on entry to the school, the majority achieve well and the standards they reach by the time they leave the school are satisfactory.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good: pupils enjoy coming to school. The majority settle to work quickly, listen to the teacher and concentrate well. Their attitudes contribute positively to their good achievement.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good in and around the school: the pupils respond well to their teachers' high expectations of them and show good levels of respect for people and property. There was one fixed term exclusion in the last school year, for behaviour.
Personal development and relationships	Good: the pupils readily and willingly accept responsibilities and carry them out well. This contributes very well to their personal development.
Attendance	Satisfactory. The majority of pupils arrive in time for the start of the school day and all lessons begin on time.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

All of the teaching observed was satisfactory or better. Because of the very good and sometimes excellent teaching that occurs in the reception class, all of the children make very good gains in learning. Good classroom routines are quickly established and good learning habits are formed because of the very well structured work prepared for the children. Teaching is good in the rest of the school, with examples of excellent teaching in mathematics and music and very good teaching in English, mathematics, science, geography, history and religious education. The teaching of English and mathematics is good overall, and the teachers reinforce literacy and numeracy skills well in most lessons. However, they do not insist on correct grammar and good presentation in all of the pupils' written work. Information and communication technology skills are satisfactorily taught and are appropriately promoted in other subjects. The teachers plan very well and successfully meet the needs of all of their pupils, including those with special educational needs and those whose first language is not English. The pupils acquire, step-by-step, the knowledge and understanding they need to achieve well because their teachers are particularly good at assessing their learning and planning work that builds on what they know, understand and can do. The pupils know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve further because they are given clear oral and written feedback on their learning. This is enabling them to take increasing responsibility for their own learning. The teachers' very good knowledge of their pupils means that they successfully adapt questions, targeting them towards individuals, to give all pupils the security and confidence to express their feelings and opinions, despite their lack of an appropriately wide range of vocabulary. Their very good relationships with the pupils creates a warm and productive learning atmosphere where pupils are not afraid to be wrong, and are successfully encouraged to help each other. Most teachers, through effective demonstrations, clear explanations and secure subject knowledge inject a sense of fun into learning that successfully motivates the pupils to work hard and use all time productively.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good: pupils are provided with a good range of worthwhile learning experiences in all subjects. These are appropriately enhanced by a satisfactory range of activities outside of the normal school day.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The good provision for pupils with special educational needs ensures that they make good progress and are well integrated into the school.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The satisfactory provision for these pupils ensures that they, too, progress well and are fully integrated into the life of the school.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The good provision in all areas contributes in great measure to the pupils' attitudes to the school, to each other and to learning. The pupils are well prepared for life beyond school in a culturally diverse Britain.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares very well for its pupils and values the contributions made by each and every one. It very effectively tracks their progress through school, and makes very good use of the information gained from this to plan work that matches the pupils' learning needs.

The school has good links with the parents and has worked hard and successfully to involve more of them in their children's learning. A good number of parents are now effectively helping their children to learn both at school and at home and this is having a positive impact on the children's achievements.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher sets a very clear direction for the school's work. All staff share her vision, which is being effectively realised through her good partnership with the deputy and strongly developing teamwork throughout the school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good: the governors have a good understanding of the issues facing the school. They support the head well and are appropriately involved in checking on all aspects of the school's work.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good: the headteacher very effectively evaluates teaching and learning throughout the school. Test and assessment results are analysed very well and the school carefully prioritises what it needs to do to help pupils achieve better.
The strategic use of resources	Good: the school plans well for the future. Spending follows the priorities set down in the school development plan, and is effectively targeted on raising pupils' attainment and helping them to achieve well.

The school has a good number of full and part-time teaching staff, all of whom are deployed well, enabling the pupils to continue to be taught in single age classes despite the fall in numbers. Some specialist teaching in science, religious education and history is particularly effective at raising standards in those subjects. The good use of one full time and one part time teacher who do not have class responsibilities means that the pupils often benefit from being taught in smaller groups where their work is more effectively focused to enable them to learn better. The adequate accommodation is kept clean and well maintained and is used effectively to promote learning, through the teachers' good organisation of their classrooms and attractive displays of pupils' work. Resources are good for religious education and are satisfactory in all other subjects. They and the well-stocked library are used effectively to promote learning. The governors and headteacher work hard and successfully ensure that the school gains best value from all of its spending.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Their children like school, are expected to work hard, make good progress and become mature.• Teaching is good, children have enough homework and parents are well informed about how well their children are doing.• The school is well led and managed, is approachable and works closely with parents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The range of activities outside of the normal school day

The inspection team agrees with the parents' positive views. It found that there was a satisfactory range of activities outside of the normal school day and that these were attended by a good number of pupils. One parent raised concerns about a racist incident in school. The inspection team found that the school has appropriate procedures in place to deal with such incidents and logs them carefully. It dealt appropriately with the incident described, and also handled well a related incident that had taken place outside of school. Both were reported to the relevant authorities.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The results of a nationally approved baseline test shows that when the children start school, their attainment is well below that expected for their age. Their communication, language and literacy, and mathematical skills are particularly weak and, despite the very good learning that has taken place since September, remain so at this stage in the school year. The children are unlikely to meet the early learning goals in these two areas of learning at the end of their reception year. The children do not have a well-developed knowledge and understanding of the world around them but are learning rapidly as a result of the very good teaching they receive that is awakening their curiosity and inspiring them to find out more. They are unlikely to meet the early learning goals in this area, but will be close to achieving them. The very good structure of the reception class very quickly establishes routines and procedures and impacts very positively on the children's personal, social and emotional development. They are on course to meet the early learning goals in this area of learning, and in physical development and creative development because of the very good range of learning experiences opened up to them by the teacher's very good planning and the very effective input of all staff.
2. The results of the National Curriculum tests for pupils in Year 2 in 2001 underline their good achievement in Years 1 and 2. In reading and mathematics, they matched the national average and in writing, they were above it. When compared with similar schools, the results were well above average in all three areas. The pupils are achieving well because of the good teaching they receive and the effective use of assessment throughout the two years. The teacher assessments for science show pupils' attainment to match the national average and to be above the average for similar schools. **The attainment of the majority of pupils currently in Year 2 matches the national expectations for reading, writing and science, and is above the national expectation for mathematics.**
3. The results of the National Curriculum tests in English for pupils in Year 6 in 2001 were well below the national average and the average for similar schools. This represented a sharp decrease in English attainment compared with the results in 2000 and was found to be because the pupils were not well enough prepared for one of the questions on the writing paper that many chose to answer. In addition, there was a significant number of pupils with special educational needs in that year group and the pupils' attainment suffered as a result of some staffing problems in the previous year that caused significant disruption to their learning. The school has taken effective action to address these issues. **In English, the attainment of the majority of pupils in the current Year 6 class matches the national expectation for their age and their achievement is good.** In mathematics, the test results for pupils in Year 6 in 2001 were well above both the national average and the average for similar schools. **In mathematics, the attainment of the majority of pupils currently in Year 6 is also well above the national expectation for their age and their achievement is very good.** The very good improvement over the results in 2001 is a direct result of the very effective implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy, the appointment to the staff of a leading mathematics teacher, now the mathematics co-ordinator, and the very effective evaluation of teaching and learning in mathematics that has led to high quality teaching, a well planned curriculum and the very effective assessment of pupils' learning. In science, the test results in 2001 were below the

national average but matched the average for similar schools. **In science, the attainment of the majority of pupils currently in Year 6 matches the national expectation for their age.** Standards have risen and the pupils are achieving well due to the effective use of some specialist teaching in the subject that is raising the pupils' expectations of themselves as they are taught in smaller groups with learning more focused on their particular needs.

4. The overall trend in the school's results is below the national trend as a result of the dip in the English results this year. Up until this year, the trend matched the national trend when taken across all three subjects. The English results have fluctuated from year to year, but in mathematics, the trend is above the national trend, and in science it continues to match the national trend. The school sets challenging targets based on what it learns from its thorough assessments of the pupils' learning. It reached the challenging target it set for mathematics in 2001 but fell significantly short of the target it set for English. It has raised its target for English for 2002 as a result of the improvements in the pupils' work last year and this. It is making good progress so far towards the targets set. The analysis of its results show that over time, there is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls, or between pupils from different ethnic groups, and none was noted during the inspection. The school's very effective tracking of the progress of individual pupils means that it can readily trace fluctuations in the test results to the performance of individual pupils with particular learning needs, and it can predict with some accuracy how much progress the pupils will make from one year to another.
5. In English, the pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 demonstrate good listening skills and satisfactory speaking skills for their age. By Year 2, the pupils are beginning to answer questions with increasing confidence as a result of the school's action to promote speaking and listening more effectively, for example, through role play, circle time and assemblies. However, throughout the school, the responses of a significant minority of pupils are often restricted to one word because they lack the range of vocabulary and the confidence to express ideas and opinions at greater length. Through effectively structured planning and teaching, the pupils achieve well in reading and by Year 2 the majority recognise an appropriate range of familiar words. They know the names and sounds of letters and use this knowledge, and the information they see in pictures, to help them read unfamiliar words. The majority read fluently and with expression, matching the national expectation for their age. In Years 3 to 6, the pupils begin to demonstrate an enjoyment of books. They read with fluency and expression and provide appropriate explanations for their preferences in reading, including their favourite authors. They use the library competently to extend their reading habits. Higher attainers in Year 6 discuss characters and events in texts and in their own written work, showing a sound ability to deduce meaning from texts. Average and higher attaining pupils also use the Internet appropriately to locate information. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make good gains in learning how to write and by Year 2 the majority form letters correctly and higher attaining pupils are beginning to join their letters together. Most pupils write complete simple sentences using capital letters and full stops correctly and some higher attainers successfully construct more complex sentences by using connecting words appropriately. They make sound attempts at spelling but these skills remain below the expectation for their age. Between Years 3 and 6 the pupils extend their writing skills well. They write biographies, letters, diaries and imaginative stories using an appropriate range of styles and demonstrate a sound awareness of the audience they are attempting to reach. However, while higher attainers use punctuation accurately and write complex sentences with good descriptive vocabulary, average and lower attainers do not consistently use grammar correctly, and their use of descriptive language is weak. By Year 6, too many pupils

have untidy handwriting, do not consistently join their letters and some still write in pencil. As a consequence, the presentation of their work is often poor and reading continues to be better than writing. The school has already clearly identified the weak areas in writing and the curriculum teams are currently at work formulating a whole school approach to addressing these weaknesses.

6. The pupils use their reading and writing skills appropriately in other subjects, for example in religious education where they write good accounts of Mohammed, and in science where they record investigations or write out instructions. However, the pupils' poor handwriting skills spoil the overall presentation of their work in, for example, history, and their lack of language skills inhibits their learning in subjects such as geography and science. This was particularly noticeable in a Year 1 English lesson, where it was clear that a pupil had not encountered the word 'stomach', volunteering 'tummy' and 'belly' in response to being encouraged to read a labelled diagram showing the main parts of the body. It was also seen in a Year 2 geography lesson where a significant number of pupils struggled to read the road names on a map of the local area.

7. In mathematics, by the time they are in Year 2, the pupils successfully extend their knowledge and understanding of number patterns and confidently use an appropriate range of mental strategies as they accurately add and subtract numbers, explaining clearly how they arrive at their answers. Pupils in Year 1 produce clear graphs to show information about a range of facts, extending their mathematical vocabulary well as they interpret block graphs, bar charts and line graphs, using comparative mathematical language such as 'tall', 'taller' and 'tallest'. Between Year 3 and Year 6 the pupils use their good knowledge of number well to work out answers to real life problems requiring increasingly complex calculations. Pupils in Year 3 have a good understanding of how to halve and double numbers. They understand inverse operations and demonstrate this effectively by using multiplication to check the accuracy of division answers and vice versa. Pupils in Year 3 have a good understanding of simple fractions and by Year 6 have successfully extended this to include converting fractions to decimals and vice versa, to ordering decimals, and to counting on and back in decimals, using the correct vocabulary and demonstrating a well developed understanding of place value. The pupils also develop a good understanding of shape and measurement. By Year 2, they have a sound knowledge of standard measurements, for example, grams for weighing. They use the correct names for simple two-dimensional shapes and accurately describe their properties talking about sides and angles. Between Years 3 and 6, they learn to measure and draw accurately using an appropriate range of equipment. For example, pupils in Year 5 used protractors to measure acute and obtuse angles and showed that they were using their prior learning to do so, namely that they knew to find zero and the straight line from it to begin their measurement. The pupils use their numeracy and mathematical skills well in other subjects. For example, older pupils present their work on a 'Walk to School Survey' using bar charts and pie charts, and use graphs in science to record their findings on whether forearms grow. They use their measurements skills well in science to carry out fair testing and in design and technology to measure accurately as they design and make, for example, musical instruments and puppets.

8. In science, by the time they are in Year 2, the pupils accurately name major body parts, and in Year 3 they acquire a good understanding of the importance of the skeleton and how bones grow as they get older. They also accurately name the main parts of flowering plants and have a sound understanding of which materials change when heated, cooled or bent, and which do not. Pupils in Year 1 explore their senses appropriately in practical investigative work and acquire a satisfactory understanding of the need for light and how their other senses become heightened when they are in the dark. The pupils develop their investigative skills further between Years 3 and 6, and by Year 6 have a sound understanding of what constitutes a fair test and how to carry one out. Between Year 4 and Year 6, they extend their knowledge and understanding of how an electrical circuit works. For example, in Year 3, they follow prepared diagrams to construct them, and in Year 6, they design their own and test whether they work. The pupils successfully extend their knowledge of sound in Year 5 as they investigate different pitches and their relation to the length and thickness of a string or the size of a drum. They record their work in an appropriate range of ways but the quality of the recording is often reduced because of the lack of language or writing skills.
9. Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) make good progress towards the clear and measurable targets in their individual education plans (IEPs) because they receive good support from their class teachers and from the learning support assistants. The pupils for whom English is an additional language make good progress in learning because of the effective support they receive from the teachers and learning support assistants. Two are at the early stages of learning English in addition to their mother tongue and are making good progress in acquiring their new language.
10. Pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 reach the nationally expected levels for their age in art and design, design and technology, geography, history, information and communication technology and physical education. In religious education, their attainment matches that expected in the locally agreed syllabus for that subject. Their achievement is good in art and design, design and technology and religious education, and satisfactory in the other subjects. There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement on attainment or achievement in music because insufficient was seen during the inspection and there were no recordings of the pupils' practical work.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. Pupils demonstrate good attitudes to school. Throughout the school, attitudes shown by pupils to their work are good. They are keen to come to school and play a full part in its life, including the activities that take place outside of the normal school day. Most show enthusiasm and interest in their allotted tasks. They are eager and willing to learn and take pride in their achievements. A few pupils, mainly boys, fail to maintain concentration for the whole lesson and teachers take appropriate action to ensure that any relevant disruption is minimal. The pupils are proud of their school and respect the materials and resources made available to them. This is a similar situation to that found in the previous inspection. The pupils' good attitudes contribute well to their learning.
12. The pupils' behaviour in class and around the school remains good, as it was at the last inspection. They are clear about what is expected from them and most respond well to class and school rules. The parents are very happy with the standards of behaviour achieved as a direct result of high teacher expectations and the firm and consistent positive reinforcement of acceptable behaviour. The good behaviour of the pupils positively assists their learning and contributes to the standards achieved.

Close links are established between the class teacher, the headteacher and parents to monitor pupils with specific behavioural difficulties. This is successfully improving the behaviour and attitudes of these pupils and encouraging overall improvements in school. There are no exclusions in the current academic year although there was one fixed term exclusion in the last school year.

13. Relationships within the school are very good and are one of the outstanding strengths of this urban school. The pupils quickly distinguish right from wrong, understand the importance of rules in a social environment, and realise the effect their actions have on others. They respect their teachers and learn from them to be kind, polite and courteous to each other. They show respect and consideration to visitors and during the inspection were always willing to hold doors open and let adults go first. During playtime boys and girls are at ease with each other and although naturally boisterous at times there was no evidence of oppressive behaviour. Pupils with special educational needs are well integrated into the school. The majority behave well and most of those with IEPs that have targets for improving behaviour try hard to meet their targets, encouraged by the very good relationships they have with the staff and the school's effective system of rewards. The school dealt appropriately with a recent racist incident, seeing the pupils and their parents, explaining the procedures and reporting it and the action taken to the relevant authorities.
14. The personal development of pupils is good. Pupils are keen to assume responsibility and carry out tasks of an appropriately challenging nature for their age. Year 6 pupils have more specific responsibilities and assist with the supervision of younger children during wet play times, a task they thoroughly enjoy. During the morning break they distribute fruit and snacks to the reception pupils and they were also noted helping the younger pupils to fasten their coats during the outside playtime.
15. Attendance is at the national average and is above that of comparable schools in the area. This shows a slight improvement since the last inspection. Punctuality at the start of the school day and of individual lessons is satisfactory, and registration is completed promptly.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

16. The quality of teaching is good overall and is a major contributor to the pupils' good achievement. It is satisfactory or better in all lessons, and very good or better in 36%. There are examples of teaching that is at least good in all classes and in all subjects. There has been very good improvement in the quality of teaching since the last inspection.
17. Teaching is consistently very good and at times excellent in the reception class. The staff are very secure in their knowledge of how young children learn. The teacher uses her very good understanding of the curriculum for the Foundation Stage to plan a superb range of highly motivating, short-term activities that meet the needs of the children and keeps them working hard. This, together with the very effective use of the support staff, very successfully develops good learning habits. These activities often promote learning in one area while maintaining interest and enthusiasm in a range of others. For example, in a mathematical development session, while the whole class emphasis was on numeracy, the children's measurement, shape and pattern making skills were very successfully consolidated through a number of puzzles and games that also promoted their learning in the areas of creative development (art), knowledge and understanding of the world (design and technology skills in rolling out modelling dough), water play (filling and emptying containers of different capacity), and making

repeated patterns using beads of different colours. Clear explanations of what is expected of them and exceptionally good assessment procedures ensure that from the time they start school, they are very effectively involved in their own learning. Their work is well annotated and their very good progress in basic skills is evident as they proceed from scribbling to emergent writing and from a poor understanding of number to being able to count objects one at a time. The staff take every opportunity to extend the pupils' learning by questioning, cajoling, extending and supporting them, and engaging them in a wide range of conversations to build up the vocabulary that many lack when they start school.

18. Throughout the school and in most lessons, the teachers use their good questioning skills to involve all pupils in discussions. Pupils' thinking is effectively challenged and their learning is successfully extended because the teachers skilfully use the pupils' initial responses to target questions towards individual pupils, enabling all to participate fully in lessons. For example, in literacy sessions in Years 3 to 6, this good questioning helped the pupils to analyse different texts to find out more about the characters involved and to deduce from the text what the author was inferring in his/her writing. Similarly, in a Year 1 design and technology lesson, the teacher's very effective questioning aroused the pupils' curiosity as to what some of the fruits she had brought in were and where they came from. The teachers are skilled at using the agreed schemes of work to plan learning that is consistent and methodical, and takes the pupils step-by-step through what they need to learn to make progress. For English and mathematics, they make good use of the national strategies, both of which have been effectively implemented. The quality of teaching is good in both subjects and the teachers constantly reinforce the pupils' literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects. However, they do not insist that the pupils always use the correct grammar and punctuation, or spell accurately, and specifically in their written work, presentation is often untidy due to the pupils' untidy, yet accepted, handwriting. Information and communication technology skills are satisfactorily taught and are appropriately promoted in other subjects. For example, computers are used in music to help pupils compose effectively, and to explore different instruments; two art programs are used effectively to draw and paint pictures and to research artists' work; and CD ROMs and the Internet are used appropriately to find out a range of information in, for example, geography and history.
19. The majority of teachers, through effective demonstrations, clear explanations and secure subject knowledge inject a sense of fun into learning that successfully motivates the pupils to work hard and make the best use of every second in a lesson. In an excellent Year 6 mathematics lesson, for example, the pupils very successfully extended their knowledge and understanding of decimals because the teacher had very high expectations of how well they could learn and make progress. Less confident pupils gained a greater understanding of place value because the teacher used visual resources very effectively, and higher attaining pupils were effectively challenged because she constantly monitored their responses and gave them harder problems to solve. In almost all lessons, the teachers' very good relationships with the pupils create a warm and productive learning atmosphere where pupils are not afraid to be wrong, and are successfully encouraged to help each other. This results in the pupils having the security and confidence to express their feelings and opinions, despite their lack of an appropriately wide range of vocabulary. The pupils know what they have to learn and how they will acquire that learning because the teachers explain clearly to them at the start of a lesson what the learning objectives are, and refer to them throughout the lesson to ensure that learning is on track. For example, in a Year 2 geography lesson, the teacher's step-by-step explanation of how to address a postcard, and the meaning behind each line of the address resulted in the majority of

pupils being able to explain to the inspector, and to the rest of the class at the end of the lesson, why it was important to include all parts of the address to make sure a letter or postcard arrived safely at its destination. The teachers manage the pupils very well and the majority of pupils respond with good behaviour and high levels of concentration. Occasionally, particularly in the Year 4 and 5 classes where there is a higher than average number of pupils with behavioural difficulties, and the teachers are less experienced, a small number of pupils become restless and disrupt learning for others. The teachers usually deal with this appropriately and soon have them back on track.

20. The teachers use their very effective day-to-day assessment of the pupils' learning to plan further work for them. The pupils know how well they are doing and take increasing responsibility for their own learning because most teachers take care to give clear oral and written feedback that shows the pupils what they need to do to improve further. However, although their work is regularly marked, written comments are not always evaluative and are sometimes very brief. The teachers' planning remains flexible enough for it to be altered daily if necessary, in response to the teacher's assessment of the pupils' learning. This happened in a very good mathematics lesson with pupils in Year 3 when the teacher's assessment of the previous day's work revealed that the pupils could cope with harder work and more challenge, and this was duly added. There is a good balance of whole class, group and individual activities in most lessons. This, and the effective use of some specialist teaching in science, enables the pupils to be taught in groups smaller than the whole class and to benefit from the more effectively focused teaching that takes place. The whole class sessions at the ends of lessons are mostly used well to consolidate the pupils' learning, help them to evaluate how well they have done, and to prepare them for what is to come next. A good range of homework further extends and consolidates the learning that takes place in class and the teachers are successfully involving growing numbers of parents in helping their children at home.
21. Work is usually planned well to meet the needs of all pupils so that all are effectively included in all lessons, including those with SEN and those for whom English is an additional language (EAL). The very good guidance provided by the SEN co-ordinator ensures that the teachers write IEPs with clear and measurable targets and use these in their planning. The support staff are effectively involved in this work and make a good contribution to the pupils' learning. For example, both teacher and pupils were overjoyed when the pupil managed to 'beat the timer' in an activity to recognise different sound combinations. The support staff keep good records and liaise effectively with the teachers to make sure that the pupils they help make as much progress as possible. Pupils with EAL are also well supported. Currently, however, this is through the use of IEPs and the four pupils involved are on the SEN register. The staff are not making a clear enough distinction between the needs of SEN and EAL pupils. Although two of the four pupils have SEN as well as EAL, the other two have specific language needs relating only to acquiring a better knowledge, understanding and use of English.

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

22. The provision for pupils in the Foundation Stage, that is, in the reception class, has improved considerably since the last inspection. The school follows the national guidance. Planning covers all six areas of learning and takes very good account of the 'Stepping Stones' in learning, defined in the guidance. The staff take good care to promote communication, language skills in all activities and good attention is given to

the effective development of mathematical concepts, skills and understanding, all of which are clearly defined in the teacher's planning.

23. The curriculum has also greatly improved for all other pupils in the school. The school now provides a good range of valuable and worthwhile learning opportunities for all pupils that cover the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. All subjects except art and design have sound written policies. The school has successfully implemented the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy. As a result, standards in mathematics are now very good. The school is still working hard to improve standards in English. The nationally recommended schemes of work have been adopted in all other subjects, thereby ensuring that the pupils' learning is continuous and that from Year 1 to Year 6, they progressively acquire an increasing range of knowledge, skills and understanding. The effective liaison between the reception and Year 1 teachers also ensures that the pupils' learning is extended from the Foundation Stage into Year 1. This good curricular planning promotes very effectively the school's good policy and practice of ensuring equality of opportunity for all pupils by enabling everyone to participate fully in all learning activities. Some specialist teaching in science, religious education and history further enhances the pupils' learning and makes the best use of the skills of all staff.
24. The school makes good provision for pupils' personal, social and health education. Sex education is taught through science at appropriate times and the school has effective links with the school nurse and health visitors to teach particular aspects of sex education to older pupils in Year 6. There is a relevant and up to date policy for drugs education. The school makes use of the local provision of a 'Life Education' mobile classroom, which visits the school regularly and has a structured programme for each year group. Parents are invited for some sessions to enable them to be involved in this aspect of their child's education. Other aspects of health education are taught through science and physical education. The school tries to promote a healthy lifestyle by helping pupils make good choices, an example of this is at playtimes, when pupils bring fruit or vegetable snacks to eat. The school uses its effective links with the community police, road safety personnel and a community based safety group, to develop and extend pupils' knowledge and understanding about personal safety.
25. An appropriate range of extra-curricular activities extends the pupils' learning beyond the normal school day. These include, for example, a good range of sporting activities at different times in the school year, a music club and a choir. The curriculum is enriched by a good range of well planned educational visits and visitors, which contribute to the quality of educational provision in art and design, history, dance, music and geography. Annual residential visits for Year 5 and Year 6 pupils extend pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding in outdoor and adventurous activities, as well as providing a good opportunity for pupils to develop their social skills. The physical education curriculum is enhanced by the sporting links made with the Soccer Dome in Wigan. The school also uses art galleries and museums to provide pupils with first hand learning experiences and benefits from loans of original works of art from the local art centre.
26. Relationships with partner schools are satisfactory. The links with local high schools are positive and ease the transition of older pupils as they move on to the next stage of learning. For example, pupils in Year 5 and 6 have taster lessons, usually of a foreign language. Sporting links are sound and recent local initiatives are ensuring pupils receive a broad range of sporting activities.

27. The provision for pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is good and makes a positive contribution to the pupils' good attitude to learning, their enthusiasm for school and their overall good behaviour, strengths that underpin their learning. The provision for moral education has been maintained since the previous inspection, but the school's provision for spiritual, social and cultural education has improved.
28. Provision for spiritual education is good. Religious education and acts of collective worship are well planned. They meet statutory requirements and both make a positive contribution to pupils' spiritual development. Pupils have good opportunities to reflect on how the themes of assemblies apply to their lives. They are encouraged to be thoughtful and reflective in their responses to incidents both inside and outside of school, and in their relationships with others. They are encouraged to reflect on relevant issues within the wider world, for example a visitor into school talked to the pupils about Remembrance Sunday and why being silent and remembering is still very relevant today. The school tackles major world problems such as wars, famine and social rights issues in a mature, sensitive way and as such, enables pupils to reflect in a peaceful atmosphere. Planned opportunities for reflection are given in each class weekly and teachers encourage the quality of reflection. Opportunities within music or poetry, for example, are taken to develop a spiritual response. Outdoor education provides pupils with the opportunity to experience the wonder of nature, particularly on visits to the Lake District when many pupils see large lakes and mountains for the first time.
29. Provision for moral development is good. In each classroom, pupils have agreed rules, which are reviewed regularly. This encourages all pupils to observe the rules and to realise their importance. The school has an agreed behaviour management strategy called 'The Himalayan Project', which focuses the pupils' attention on developing personal responsibility and taking responsibility for others. All staff, including lunchtime assistants and classroom helpers, have undergone training in behaviour management and are consistent in their approach to pupils. The promotion of sound moral values permeates all aspects of the school. High standards are set for the pupils' behaviour. All staff set good examples for the pupils and make the most of the incidental opportunities that arise in everyday school life to reinforce moral teaching. The pupils have a good understanding of the difference between right and wrong and of the impact of their actions on others.

30. Provision for social development is good. The teachers use a range of teaching methods that enable the pupils to work in groups of different sizes. This is done thoughtfully, not only to develop learning skills, but also to encourage those pupils who may be lacking in confidence, or to give responsibility to a particular individual to take charge of a group or team. The pupils understand that being a team leader, for example within sporting activities, means that they have the responsibility to look for the strengths of individuals within that team, and to provide some support and guidance to weaker elements. Residential visits for pupils in Year 5 and 6 provide many opportunities for social development, particularly as pupils are placed in teams to take part in more challenging activities and have to work together to solve problems. Wider social issues are explored sensitively as pupils visit residential homes in the community, particularly at Christmas time when they sing carols for older residents. They are taught to consider the concept of caring for the old and ill as part of their social development. Pupils are encouraged to think about worldwide social issues, particularly as they affect children in the world, as they provide a shoebox of gifts to send to children in Afghanistan, the Balkans or other major world trouble spots. Each shoebox contains a letter written by a pupil, with a photograph and a gift label. This encourages pupils to develop their social and moral education in a thoughtful and constructive way.
31. Provision for cultural development is good and the school uses the local and wider community to develop and extend knowledge, skills and understanding in art, music, physical education and history. The school emphasises the importance of providing pupils with first hand learning opportunities to extend and enrich the curriculum. It reflects the multicultural aspects of society today within the religious education curriculum in particular, but visitors into school are also carefully selected to provide good opportunities for the pupils to learn about and from other cultures. For example, the music, history and physical education curriculum in Year 4 is enriched by pupils a visit from an Egyptian dancer. Last year's Christmas performance for parents involved all junior pupils in preparing a different world cultural festival and presenting their version of this to an audience. A recent visit looked at the music and culture of Brazil, in a samba project, which enabled the pupils to listen to and look at Brazilian musical instruments and enjoy their dance and music. Parents recently joined the staff and pupils on a trip to the Jewish museum in Manchester as part of the school's religious education.
32. Provision for SEN is good. The guidance in the nationally recommended code of practice for SEN is effectively implemented. Individual Education Plans are reviewed at least termly and adjustments made as a result of the effective assessments of the pupils' learning. The school works hard and successfully meets the needs of the pupils with statements. Statutory requirements are met and annual reviews are effectively organised and carried out. Sound provision is made for EAL pupils' learning by the special needs co-ordinator. However, procedures for registering pupils with EAL are not clearly defined. Neither the co-ordinator nor the visiting teacher has been fully aware of the need to distinguish between pupils who have special needs in language and those who have English as an additional language. Although specific procedures are not in place, the present pupils' progress has not been affected as they have received relevant support for their needs and are making good progress.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

33. The provision for ensuring pupils' welfare is good. The school provides a close knit, secure and happy environment in which pupils are well protected and their individual well-being is effectively promoted. Teachers are very sensitive to the needs of those in their charge. They know the pupils well and work hard to ensure their welfare. The trusting relationships the pupils enjoy with their teachers, give them the confidence to share any concerns and help them cope with the problems that arise in everyday life. Parents see the school as a caring community. Governors have a responsible attitude towards health and safety in the school. The risk assessment aspects and the routine tasks have been delegated to the chairperson of the premises committee and are handled in an extremely practical and conscientious manner. Outstanding areas of concern, which have been recorded in the risk file directly relate to the disrepair of the building and not to any safety issues that would constitute a hazardous risk to pupils. During the inspection the security of the building was of a high standard. Child protection procedures are good and all staff are aware of what they should do if they have cause for concern.
34. The school's procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and eliminating oppressive incidents are effective and supported by parents and governors. The behaviour policy contains an appropriate range of rewards and sanctions to encourage good behaviour. The pupils show respect for each other and for the teachers. An anti-bullying policy was introduced after consultation with staff and the governing body and is effectively implemented. Incidents of bullying are infrequent and details of any incidents of racism or sexism are recorded and reported to the relevant authorities. When they do occur they are treated seriously and dealt with speedily.
35. The procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are satisfactory. The school has an explicit attendance policy and constantly remind parents, through discussions with them and through the regular newsletter, of its strategies to gain further improvements in overall attendance. Parents co-operate well by advising the school at the earliest opportunity if a child will be absent and this has resulted in minimal unauthorised absence being recorded. The Education Welfare Officer scrutinises the registers each month to assess the reasons for individual absences. However, whole school attendance is not collated on a more frequent basis and therefore the data is not being used as effectively as it could be to assess and record individual and group trends of absence. In this aspect, the procedures lack rigour.
36. The school's procedures for monitoring and supporting the pupils' personal development are effective. Class teachers monitor the pupils' personal development, and readily identify and evaluate strengths and weaknesses including qualities such as persistence, application and self-confidence. Relevant information is recorded in the annual report to parents and is also used for the school's assessment when identifying pupils with special educational needs. Teachers and other staff have a caring approach to the personal needs of the pupils and this makes an important contribution to the ethos of the school.
37. Since the last inspection, the school has greatly improved its procedures for assessing and recording pupils' learning and it now makes very good use of the information gained from these procedures to plan what pupils are to learn next and to address any weaknesses identified during the assessments. A wide range of strategies has been put in place for assessing pupils' attainment and analysing and tracking their achievement. These are very well established in English, mathematics and science. For example, weaknesses in learning in English were identified and the

school has focused on writing, and particularly on the writing of play scripts, to avoid a repeat of the drop in English results that it suffered last year. The pupils are now taught in ability groups throughout the school for English and mathematics, ensuring that all are suitably challenged and that their learning is more effectively focused on their needs. In science, weaknesses are being identified through the national optional tests at the end of Year 4. Pupils are set in Year 5 and taught separately by two members of staff. This is having a positive effect on their attainment. The very good practice in the core subjects is now being extended to other subjects but is not yet fully in place in all of them. Pupils' progress is measured regularly and predictions are made from these as to the levels they will achieve at the end of each year. Their progress towards these is well supported by the individual targets in reading, writing, mathematics and personal development. This has resulted in improved standards and in the teachers having higher expectations of pupils' capabilities. Pupils with SEN and those with EAL have well focused learning targets that arise from the good recording of their progress and the effective assessments of their learning needs.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

38. Partnership with parents is good overall. The school takes an interest in the home life of the pupils and plays an important part in the life of the community. This represents good improvement since the last inspection.
39. Parents are very supportive of the school and the links the school have worked hard to develop are now having a positive impact on the pupils' learning. The school receives substantial support from parents in the classroom with reading and crafts and during the inspection three parents helped the teachers to supervise the children on an environmental walkabout in Hindley. Those who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire and those who attended the parents meeting indicated overwhelmingly that their children like school and make good progress. Despite efforts by the schools' management, there is no parent-teacher association but the school nevertheless benefits from the good support of its parents.
40. Regular newsletters contain details of school activities and provide progress reports on action plans but have limited references to the curriculum. The annual written reports on pupils' progress are evaluative and constructive and give parents appropriate information on what their children have learned. They do not yet consistently include areas for improvement, targets or comments and suggestions for home help. The school provides appropriate opportunities for the exchange of information relating to these reports and parents are invited to attend parents' evenings in February and October of each year. The school prospectus meets statutory requirements but the National Curriculum test results are presently included only in the governors' annual report to parents. The homework policy is explicit with the requirements being clearly defined and the contents well known by parents.
41. Parents are always welcome at the school. They find the staff very approachable and always willing to discuss any issues relating to their child's education and welfare. The headteacher willingly meets and greets parents prior to and after school and parents are aware of and appreciate this facility. Many parents have expressed an interest in an early morning club for the pupils of working parents, and this is being considered by the school's management. A small but significant number of parents of pupils in the reception year attend a Family Numeracy course in the school, which many find personally beneficial and helps them to contribute to improvements in their child's learning.

42. The parents of pupils with SEN are effectively involved from the earliest stages of concern. The school works hard to encourage them to help their children make progress. The parents of pupils with statements of SEN are invited to all reviews and if they do not attend, the school approaches them at the end of the school day following the review to try to arrange a further appointment to discuss the review outcomes.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

43. There has been very good improvement in the leadership and management of the school since the previous inspection. This is one of the main reasons for the good overall improvement since that time. The headteacher has very effectively managed some very difficult situations in recent years and is now providing very good leadership and setting a very clear and effective direction to the school's work. Her 'working file' shows that this extends for up to three years and includes a range of very carefully considered actions aimed at bringing about further improvement in pupils' attainment and achievement. She is receiving good support from the deputy headteacher and together they are establishing good teamwork amongst the staff. This has been enabled through staff changes and the astute organisation of co-ordinators into curriculum teams so that they can help and support each other. As a result, the co-ordinators are becoming more effective in their leadership roles and are using their regular non-contact time effectively to improve provision in their subjects. All co-ordinators evaluate teaching and learning by analysing pupils' work and checking teachers' planning. The co-ordinators for literacy, numeracy and history have evaluated the quality of teaching and learning at first hand in the classroom. It is the school's clearly stated intention to extend this opportunity to all co-ordinators over time. Co-ordinators are also given time in staff meetings to give and receive advice and support.
44. School self-evaluation procedures are very good. The headteacher's own performance management is carried out effectively. She checks teaching and learning in all classes and through meetings with staff and their effective performance management, identifies areas for development and sets challenging targets for improvement. These are reviewed and evaluated when further observations are carried out and teachers and co-ordinators are being made increasingly accountable for the quality of their work and for the pupils' learning. They are responding well to this. Governors are appropriately involved in monitoring the work of the school. They have increased their own expertise through a range of appropriate training, and visit classrooms on a regular basis to gain information to help them evaluate the school's provision. They have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and are very supportive of the headteacher and the staff.
45. The school now has clear aims and values that permeate all of its work and help provide a clear and effective learning environment for the pupils. Although not explicitly stated in the aims, the commitment to high achievement is evident in all of the school's work. The school plans well for the future. It is keenly aware of the effect of the falling birth rate on the numbers coming into school but governors have worked hard to maintain single age classes and a generous staffing ratio to help to continue to raise achievement. While the governors and headteacher ensure that all money is used for the purposes for which it was allocated, they are prudent in their spending. They plan and manage the school's finances effectively and carefully target their spending on the priorities laid down in the well-constructed school development plan, which is greatly improved since the last inspection. This is appropriately costed and there are clear criteria whereby the progress the school is making towards its targets can be measured. The headteacher and governors work hard and successfully

ensure that the school gains best value from all its spending. The administrative officer provides effective support for them by checking budget statements and keeping the headteacher well informed about financial matters. The deputy headteacher is also becoming more involved in this area of the school's work as part of her management role in the school. The large surplus in the school's budget in the 2000/2001 year was effectively earmarked to contribute to the cost of refurbishing the ageing buildings and this work is well under way. The school is making increasingly good use of information and communication technology in its administrative work. It is linked into the Local Education Authority for financial and administrative purposes and receives and submits a wide range of information electronically. It has due regard for data protection procedures and Internet safety and informs parents appropriately.

46. The leadership and management of SEN are good. Registers are kept up to date and statutory requirements are met. The funding delegated to the school for SEN is efficiently and effectively used to meet the requirements of statements and to provide additional classroom support and resources to improve the pupils' rate of progress. Governors see this as an important area of the school's work and are effectively involved in checking that provision remains good. They also have a good awareness of the needs of EAL pupils and although the number is small at present, the SEN co-ordinator ensures that they too receive effective support to help them achieve well. The governors see equality of opportunity and the inclusion of pupils, whatever their background, as further important aims of the school. They are effectively involved in monitoring that these principles are applied equally to all members of the school community, and the staff work hard and successfully ensure that they are.
47. Staff development and training follows the school's priorities and is effectively determined through this and through the school's well-implemented performance management procedures. There are good procedures in place for the induction of teachers new to the school, including the two newly qualified teachers. All teaching and support staff are very effectively deployed to promote pupils' learning. Learning support staff make a good contribution to the pupils' achievement because their work is well planned and they work closely with the teachers to ensure that the pupils gain maximum benefit from the time they spend with them. The effective use of teachers that do not have a class responsibility is having a very positive impact on pupils' learning because it enables them to be taught in smaller groups with learning more closely focused on their needs. In this sense, the school has benefited from its falling roll in that it has the spare capacity to enable the pupils to be taught in separate classrooms when this happens. Thus the school makes good use of the accommodation. Although there is no designated area for outdoor play for children in the Foundation Stage, the school compensates well for this through the effective use of the school grounds and by providing access to large and small apparatus in the school hall. The well-stocked library is used effectively to promote the pupils' reading skills and governors and parents give generously of their time to teach library skills and be on hand to help pupils change books or find information across a range of subjects. Attractive displays celebrate pupils' achievements and often encourage them to answer questions, and learn from what they see. Resources are sufficient to enable all subjects and aspects of the curriculum to be taught and they are used effectively in all lessons.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

48. In order to raise standards further, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

- accelerate the implementation of the clearly stated intentions to improve pupils' attainment and achievement in English. To do this, they should:
 - further improve the pupils' written work by insisting on accurate spelling and the correct use of grammar and punctuation
 - provide more opportunities for role-play, drama and debate in order to promote confident speaking skills and widen the pupils' range of vocabulary
 - establish a whole school agreed approach to improving pupils' handwriting and the quality of presentation in their work
 - establish a whole school approach as to how all of the above will be reinforced and consolidated through all other subjects

(Paragraphs: 5, 18, 60 – 67, 90)

- extend to all subjects the co-ordinators' roles in:
 - checking whether the continuity of learning evident in the teachers' planning is taking place in the classroom
 - collating, annotating and moderating samples of pupils' work to provide guidance for staff as to levels in each subject

(Paragraphs: 43, 44, 76, 83, 95, 98)

The second and third points of the first key issue, and all of the second key issue are already identified in the school improvement plan.

In addition to the above key issues, the governors should consider including the following minor issues in their action plan:

- distinguishing clearly between the needs of pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language *(Paras: 21, 32, 46)*
- the development of an outdoor play area for the Foundation Stage *(Paras: 47, 57)*
- making the school's obvious commitment to high achievement explicit in the school aims *(Para: 45)*

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed (includes 5 short observations where teaching was not graded)	49
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	39

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	3	13	18	10	0	0	0
Percentage	7	29	41	23	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	n/a	200
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	n/a	49

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	n/a	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	n/a	56

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	4

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	10
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	20

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2

National comparative data	5.2
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National comparative data	0.5
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Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	16	17	33

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	14	14
	Girls	16	16	16
	Total	30	30	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	91 (82)	91 (85)	91 (85)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	14	15
	Girls	16	16	16
	Total	30	30	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	91 (82)	91 (85)	94 (97)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	14	12	26

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	6	13	13
	Girls	8	10	11
	Total	14	23	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	54 (81)	88 (71)	92 (84)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	12	12
	Girls	9	10	9
	Total	20	22	21
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	77 (77)	85 (68)	81 (77)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	1
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	3
White	0
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9.7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20.62
Average class size	28.57

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	55

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2.9
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2.0
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	2
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	1	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Financial information

Financial year	2000/2001
	£
Total income	434,630
Total expenditure	433,735
Expenditure per pupil	2,076
Balance brought forward from previous year	42,868
Balance carried forward to next year	43,763

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate 14.4%

Number of questionnaires sent out	194
Number of questionnaires returned	28

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	68	29	0	4	0
My child is making good progress in school.	64	36	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	61	36	4	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	43	50	7	0	0
The teaching is good.	64	32	0	0	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	61	32	7	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	79	18	4	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	82	18	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	54	46	0	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	68	32	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	68	32	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	36	46	11	0	7

Other issues raised by parents

One parent raised concerns about a racist incident in school. The inspection team found that the school has appropriate procedures in place to deal with such incidents and logs them carefully. It dealt appropriately with the incident described, and also handled well a related incident that had taken place outside of school. Both were reported to the relevant authorities.

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

49. There has been very good improvement in the provision for this age group since the last inspection. The baseline assessments carried out at the beginning of the reception year show that the majority of children come to the school with levels of attainment that are well below average for their age. A significant minority have poorly developed communication, language and literacy skills that inhibit their learning in other areas. However the children make very good progress in all areas of learning. The Foundation Stage is very well managed. The curriculum is very well planned and takes full account of the nationally produced guidance for this age group. A major strength is the reception teacher's very good understanding of the step-by-step learning required for children of this age to make progress, that ensures the children are very well prepared for their work in Year 1. The school adds particularly good value to the children's education in their first year.
50. High quality displays of the children's work underline their very good progress from the start of the year. This is also evident from their work books and from the very comprehensive assessment procedures that ensure their work is very well marked, and that they know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve. This is recorded in a very child-friendly way through records of achievement that respond to statements such as 'I am confident about...' and 'My teacher thinks I need to.....', with a clear emphasis on the stepping stones for learning for this age group. All of the children's work is very well annotated to show how much assistance was needed (or not) and the next steps in their learning are clearly determined from the assessment of their work so far.
51. Parents are very effectively involved in their children's learning from before they start school. Effective induction procedures include a series of pre-school visits during which the parents are provided with a range of information and a helpful information booklet that shows them how to help their children learn. Once the children have started school, the majority of parents are successfully encouraged to help their children to read, spell and count, by teaching them the letters, word lists and number ranges that the children are given to take home each week. The teacher's daily contact with the parents ensures that any problems are identified at an early stage and action taken to help address them. Where parents are less supportive, the reception teacher makes a point of seeing them regularly to try to encourage their involvement. There is a very strong partnership with parents at this stage in the children's lives. This is further enhanced by the participation of parents and carers in the 'Family Numeracy' project, successfully aimed at showing them how to help their children with mathematical concepts and understanding.
52. The quality of teaching is very good. All staff, working from the teacher's exceptionally good planning, take every available opportunity and use the good range of resources available to promote children's learning and to ensure a rigorous pace and productivity throughout each lesson. The reception teacher has a very good understanding of the curriculum for the foundation stage and of the way in which young children learn. She uses these very effectively to plan a superb range of short term activities that meet the children's needs and keeps them working hard. These activities often promote their learning in one area while maintaining interest and enthusiasm in a range of others. For example, in a mathematics session, while the whole class emphasis was on numeracy, the children's measurement, shape and pattern making skills were very

successfully consolidated through a number of puzzles and games that also promoted their learning in the areas of creative development (art), knowledge and understanding (design and technology skills in rolling out modelling dough), water play (filling and emptying containers of different capacity), and making repeated patterns using beads of different colours. The staff ensured that all children had the same opportunity to experience all of the activities prepared for them. Similarly in a literacy session, the children's aural discrimination skills were effectively promoted through recognising the sounds made by musical instruments and by playing matching pairs games to promote sight recognition of letters. Thus the children become immersed in the subjects and their skills are greatly developed. Great care is also taken, through very effective questioning and encouraging the children to hold social conversations while they work, to promote communication, language and literacy and mathematical skills in all other areas of learning so that the children are constantly consolidating their knowledge and understanding in these areas. The teacher's very good management and organisation of the classroom itself promotes very good progress in personal, social and emotional development because activities are always prepared in a way that the children have to take some responsibility for their learning, share resources and materials, help each other if they get stuck, and help to tidy away at the end. The very effective use of labelling and a range of cards to determine what the children have to do next also contribute very well to their learning to read and follow instructions.

Personal, social and emotional development

53. The children's very good achievement in this area is seen in their excellent behaviour, good social interaction and extended thinking skills. The majority are likely to reach the early learning goals at the end of their reception year because of the very good teaching they receive that constantly reinforces the need to listen, to care for others and to respect people and property. Personal, social and emotional development is very effectively fostered as the children prepare for physical education activities. The children's independent skills are weak. A significant minority are unable to fasten buttons, put their clothes on the right way round, or put their pumps on the correct feet. However, the staff work hard to improve these areas by giving them an appropriate amount of time to change. The staff insist that the children fold their clothes and put their shoes together, and the children try very hard to do so. Cards and displays are used very effectively to teach the children to take increasing responsibility for their activities and to follow written instructions. They recognise, for example, which groups they are to go to after a whole class session because the lists are clearly displayed for them, and they respond with great enthusiasm when the teacher asks them to tell her where they are to go. They are beginning to recognise the activities they have to do when the teacher shows them cards labelled, for example, 'choose', 'tidy up', 'playtime' and 'workbook', and eagerly awaited the outcome of the 'surprise' card, which showed them it was time for outdoor play. Outdoor play activities are also very effectively organised to enable the children to mix socially, to develop initiative and personality as, for example, they work out how to cross an imaginary river, to think for themselves, and to converse with each other and with the staff. The children understand and are very comfortable with the established routines of the school day. They learn to care for each other and respond with great joy when it is their turn to take Barnaby Bear home for the evening to care for him, get him ready for bed and prepare a diary of his experiences while he is with them. They know that their contributions are valued and in turn, they learn to take pride in what they do and how they present their work. This prepares them very well for life beyond school.

Communication, language and literacy

54. The children achieve very well in this area of learning but the majority are unlikely to meet the early learning goals at the end of their reception year. The children lack confidence when speaking, although the majority listen attentively and try hard to contribute to lessons by answering questions. However, their speech is often indistinct and they provide short, often one-word answers. Despite the very good questioning from the staff, the majority are unable to expand their answers to any significant degree, largely because they lack the vocabulary to do so. Probing questioning helped them to recall the different parts of a book, for example, the title, the cover, a page, a line, a word, a letter. Higher attaining children are beginning, with the help of the teacher, to decode unfamiliar words by 'reading' the pictures, and they accurately sequenced the rhyme 'Humpty Dumpty' in their workbooks. Average attaining children do not yet understand well enough that text carries meaning and they do not have a good recall of letter sounds. However, when encouraged to try, the majority show they are beginning to recognise individual letters but have considerable difficulty in putting them together to form words. For example, although they recognise the letters f, i and n, they do not recognise that put together they make the word 'fin'. Lower attaining pupils do not yet associate written text with meaning. For example, one child did not recognise that a picture in an alphabet book was accompanied by a word saying what the picture was; and another, who recognised the letter 'e' did not recognise it as the initial sound of the word 'elf', which was the associated picture. The children very much enjoy listening to stories, and the very good teaching they receive as they do so is helping them to re-tell stories and to begin to make reasonable predictions about what might happen next. The children try hard to write. Higher attainers make good attempts at writing the letters o, c and d accurately, and show appropriate pencil control as they practise a range of writing patterns. Average and lower attainers are struggling with writing patterns. The majority still have poor pencil control and are unable to make the circle meet in the letter 'o'. Some very low attainers require a high degree of support to help them make recognisable marks on paper. Nevertheless, their workbooks show that they have made very considerable progress since they started school in September.

Mathematical development

55. Very good achievement in this area of learning means that the majority of children count reliably to 5 or 10, recognise simple shapes and compare different lengths using the words 'longer' and 'shorter' in the correct context. All pupils count up to 20 accurately by rote but are much less secure at counting backwards from 20 or even from 10. While the majority also order numbers to 5 or 10 accurately, a significant minority struggle to do so. For example, when asked for a number after 5 and before 7, only one child offered 6, and that after much prompting and encouragement from the teacher, and several wrong guesses by other children. Higher attainers recognise a small range of numbers when written down and count objects accurately one by one. They are also beginning to form numbers correctly when writing them down. The majority rely on counting the spots on the back of their number cards because they do not recognise written numbers, but because they do not count consistently one by one, they often offer the wrong answer to a question. Most children struggle with the concept of counting 'one more than' and with answering questions such as 'how many more' but higher attainers are beginning to be able to name the smallest or largest number in a given sequence that does not begin with zero. The very good teaching in this area ensures that mathematical skills and concepts are reinforced at every opportunity. Apart from counting, the teacher's very effective intervention in the children's water play introduces them to capacity and as they make different sizes of

snakes from modelling dough, the children further reinforce the concepts of 'longer than' and 'shorter than'. The teacher uses her very good knowledge of the children's prior learning by preparing boards that start off a pattern with beads that the children have to continue. Most children do this accurately and explain their patterns correctly in terms of the sequence of colours they have used. Overall, the children's attainment is well below that expected of four-year-olds nationally and the majority are unlikely to meet the early learning goal for mathematics by the end of the reception year.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

56. The children achieve very well in this area of learning and the majority are likely to be close to meeting the early learning goal at the end of their reception year. The children play imaginatively with construction toys, and, usually related to a language or mathematical activity, they build houses and vehicles and create imaginary situations in which to play with them. They use modelling dough to create snakes of different lengths. Very good teaching ensures that they acquire an appropriate range of geographical and historical skills as they walk in their local area, for example to the supermarket, and recognise the changes that have taken place in themselves since they were babies. They readily and accurately compare, for example, what a baby can or cannot do, with what they can do now. This is further reinforced through the good teaching of religious education as they learn the importance of special clothes for special occasions and re-enact a baptismal ceremony at which they become the 'godparents' and discuss how to care for a baby's needs. They make lists of their favourite foods as they learn that they need food to grow, and are developing a growing awareness of their own needs and of their bodies, through scientific activities.

Physical development

57. The children's physical skills are below average for their age. However, their very good achievement since the beginning of the year combined with the very good teaching in this area means that the majority are well on the way to meeting the early learning goals for the end of the reception year. The staff compensate very well for the lack of spontaneous access to an outdoor play area. They plan very well for outdoor activities and make best use of the time available to engage the children in challenging physical activity. The children respond very well by using their imagination effectively, balancing on ropes and pretending the ropes are the river banks, then balancing on rubber rings as the means of crossing the river. The children use the hall space well during the very effectively planned indoor physical activity sessions. They show good awareness of safety, both in movement and in carrying simple apparatus around. They respond very well to the teachers' carefully targeted questioning that successfully leads them to understand the importance of warm up and cool down sessions before and after physical activity. They know, for example, that their bodies have become hot when they become 'puffed out' following physical exertion, and note that the teacher finds it hard to speak when she is out of breath due to physical exertion.
58. Manipulative skills are weak. For example, as they prepared to work with modelling dough, three out of five children were unable to get the dough out of the tub and their rolling out skills required considerable help from the nursery nurse to achieve their end. Work in their books shows that lower attainers have great difficulty cutting out fish and, while higher attainers manage to retain the shape, they do not cut accurately around a given line. The pasting of work into books is untidy but has improved greatly since September. The majority of children are now able to remain with a shape when colouring in, and their artwork shows increasing control of pencils and paintbrushes.

Creative development

59. The children are exposed to a good range of creative activities. Their achievement is very good because they are very well taught, and the majority are well on the way to meeting the early learning goals for the end of the reception year. Musical listening skills are especially well developed as the children learn to distinguish between the sounds of different instruments and to sort them according to whether they are hit or stroked. They successfully distinguish between 'loud' and 'quiet', and 'long' and 'short' in relation to sound. They know a good range of nursery rhymes and songs and sing with enthusiasm and enjoyment, and with reasonably accurate pitch. The children create collages and make leaf prints and while some of their work is inhibited by their poor manipulative skills, it nevertheless shows imagination and a developing creativity. Colour recognition is insecure. For example, in one piece of work, where the children were required to use different colours, one painting is all red and another is all black but the recording of the children's responses is 'I tried hard to use all colours'. The children's very good progress in art is seen in the difference between their work in September and they are now much more secure control of paintbrushes and use of paint. Through outdoor activities, they are also beginning to learn about texture in art as they make brick rubbings. Effective involvement in role play further enhances the pupils' literacy skills as they take on the role of a waiter or waitress in a café and show good levels of imagination and creative thought as they take orders on a notepad, spurred on by very effective interaction with the teacher. Further opportunities for role play are grasped in religious education where the children enthusiastically joined in the re-enactment of a baptismal service and confidently offered ways in which they would care for the baby.

ENGLISH

60. The attainment of the majority of pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 matches the national expectation for their ages. Since the previous inspection standards have improved, despite the dip in the National Curriculum test results for pupils in Year 6 in 2001. There was a significant number of pupils with special educational needs in that year group and the pupils were insufficiently well prepared for the question that many chose to do on the test paper. Their attainment also suffered as a result of some staffing problems in the previous year that caused disruption to their learning. The school has meticulously identified and addressed these issues and the current pupils are achieving well. Pupils with SEN are well supported and make good progress towards the targets in their IEPs. Pupils with EAL are few in number, but teachers ensure that their tasks and activities are clearly explained to them and they make good progress in their learning.
61. Pupils enter the school with very poor speaking and listening skills. However, through effective teaching, pupils' listening skills are good both in Year 2 and in Year 6. Their speaking skills, though satisfactory by the time they are in Year 6, are less well developed. A significant number of pupils in Years 3 to 6 lack the confidence and skills to speak aloud clearly and give explanations that provide relevant information and interesting detail. The school has taken effective action to address this in Years 1 and 2 and as a result the pupils in those two years and in Year 3 are answering with increasing confidence in literacy sessions. The pupils benefit from a limited number of opportunities to engage in role-play where staff interact well with pupils, and speaking skills are also being developed in circle time and class assemblies. However, there are still not enough opportunities for role-play, drama and debate to promote more confidence, enhance speaking skills and help widen pupils' vocabulary. Speaking and listening skills are extended appropriately in some other subjects, for

example in religious education, when pupils talk about special books; and in science, where one pupil investigating sound volunteers that “Loose strings are useless for making a sound on an instrument”.

62. Pupils, through well-structured planning and teaching, are achieving well in reading, especially considering their limited skills on entry to school. Teachers throughout the school successfully use the daily literacy lesson to promote reading skills. The systematic teaching of phonic skills (letter sounds) is having a good effect on standards in reading. By the time they are in Year 2, most pupils know the names and sounds of letters and recognise phonic blends. Lower attainers use these skills and picture clues well when faced with deciphering unfamiliar words. Although lower attainers still need a significant amount of adult support when reading aloud, other pupils read simple books accurately, instantly recognising character names and a good number of often used words. Average and higher attainers blend letters successfully and have a good understanding of what they are reading. The majority of pupils in Year 3 read with fluency and understanding. Pupils' achievement accelerates between Year 3 and Year 5 and by the time they are in Year 6, the majority of pupils read accurately and show a sound understanding of a range of texts. Lower attainers still lack fluency and expression when given the challenging texts that are more appropriate for their age. The school's emphasis on improving reading over the past few years, together with good literacy support for pupils with SEN, has culminated in an overall improvement in standards throughout the whole school. Pupils have good attitudes to books and a few higher attainers show an increasing ability to infer meaning from what they read as they discuss characters and events in texts and in their own written work. The majority of pupils in all age groups adequately explain their preferences in reading, for example, fantasy and biographies. They are familiar with a range of authors and by Year 6 they have a good understanding of how fiction and non-fiction texts are organised and how to find books about different subjects. Regular library sessions, organised by staff and supported by parents and governors, further extends the pupils' reading and library skills. Some higher and average attaining pupils also understand how to locate information using the Internet.
63. Through good assessment procedures and the very effective tracking of pupils' progress, the school has identified weaknesses in writing. Following this, an intensive support visit by the Local Education Authority's literacy consultant was instigated and this highlighted areas for development. Teachers are now endeavouring to help pupils to develop a range of sentence types and to use tenses consistently. In-service training followed this initiative and this, together with the school's introduction of ability groups and classroom support for literacy, is beginning to improve the range and quality of pupils' writing. Pupils currently in Year 2 and Year 6 are working at the nationally expected levels for their age.
64. By Year 2, the majority of pupils write complete sentences accurately using full stops and capital letters. They sequence sentences correctly and have a satisfactory understanding of how to write instructions, for example, how to make a finger puppet. Reasonable spelling attempts reflect a satisfactory knowledge of phonics, for example, 'hayar' for 'higher'. All pupils make reasonable attempts at story writing and most produce work in appropriately constructed sentences that communicate meaning. Higher attainers' writing shows some variation in sentence construction and sometimes they use connecting words and phrases well, for example, continuing their story with phrases such as 'After a couple of days'. From the earliest stages pupils are encouraged to make marks and 'write' in, for example, the 'home corner', and 'the post office'. For example, in a lesson in which the pupils were learning to write captions and simple sentences, stimulated by photographs of themselves in physical

education, one child wrote 'You can travel on your back' and another 'We can moo on R legs'. A good range of word games and apparatus is used effectively to support pupils' writing in Years 1 and 2 and the pupils are achieving well. They successfully learn to form letters correctly and know to use finger spaces to lay out their writing clearly. Pupils in Year 2 are beginning to join their letters. By the time they are in Year 6, the majority of pupils make good use of the opportunities presented to them to write in a range of styles for different purposes. For example, pupils in Year 5 write character profiles leading to creating a play script whilst pupils in Year 6 successfully compare a novel with the television version of the story. Pupils express their ideas and improve their grammar and punctuation through writing biographies, diaries, letters and imaginative stories. Higher attainers use punctuation accurately and include good descriptive vocabulary and complex sentences as they write. For example, one pupil began her story with 'On a stormy night, with the rain lashing like a whip ...'. Lessons in extended writing give all pupils, but especially higher attainers, further opportunities to develop their writing well. Average attainers cover similar work to higher attainers, but their grammar and use of language is less secure. They write, for example, 'Me and John was scared'. Lower attainers produce less mature writing and have difficulties with grammar and spelling. These pupils, most of whom have SEN, receive good support, and tasks in literacy are well matched to pupils' needs. Many pupils have untidy handwriting and do not always join their letters and the presentation of their work is poor. Some pupils, even in Year 6, often write in pencil.

65. The quality of teaching is good overall. It is never less than good in Years 1 and 2 and ranges from satisfactory to excellent in Years 3 to 6. The teachers use their secure subject knowledge to plan work with clear learning objectives. They share these with the pupils thereby ensuring that the pupils' thinking is effectively focused on what they are to learn, and they use the objectives to guide their teaching and support effective assessment. Whole class sessions are usually lively and interesting and the teachers ensure all pupils are included by effectively adapting questions to enable all to participate whatever their level of prior attainment. In the very good lessons, the teachers successfully transmit their own enjoyment of literacy to the pupils and plan independent and group tasks that provide appropriate levels of challenge for all pupils, including those with special educational needs. For example, in a shared reading session, the teacher acted a good role model, persuading the pupils to use their voices expressively to represent the characters in a play, and challenging them to improve the way they represented the characters, thus making the lesson enjoyable and at the same time improving the pupils' ability to read expressively and fluently. In most lessons, the whole class sessions at the end of the literacy hour are used effectively to consolidate and evaluate the pupils' work and help them to learn from each other.
66. In all age groups, the teachers' effective planning of work in other subjects supports the development of pupils' language and literacy skills. For example, in religious education pupils write good accounts about Mohammed and in science they record investigations or write out instructions. Pupils in years 3 to 6 use information and communication technology skills appropriately to support their learning, for example, through using word processing. They do not yet use these skills to produce an initial draft and then refine their work. In Years 1 and 2, there was little evidence of the use of the computer to support pupils' learning in English.
67. The leadership and management of English are satisfactory. The co-ordinator is very conscientious and has worked successfully with staff to ensure the full implementation of the literacy hour and to raise standards. She has been particularly effective in Years 1 and 2. For example, meetings are held with parents to discuss

how reading is taught in school and how parents can help their children. Reading homework is carefully planned and monitored and a new reading scheme has been introduced that has successfully raised the pupils' interest in books and provided opportunities for reading more widely. The teachers in Years 2 and 3 work closely together to ensure a smooth transition for the pupils. This continuity of provision is having a very good effect on the pupils' work in Year 3.

MATHEMATICS

68. The pupils currently in Year 2 are achieving very well and the majority are attaining standards above those expected for their age. The very good achievement continues throughout Years 3 to 6 and the attainment of the majority of pupils currently in Year 6 is well above the national expectation for their age. The pupils' very good achievement is due mainly to very good and occasionally excellent teaching, and to the very good leadership and management of the subject. One aspect of this work, which has been instrumental in raising standards, is the very good assessment, monitoring and tracking of individual work. As a result, challenging, but achievable targets are set and this is improving standards in all year groups. The challenging targets set by the school in 2001 were reached and the targets set for 2002 are well on track to be exceeded. The school has already raised them in response to the pupils' very good achievement so far. There are no significant differences between the performance of boys and girls. Pupils with SEN are well supported and this enables them to make good gains in their learning. Pupils with EAL are few in number, but teachers ensure that they have tasks and activities clearly explained and their progress is carefully monitored to ensure that the progress made matches their ability. There has been very good improvement in mathematics since the last inspection.

69. By Year 2, the good teaching of basic skills enables pupils to develop and extend their knowledge and understanding of number patterns. The pupils are confident when using a range of mental strategies to recall addition and subtraction facts in 2's, 5's and 10's. The teacher's good use of mathematical vocabulary, encouraging pupils to count in multiples of 10, ensures that they then use correct language when explaining their answers. This also helps pupils to develop their speaking skills generally, as they are constantly encouraged to make their explanations clear, both to the teacher and to other pupils. In this class, the learning support assistant was used effectively to support pupils new to the school, and to work with a small group of pupils to practise folding paper accurately to show halves. Younger pupils in Year 1 produce clear graphs to show information about the colour of eyes, hair and how tall pupils are. Pupils successfully interpret block graphs, bar charts and line graphs, extending and developing their mathematical language as they look for tall, taller and tallest pupils. The teacher displays the work of pupils well, and as a result, they are able to use this as an effective learning resource.
70. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 successfully build on this good learning. The teachers' very good assessment of what pupils know, understand and can do informs their planning of what the pupils need to do next and the challenging activities that arise from this require the pupils to think hard, concentrate well and work very productively. Planning is thorough, but is very relevant to the day to day activities, for example, in Year 3, the lesson planning had been changed overnight as the teacher's marking of work indicated that more challenging activities could be tackled. During the lesson observed, the teacher quickly realised that the activities chosen were slightly too challenging for the majority of pupils, so a further adjustment was planned. This very astute assessment, informing planning, also indicates good subject knowledge and is a clear factor in raising attainment throughout the school. Mental and oral activities, which begin each lesson, are conducted at a cracking pace and all teachers do this well. This ensures that pupils are lively, attentive and behaviour is good because the pupils enjoy their activities and are anxious to do well. A further good feature of many lessons is the way teachers frame questions to probe for sound knowledge and understanding of mathematical concepts before moving on to the next stage of learning. They encourage pupils to explain very clearly, and using correct mathematical vocabulary, how they have arrived at an answer. Pupils with SEN are helped in a sensitive way to take part, either by the class teacher or with guidance from a learning support assistant. By Year 6, a very firm grounding in mathematics has been established and pupils have positive attitudes to the subject. In Year 6, excellent use of visual resources and the pace of the lesson enable pupils to extend their knowledge and understanding of decimals. The teacher constantly monitors the responses from all pupils and uses resources very well to help those pupils who are less confident to succeed. Inspiring and challenging teaching in this class ensures that pupils make excellent progress during lessons. The teachers' very high expectations of what the pupils can do, together with her excellent subject knowledge and relationships ensure that high standards are reached. In discussion, the pupils indicated that they enjoyed their lessons very much and when observed, they were keen to help and support each other to learn.
71. The subject is very well led and managed by the co-ordinator. A very positive feature of her monitoring of the subject is the individual pupil assessment and tracking of progress as pupils move through the school. A specific priority was to tackle some underachievement of higher attaining pupils and monitor the performance of girls. This has been successful and higher attaining pupils are reaching high standards both in relation to all schools and when compared to similar schools. The National Numeracy Strategy has been very well implemented and the co-ordinator has

monitored the work of all teachers with a clear focus on the starting activities in each mathematics lesson. As a result of this work, mental and oral activities are done well by all teachers. The mathematics curriculum is broad, balanced and teachers use information and communication technology where appropriate to support both teaching and learning. Some good use of technology is evident in the teaching of shape, space and measures, with computer-generated graphs being used to provide effective visual resources for learning. These are then displayed well around the school, enabling all pupils to take an interest and learn from the work of others. Staff new to the school are monitored and supported well, ensuring that the progress of pupils is maintained. Resources for the subject are satisfactory.

SCIENCE

72. There has been good improvement in science since the last inspection. Pupils are now achieving well and the attainment of the pupils currently in Year 2 and Year 6 matches the national expectation for their age.
73. The majority of pupils in Year 2 accurately name the major parts of the body and successfully identify materials that change through heating, cooling and bending and those that do not. They recognise and name correctly the parts of flowering plants and in their work on healthy eating show a sound understanding of which foods would go into a 'sensible child's lunch box' and which would not. They know they need to exercise to keep healthy and that medicine is used to help them, for example, as one pupil wrote 'When I have a bad cofe'. The pupils enjoy the opportunities presented to them to engage in first hand investigative work. For example, Year 1 pupils, through practical experiments, appreciate that light is essential for seeing things, but discover that their other senses can assist them when in dark places. Assessments at the end of each unit of work are systematically recorded, particularly at the end of Year 2, and are passed on to the teacher in Year 3. Pupils in years 1 and 2 record their work appropriately and in the main it is neat and tidy. Their teachers have high expectations of what the pupils can do but seldom use the computer to record evidence or to find out further information.
74. Pupils in Year 6 have a sound understanding of the principles relating to fair tests and use appropriate scientific vocabulary to describe, for example, heart and pulse rates and when experimenting with electrical circuits. For example, one pupil offered that 'Metals are good conductors of electricity', demonstrating a good use of scientific vocabulary and a developing understanding of this concept. The majority of pupils have good factual knowledge of the skeleton and know that their bones grow as they get older, building on the work they did in Year 3, where they learn the importance of the skeleton to the human body. Appropriate links are made with numeracy when, for example, Year 4 pupils plan a survey to find out if forearms grow and then make graphs to illustrate their findings. The pupils also make good individual books about moving and growing, thereby enhancing their literacy skills. The teachers build effectively on work pupils have previously learned. For example, pupils in Year 4 constructed and tested electrical circuits from given diagrams, while pupils in Year 6 designed their own diagrams and then tested them to see if they worked. Pupils in Year 5 experiment successfully with sound effects, making good links to music and design and technology. They make musical instruments and understand the need for vibration and that different lengths and thicknesses of string, and different sizes of drums, produce different pitches. Their investigative skills are developing well and the practical work is usually well managed. Graphs, for example, to show heights of shadows and distance from light which also link with mathematics, are presented

well. However, the written recording of evidence is less secure and in this area, work is often untidy.

75. The quality of the teaching is good, with a number of strengths that account for the improvement in the subject. Teachers place emphasis on pupils' observational and investigative skills, encouraging them to find things out for themselves. For example, in a Year 6 lesson, pupils were delighted to find that different and unexpected metal objects could extend their circuits. Teachers plan together and the newly adopted national scheme is interpreted well to ensure all elements of science are covered. Most teachers ask probing questions and encourage pupils to explain their thinking to others. Some pupils find this difficult, but their teachers are sensitive to their needs.
76. The leadership and management of science are good. The co-ordinator has a clear monitoring role which includes assessing the planning and the pupils' work, but does not yet include monitoring teaching in the classroom. Good assessment procedures covering the whole school are being implemented effectively and the outcomes are used effectively to inform further planning. For example, as a result of the analysis of the results of the teacher assessments at the end of Year 4, pupils were put into sets in Year 5. These sets of higher and lower attainers are taught by two teachers, one of whom is a science specialist. This enables teachers to target pupils in the smaller groups appropriately and support their individual needs. Pupils are taught in ability groups in Year 6 with class support. These initiatives are already having a good effect on pupils' learning. Resources are sufficient to support the school's scheme of work and are used well to support pupils' learning.

ART AND DESIGN

77. Pupils' attainment is as expected nationally for their age. They achieve well from a very low starting point. Their sketchbooks are effectively used and confirm their good progress in, for example observational drawing and through an appropriately wide range of art activities. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection.
78. Art and design is taught alternately with design and technology and it was possible to see only one lesson during the inspection. In this, the teaching was good. The pupils in Year 5 were successfully introduced to van Gogh's 'Sunflowers' and discussed with their teacher the differences between the picture and the artificial sunflowers brought in for the occasion, commenting on the colour, and the need for colour mixing, and showing a sound understanding of texture, shading and the technique of dabbing. At the end of the lesson, the teacher, in a successful whole class session, helped the pupils to evaluate their work and to explain the process of how they had decided to paint, for example, drawing first, or determining the size on the paper in outline.
79. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The headteacher is co-ordinating art and design on a temporary basis, having taken it over from a teacher who left at the end of last year. There is currently no written policy but there is a clear understanding of how to teach the subject throughout the school, gained from the use of the nationally recommended scheme of work, from effective involvement in workshops with staff at the local art centre, and through visits to and loans of original works from the centre related to the themes being studied in school. This appropriately enhances the curriculum by providing first hand experience of working with practising artists and studying art in different styles and forms, from different times and places. The subject makes a good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The pupils engage in a good range of work in two and three dimensions, including clay. They also have appropriate experience of

textiles, as seen in, for example, the large quilts they have made, including one for the millennium. Assessment procedures are satisfactory but are rightly under review to meet the requirements of Curriculum 2000 and to provide evidence of progress through collections of appropriately annotated and levelled work.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

80. Standards in design and technology are in line with the national expectation for pupils in Year 2 and Year 6, and pupils achieve well throughout the school. This represents good improvement since the last inspection. Since then a new policy and scheme of work have been introduced and successfully implemented. These have enabled staff to plan together effectively and make good links with other subjects such as music, art and design, and history.
81. Pupils in Year 2 demonstrate satisfactory designing skills. They make careful drawings and construct creditable models from a wide range of materials and explain clearly what they have done. For example, one pupil writes, 'Me and Natalie made a model school', and another, 'We decide to make a big fire engine. We made the ladder by clipping the blue bits together with some red clips'. They gain good experiences in selecting and using tools, for example, when cutting and chopping fruit and learn to handle tools safely. Through good teaching, the pupils are beginning to plan their work effectively. They successfully convey their own ideas through drawing and modelling using a good range of construction kits. Evaluation of the products they make is built into the scheme of work. For example, the pupils tried hard to make simple evaluations as to how they could make the puppets that they had designed and made work better.
82. Pupils in Year 3 successfully identify different foods in specific groups as they evaluate the quality of a range of sandwiches. They record their opinions on taste, smell and appearance appropriately. In Years 4 to 6, as they look at the properties of materials, the pupils successfully evaluate their usefulness for a particular purpose. For example, when making containers for money, pupils in Year 4 focused effectively on the strength, transparency, waterproof properties and general fitness of particular materials for the containers. Pupils in Year 5 considered carefully which materials, bottles and boxes to use when designing and making musical instruments, which they then named and played, for example, "drumbells", "stranglestrings" and "bubbleworld". Pupils in Year 6 enjoyed sketching different slippers, noting the materials used and how they are joined, and making reasonable attempts at estimating the relative costs of each. They also discussed the suitability of the designs of the slippers for different age groups and evaluated safety aspects distinguishing, for example, between those slippers that are functional and those that are purely decorative. Pupils have good attitudes to their work and all pupils, including those with SEN, are included in the activities.

83. The quality of teaching is good. Planning is thorough and gives good attention to the skills to be learned and the understanding to be developed. The subject is well led and managed. The co-ordinator monitors planning but not yet classroom practice. A school portfolio is being compiled to show good practice and provide samples of work at different levels. Resources are sufficient to meet the needs of the curriculum and are used well to promote pupils' learning. The introduction of sessions involving children in the reception class working alongside pupils in Year 1 is proving successful in raising standards in this subject.

GEOGRAPHY

84. The majority of pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 reach the standards expected nationally for their ages. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. Only one lesson was seen during the inspection, therefore judgements are also based on discussions with teachers and pupils, the scrutiny of planning, work in pupils' books and on-going work displayed in classrooms throughout the school. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory throughout the school and the pupils' attitude to their work, their response to questions and their behaviour are very good.
85. In the one lesson observed, very good teaching in Year 2 enabled pupils to develop and extend their geographical skills of using maps and plans of the locality. The pupils were able to locate their school and playing field on the map and a small number of pupils were also able to locate the street where they live. Good links were made with literacy in this lesson as the teacher taught the correct way to write an address on a postcard or letter. The effective use of a computer in this lesson enabled pupils to learn how to draw a plan of their journey to school, which they printed out independently. The weak literacy skills of some pupils slowed their progress in this lesson, as they were unable to read the road names on a map. Older pupils in Year 5 are taught to use databases to record their information about global climates and annual rainfall. This was an effective link with information and communication skills as the pupils began to appreciate that data entered incorrectly would give false information and consequently be of little use. In most lessons, teachers make good use of numeracy skills in the way data in the form of graphs is presented, For example, older pupils present their work on a 'Walk to School Survey' using bar charts and pie charts. In discussion, pupils in Year 6 discussed their current work on mountains. They were able to talk knowledgeably about how they use maps, globes and atlases to learn about continents, oceans and places, but their geographical skills and ability to frame geographical questions to explore important issues are not secure, indicating that geographical skills have not been taught progressively.
86. Teachers have started to use assessment effectively at the end of each teaching unit and as a consequence of this, strengths and weaknesses in the pupils' learning are identified and can now be addressed. Teachers plan their lessons using national guidance, so the coverage of topics and the gradual development of skills are now being taught progressively. Lessons and activities are planned to take into account the learning needs of higher attaining pupils and those pupils with SEN. This helps all pupils to achieve as well as they can. Pupils with EAL are well supported in lessons and achieve in line with their age and ability. Teachers make effective links with moral and social education and this was illustrated well as pupils filled shoeboxes full of gifts for disadvantaged children in other countries. The final destinations of the shoeboxes are located on a world map, making a useful contribution to the pupils' knowledge of other countries and places. The very good teaching in Year 2 and the analysis of the teachers' planning and the pupils' work, together with discussions with the pupils in Year 6, show that overall the teaching of geography is satisfactory.

87. The subject is presently being satisfactorily co-ordinated by the headteacher in a care-taking role, due to staffing changes. Strengths and weaknesses in the teaching of the subject have been quickly identified and the quality of learning is being monitored by sound assessment procedures. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. The school makes good use of the local and wider community to provide many opportunities for the pupils to experience new learning opportunities and as a result, the geography curriculum is enriched. Overall, resources in school for the subject are satisfactory.

HISTORY

88. The majority of pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 reach the nationally expected standards for their age. They achieve satisfactorily throughout the school, progressively acquiring the knowledge, skills and understanding needed in this subject. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection. In some lessons, where their interest and imagination is fired by the use of interesting resources and very good teaching, learning is very good. The pupils' attitudes to learning and behaviour in lessons are always satisfactory and often good.
89. The teaching of history is satisfactory. Younger pupils are taught chronology in ways that are relevant and meaningful to them, for example in a Year 2 class a time-line shows the typical events that take place during a school day. Knowledge and understanding of the past is gradually developed as pupils learn about the types of homes and lifestyles in the past. They are taught to use reference books appropriately to make comparisons between objects in the home in the past and those they are familiar with now. Effective links are made with spiritual, moral and social education as pupils learn about the events in the First World War, which led to the annual Remembrance Sunday and the custom of buying a poppy for remembrance. Older pupils in Year 3 learn about the Romans very effectively. The knowledge and understanding of this period is taught very well, and the pupils make good use of a range of resources to find out about the Roman occupation of Britain. They use books, posters and a CD-ROM to investigate the past and begin to learn the difference between fact and opinion.
90. Teachers make good links with literacy skills during lessons. For example, they frame questions carefully to give pupils the opportunity to develop their speaking skills to explain their thoughts and opinions in some detail. Writing tasks and activities are appropriately planned to develop the pupils' ability to write stories and accounts. These are then marked with an emphasis on correct spelling, punctuation and handwriting. However, weak handwriting amongst older pupils often spoils the presentation of their work. Pupils in Year 6 are given the opportunity to distinguish between fact, opinion and propaganda as they learn about the effect of the blitz during World War 2 and what the effects of being evacuated were on many children. Scrutiny of pupils' work shows that there are some inconsistencies in the way pupils are taught to record work, indicating that the expectations of some teachers are not as high as others. All teachers plan their lessons well and use assessment effectively to inform the next stage of learning. Teachers plan activities to take into account the needs of those pupils with SEN or those who are more able and consequently, all pupils achieve satisfactorily over time. Pupils with EAL have their needs met satisfactorily in lessons, as teachers ensure that they understand the language and concepts necessary to complete activities.

91. The subject is led and managed well. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. The co-ordinator has a secure view of standards throughout the school as she regularly monitors pupils' work and has undertaken some observation of teaching and learning in the classroom. A useful portfolio of pupils' work from each year group is used to judge standards. Inexperienced teachers are monitored and supported well. Assessment at the end of each teaching unit enables strengths and weaknesses in knowledge, skills and understanding to be addressed. Resources for the subject are satisfactory, but there are few artefacts in school.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

92. The majority of pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 reach the standards expected nationally for their age in this subject. This represents good improvement since the previous inspection, when standards were found to be unsatisfactory. The reasons for the improvements are that the teachers' planning now fully meets the National Curriculum requirements for the subject. Further national guidance has been adopted in planning and as a result of this, ICT skills are taught in a progressive way as pupils move through the school. Their achievement is satisfactory and teachers ensure that they now use these skills much more within other subjects of the curriculum.
93. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, and occasionally it is good. The teachers have improved their own subject knowledge through training, but there are still some areas for improvement, which have been highlighted for further training. As a result, standards in ICT vary, with some pupils working at the correct or much higher level, depending on the confidence of the teacher. Younger pupils in Year 1 build up their skills in using modelling programs as they use the mouse to drag items of clothing across the screen to dress a teddy. They appreciate the flexibility of the computer when adjusting the teddy's clothing by moving the mouse slowly. Some specialist teaching in Year 2 enables pupils to learn both quickly and in an interesting way how to program a moving device. The pupils know that computers follow a set of instructions and they are able to write a simple set of instructions to program and move a floor robot accordingly. In this lesson, very good teaching with a small group of pupils ensured that their learning was fun. The teacher used correct vocabulary and also used the school gymnasium as an effective teaching resource to enable the pupils to 'march out' the program, so that they were able to visualise what the computer would then do. This was effective and increased the pupils' enjoyment of the lesson. Older pupils in Year 3 very successfully used their computer skills to develop their knowledge and understanding of music. The teacher gave individual teaching to ensure that pupils of all abilities were successfully challenged to use their creative skills as they described high and low pitch and composed successful pieces of music. In Year 5, the sound teaching of database skills enabled pupils to develop and extend their knowledge of how to input information using fields. They are taught to appreciate that data must be entered accurately or its subsequent use in answering questions, for example related to global climate and annual rainfall levels, is diminished.

94. In most subject areas, teachers are extending the use of ICT to assist and support learning opportunities. In English however, pupils mainly use the word processing facility of the computer to produce final drafts of work as an aid to presentation, rather than writing initial first drafts and then editing, using their computer skills. Teachers have ensured that the social and moral aspects of using the Internet have been explored with older pupils and in discussion, they are able to explain how to use the Internet safely. Social skills develop as teachers encourage pupils to work together and help each other to succeed, which they were observed to do in many instances.
95. There is no co-ordinator for the subject at the moment due to recent staffing changes, so the headteacher has taken temporary responsibility. She is fully aware of strengths and weaknesses in the subject and has a clear action plan for further improvement. In particular, staff training, which will ensure that all staff are competent, is an identified priority for the school. Resources for the subject are satisfactory and the new computer suite, although small, enables small groups of pupils to receive intensive teaching and support.

MUSIC

96. There is insufficient evidence on which to make a secure judgement on attainment or achievement in music, on the quality of teaching, or on improvement since the last inspection. Because of the school's timetabling, only one full session was observed, with more to take place the day after the inspection ended. Although information and communication technology is used well in this subject, pupils' work is not stored on disk or tape for evaluation or for evidence. However, in discussion, the pupils in Year 6 recalled that they had engaged in a range of musical activities involving listening, composing, appraising and performing and their appropriate use of relevant musical vocabulary confirmed that the small amount of work seen in their books. During a hymn practice, the pupils sang with enthusiasm and with a secure sense of pitch. Their attention was appropriately drawn to the need for correct posture, breathing and clear diction but the effectiveness of these good points was inhibited by the fact that they had to sit on the floor for most of the session.
97. In the lesson seen, excellent teaching made very effective use of information and communication technology in composition and research work. Pupils in Year 3 successfully composed music, the majority using one of two different computer programs and some composing two pieces, one on each. They competently used the computer to refine their work and to explore a range of instruments using a CD ROM. Good extension work followed for those who had finished, namely to find the instruments they had used on the computer, on the keyboard, and to compare and contrast the quality of sound. Part of another session with pupils in Year 3 showed that they had a good sense of samba rhythm and were able to follow accurately instructions to raise and lower pitch.
98. The leadership and management of music are satisfactory. The co-ordinator correctly aims to raise the profile of music throughout the school and to make assessment more rigorous as teachers become secure with the nationally recommended guidance for the subject. The teachers' planning shows that the pupils listen to a good range of music from different times and places. Music makes a good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural activities. The curriculum is suitably enhanced through activities such as the choir and the music club, and a range of visitors into school widen the pupils' musical horizons and help them to understand and appreciate different styles of music, for example, the samba and (pending) Egyptian music as well as music by a woodwind group in the western tradition.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

99. Pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 reach the nationally expected standards for their age. The pupils achieve satisfactorily and standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. Pupils with SEN and pupils with EAL make similar progress to all pupils. Pupils' attainment in swimming fully meets requirements, with all pupils achieving the recommended 25-metre certificate in 2001. The school predicts a similar standard to be reached next year.
100. The quality of teaching is satisfactory and teachers ensure that all pupils receive a broad and balanced curriculum. Outdoors and adventurous activities are taught during a residential visit for older pupils in Years 5 and 6. Teachers plan lessons well based on school and national guidance and as a result, pupils acquire sound skills in gymnastics, dance and games in a cumulative way. Younger pupils in the infants have suitably vigorous activities during the warm-up part of their lessons, but teachers do not always use this part of the lesson well enough to develop the knowledge and understanding of what happens to the body as activity increases. This is also not a strong feature of lessons with older pupils and consequently, a learning opportunity is lost to teach the health-related aspects of physical exercise. Teachers give instructions clearly and manage pupils well. This results in the majority of pupils being attentive and responsive, and most pupils behave well in lessons. The majority of teachers change into appropriate clothing for lessons, thereby providing a good role model to their pupils, but some do not, which gives a mixed message to the pupils. Teachers use questioning effectively to extend and develop knowledge during lessons and good use is made of pupils to demonstrate good movement in dance and gymnastics. This results in pupils learning from watching and evaluating the skills and performances of others. This was particularly evident in a Year 6 class where a good demonstration was given by pairs of pupils on how to support a partner when balancing. This helped all pupils to refine and develop their own skills. Sound teaching of health and safety rules, particularly when performing more challenging balancing skills in gymnastics, or when putting out equipment and apparatus, ensures that all pupils learn in a safe environment. Many teachers are involved in extra-curricular activities held either at lunchtime or after school, and provide a satisfactory range of athletics, games and gymnastics activities.
101. The co-ordinator provides satisfactory leadership and management of the subject. The teachers' planning is monitored to ensure that skills are taught progressively, but the co-ordinator does not observe lessons to monitor the quality of teaching or learning throughout the school. The co-ordinator is instrumental in forging links with partner schools, particularly with the local high schools to provide extra skills training a variety of sporting activities. Resources are satisfactory and have recently been enhanced by the school's involvement in national sports initiatives.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

102. Pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 reach standards that are consistent with the locally agreed syllabus for their ages. In the last inspection it was reported that the subject did not support pupils' spiritual development and there were few opportunities for reflection. Religious education now contributes very well to pupils' spiritual development and there are many opportunities for reflection, and overall improvement has been good.
103. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have an appropriate understanding of Bible stories and the teaching of Jesus. They also appreciate that the Bible is a special book for Christians and there are many special days in the Christian calendar and related to it, for example, Remembrance Day. Pupils look at photographs and special events such as a Christening and learn the names of the different pieces of church furniture, for example, the font and altar. Through good teaching, the pupils gain appropriate knowledge and understanding of the special books in other religions such as the Q'ran. They also know that there are alternative places in which to worship for people with different beliefs, for example, in a synagogue. By Year 2, they have good knowledge and understanding of some stories from the Christian, Jewish and Islamic religions. By Year 6, the majority of pupils have an appropriate knowledge of many of the major beliefs, symbols and observances of Christians, Muslims, Jews and Hindus and know the relevant vocabulary associated with each. For example, they know the background to the 'Diwali' ceremony and talk about the 'five pillars' that support a 'Muslim' in his faith and the significance of 'Ramadan'. Pupils, through good teaching, are aware that all major religions have special festivals and celebrations and that many festivals celebrate the triumph over evil in all religions. They enjoy listening to and acting out Bible stories, for example, the miracle of the calming of the storm, and are gaining a good understanding of biblical locations and events in Jesus' life.
104. Teaching is good and is delivered mainly by a specialist teacher. Her very good subject knowledge and her high expectations of pupils' skills in listening, discussion and written work are having a good impact on standards. There is a growing improvement in pupils' recorded work. Lessons are taken at an appropriate pace and all work is marked constructively and carefully. Religious education has a high profile in the school. It supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well. The co-ordinator's enthusiasm for the subject, together with the linking of special days and festivals, such as World Kindness Day and Hanukkah with planned reflection time in the classroom, enhances the provision for pupils' spiritual development. Effective assessment is ongoing and built into the scheme at the end of specific units. Visits to places of worship and visiting speakers from organisations such the British Legion enrich the pupils' understanding and help them to be aware of the needs of others. Resources are good, with sufficient artefacts for pupils to handle and study. The subject is well led and managed.