

INSPECTION REPORT

ROSEBANK SCHOOL

Northwich

LEA area: Cheshire

Unique reference number: 111513

Headteacher: Ms C Newall

Reporting inspector: Mr Tom Smith
21044

Dates of inspection: 22 – 26 May 2000

Inspection number: 197474

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Special
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3-7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Townfield Lane Barnton Northwich Cheshire
Postcode:	CW 8 4QP
Telephone number:	01606 74975
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr J Watters
Date of previous inspection:	15-19 September 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr Tom Smith	Registered inspector	Information and communication technology. Religious Education. Physical Education.	What sort of school is it? The school's results and achievements. How well are the pupils taught?
Mrs Sarah Drake	Lay Inspector		How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Mrs Christine Humphreys		Science. Art. Design and technology. Equal opportunities.	
Mr Glyn Essex		Mathematics. Geography. History. Special educational needs.	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development.
Mrs Christine Richardson		English. Music. Under fives.	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils? How well does the school care for its pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Rosebank School is a maintained day school for 50 pupils aged 3-7 and is situated on a pleasant site in the village of Barnton in Cheshire. It provides education for pupils who collectively have a range of special and complex needs, including autism, speech and language difficulty and emotional and behavioural difficulty. They come from a wide area of Cheshire. Part of the school's function is to provide assessment. On entry to the school pupils have low attainment. Pupils come from a white, European background. Almost one third of pupils are entitled to free school meals. All pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Need. Since the last inspection the number of pupils with autistic spectrum disorders has increased, so that they now represent approximately 34 per cent of the pupil population. The number of nursery-aged pupils has also increased.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Rosebank School is a very good school that provides a high quality learning environment for its pupils. It has a number of significant strengths. The planning of the curriculum done by teachers is meticulous and well considered. The teaching throughout the school is of high quality and is directly linked to the good progress that pupils make across a wide range of their academic and personal development. The good teaching is the consequence of effective monitoring by the school management team who, collectively, have contributed in large measure to the raising of standards. The governing body offers positive support to the school and plays a part in ensuring that targets are met and principles of best value are applied, as a result the school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- There are significantly high levels of good quality teaching that ensure pupils' progress is good and often very good. This good teaching is underpinned by excellent planning.
- Within classes, all staff work effectively as teams and the support provided by learning support assistants (LSA) is a significant factor in the very good progress made by pupils.
- Enables pupils to fully develop their own independence by insisting they make appropriate choices in their learning.
- Behaviour both around the school and within lessons is very good.
- The curriculum for pupils is wide and relevant and this provides a rich learning environment. This sets very good challenges for pupils that are effectively monitored.
- There is very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Procedures for the welfare of pupils are very good.
- Parents are fully included, as partners, in the work of the school. Their contribution is valued, responded to and used by the school for the benefit of the pupils.
- The governors and all staff have a commitment to the school by which they provide the best opportunities for their pupils.
- The good work done by pupils is clearly identified through very good assessment practice and the information gained is effectively used in planning the next stages of their learning.
- Very good use is made of the local community, by way of visits, to extend the pupils' knowledge and experience of the world.

What could be improved

- The current effective system of monitoring teacher's plans could be extended to include classroom practice.
- There is inconsistency in the way that alternative communication systems are used.
- The current very good accommodation does not support the growing and diverse needs of pupils. This is particularly so for pupils within the autistic spectrum.
- Some higher attaining pupils at Key Stage 1 reach a plateau in their development and their future placement is uncertain.
- Documentation relating to child protection and health and safety issues should reflect the good practice – particularly in relation to risk assessment procedures.
- Previous annual review targets need to be systematically considered within the context of subsequent reviews.

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the action plan prepared by the appropriate authority.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made considerable improvements since the last inspection in 1997.

- There are now significantly high levels of very good quality teaching. Teaching of literacy and communication skills is particularly effective
- Teachers fully understand the needs of their pupils and use appropriate and effective strategies that enable pupils to increase their learning as well as manage their behaviour. The provision of classroom support has increased and the additional quality resulting from this is significant.
- The curriculum for all pupils is well balanced, very broad and relevant to their needs.
- The good quality assessment and recording procedures lead more easily to identifiable progress in pupils.
- The quality and range of planning for curricular opportunities has significantly improved. This enables pupils' entitlement to be regularly and comprehensively monitored.
- The provision and curriculum for pupils under five is very good and as a result these pupils make significant gains in both learning and social development.
- The leadership of the school has become more effective because of the range of monitoring procedures now in place.
- The governing body contributes to the effectiveness of the school through an appropriate range of sub-committees, which regularly report to the full body of governors.

STANDARDS

The table summarises inspectors' judgements about how well pupils achieve in relation to their individual targets by the time they leave the school.

Progress in:	by age 5	by age 7	Key	
speaking and listening	B	B	very good	A
reading	B	B	good	B
writing	B	B	satisfactory	C
mathematics	B	B	unsatisfactory	D
personal, social and health education	A	A	poor	E
other personal targets set at annual reviews or in IEPs*	A	A		

The targets set at annual reviews and those contained within the individual education plans (IEP) and behaviour management plans (BMP) are both challenging, realistic and achievable. Children under-five make good progress in their ability to communicate and generally achieve well in other areas of learning. Key Stage 1 pupils make good progress in all subjects. Although not taught as discrete subjects, achievement in geography, history, information and communication technology, and religious education is at least good. The personal and social development of pupils is very good. Achievements in literacy and communication skills are enhanced by the school's use of the National Literacy Strategy. Although not as firmly based on the National Numeracy Strategy, pupils' achievements in numeracy are also good. These skills are used effectively across all other subjects of the curriculum.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have very keen attitudes to school. They are happy to come to

	the school and work very hard during their school day.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is very good throughout the school. When pupils become distressed they quickly calm down, with the support of staff.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' personal development is very good. They manage well their relationships with others, often with touching levels of concern.
Attendance	Attendance is very good, with most absences the result of medical conditions or related appointments.

The attitude and energy that pupils bring to their lessons is outstanding. Throughout the inspection it was evident that pupils enjoy the work they do and are effectively challenged by it. They show enjoyment at their success and are keen to use their natural curiosity to further their knowledge. Pupils are expected, at an appropriate level, to take responsibility both for themselves and what they do. Despite their own difficulties, it is touching to see the care that some pupils exhibit for others. Attendance is very good. Parents report that, even on Saturdays, their children are keen to come to the school.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5	aged 5 - 7
Lessons seen overall	Very good	Very 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.

For pupils under-five, all areas of learning are effectively taught. Of all the lessons seen at this stage some 94 per cent were either good or better. At Key Stage 1 a similar pattern emerges, with some 70 per cent of lessons being good or better. Personal and social education is well taught and this enhances the very good quality relationships evident throughout the school.

A particular strength of the teaching is the meticulous planning which teachers undertake. Their knowledge of subjects and the way in which this is adapted to the needs of individual pupils, contributes significantly to the very good progress made by them. For pupils under-five the Early Learning Goals are planned in detail, resulting in very good progress for these children. The structure of the National Literacy Strategy has been well adapted by teachers, with the result that pupils make good progress in their communication needs. Mathematics and numeracy skills, while not yet benefiting from this same structure, are also effectively taught and pupils use these skills across other areas of their learning. Teachers are skilful at including many opportunities for learning within central themes and their meticulous recording systems ensure that their future teaching strategies enhance pupils' progress.

Behaviour within lessons is managed very effectively through the combined efforts of teachers and learning support assistants (LSA). LSA, particularly, contribute very skilfully to the behaviour management of individual pupils, thus ensuring that they also make very good progress.

During the inspection teaching, overall, was at least satisfactory in 98 per cent of all lessons. Good or better teaching was observed in 83 per cent of lessons. Very good and excellent teaching made up 37 per cent of lessons. As a result of this consistently high quality teaching pupils remained busy and worked very hard during all lessons.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very broad range of learning opportunities leading to a learning rich environment.

Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	There are very good opportunities for spiritual development, effectively incorporated within the curriculum. Very good provision for moral and social development through teaching. Pupils have access to a wide range of both cultural and multi-cultural experiences.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The levels and procedures for the care of pupils are exemplary.

Parents are full and effective partners in the education of their children. The school is to be commended for the effort it undertakes to include parents in its work. As a result, parents report that they have a voice that is consistently heard and listened to.

The curriculum provided by the school is challenging and relevant for its pupils and instrumental in the significant progress they make. The curriculum for Early Years pupils fully meets the requirements of the Early Learning Goals. The curriculum for Key Stage 1 pupils also fully meets requirements.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The school is effectively led by the headteacher with clarity of vision and purpose. In this a very able senior management team supports her.
How well the appropriate authority fulfils its responsibilities	The governing body fulfils its statutory responsibilities effectively and ensures that the school functions in a supportive atmosphere.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The governors and senior management critically evaluates its own performance through effective monitoring procedures and meetings.
The strategic use of resources	The GB ensure that resources available to the school are well chosen. The school provides good value for money.

There is sufficient staff, suitably qualified, to meet the needs of both formal and informal curriculum. The accommodation is very good and maintained to high levels of cleanliness. The changing nature of the school population means that, despite the overall excellent quality of the accommodation, the size and location of some rooms is detrimental to the needs of individual pupils, particularly those within the autistic spectrum. Resources for teaching the curriculum are good in both quality and range. The school seeks best value in all its activity and takes carefully considered steps to ensure this.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The way in which they feel fully included within the work of the school. The manner in which the school regards them as 'experts' in the knowledge of their children. The trouble the school takes to maintain effective lines of communication. The relationship and understanding they have with the teachers of their children. That the school welcomes their visit at any time and makes time to listen to their concerns. The knowledge that the school is working effectively with their children. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No parent raised significant concerns either at the pre-inspection meeting or through the written responses submitted with returned questionnaires.

The inspection team share the views of parents that the school is providing a very good quality of teaching and care for their children. Parents are justifiably proud of their involvement with the school. Two parents indicated they would like to see more homework provided by the school. The evidence gathered by the inspection team indicates that such work is already available and it is our interpretation that the work offered is not perceived by parents as 'homework' in the traditional understanding of that term.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. The characteristic of the pupils for whom the school caters makes it inappropriate to judge their attainments against national expectations and averages. The report does, however, give examples of what pupils know, can do and understand. Judgements about progress and reference to attainment take account of information contained in pupils' Statements of Special Educational Need, as well as their annual reviews and individual education plans.
2. When pupils are admitted to the school before the age of five they have poorly developed general ability. Their communication skills are under-developed, as are their social and personal skills. As a result of the very good curriculum provided by the school and the consistently high level of good quality teaching, they make very good progress. By the time they enter formal education at Key Stage 1 they are very well prepared. Many pupils make significant progress in their communication skills. They are familiar with books and the conventions that attach to these, such as reading from left to right and handling them with appropriate care. Their physical development is very good and when using gymnastic apparatus, such as climbing frames and benches, they demonstrate very good confidence in their general physical development.
3. Almost one-third of the school is classified as having autistic spectrum disorders. These pupils also make very good progress as a result of the considerable expertise of the staff in managing both their behaviour and academic development. Pupils within this group benefit from the consistent and calm approaches used by all staff. As a result the pupils feel confident in their learning and many have adopted a *try anything* attitude. This serves them well as a platform for all their learning. Several of these pupils are very articulate in the demands they make of staff. Other pupils who have complex learning difficulties also make very good progress because of the provision made for them by the school. As part of their curriculum these pupils benefit from appropriate sessions of speech therapy, occupational therapy or physiotherapy. These different therapists work in closely with teachers, with the result that the pupils make very good progress across the whole range of both academic and personal development. In the latest reporting year for Key Stage 1, Standard Assessment Tasks and Tests (SAT) show that 9 per cent of pupils achieved level 2 within the tests, while 18 per cent achieved level 1. The benefit to these pupils is that they can take up supported places within the mainstream sector.
4. The introduction of the National Literacy Strategy, which the teachers have imaginatively adapted, ensures a good grounding in the basic reading and communication skills for all pupils. The majority of pupils develop a sound understanding of the phonic construction of simple words, with the result that some can write, on a whiteboard, words such as *milky*. This represents a considerable academic and social achievement when it is done in full view of all their classmates. The attractive library area encourages pupils to select books and browse through them, often looking wide eyed at the attractive pictures they contain. Higher attaining pupils read simple stories to their teacher.
5. Although not as far developed in its implementation as the National Literacy Strategy, the National Numeracy Strategy (due for full introduction in September 2000) also provides a good basis for pupils' current learning and their achievements are good. Teachers use many effective techniques to reinforce the pupils' concept of number. In morning greeting sessions, pupils count each other and go on to include the adults in the room. With this information they count on, as well as explain the concepts of *more* and *fewer*.
6. Children under-five make very good progress within the curriculum of Early Learning Goals. Their gains in knowledge and understanding stem from a very well planned and detailed curriculum which is well taught. The result of this is that they make significant progress in their skills of communication. They sing songs confidently and understand routines sufficiently well to be able to anticipate what will come next. Writing and pre-writing skills are developed by forming letters in sand or with paint and chalk. Numeracy skills are well developed and they count confidently up to five, with some of the higher attaining children going beyond this to ten more.
7. At Key Stage 1, pupils achieve well across the range of the National Curriculum subjects. In English pupils' achievements are good in speaking and listening, reading and writing. In

reading, pupils follow the appropriate conventions, such as following the text from left to right and respond appropriately to the punctuation. The majority of pupils recognise their own name when it is presented against a background of other names, for example, within the morning greeting sessions. Writing skills are well developed, from the level of 'practice writing' for younger pupils to that of older or higher attaining pupils who are developing an understanding of upper and lower case letters. Throughout the key stage pupils take part in effective dialogue both with adults and between themselves. This progress is most noticeable in the many role-play situations, such as that seen based on the story of Handa's surprise, where pupils took part in a market scene. Achievements in mathematics are good. Pupils are confident in counting and use these skills in other situations, such as head counts within different groups. Numbers are placed in correct sequences and higher attaining pupils show a good understanding of basic geometric shapes, describing these accurately as 'rectangle' 'square' or 'circle'. In science, achievements are good as pupils are enabled to experience a range of learning based on their senses. Higher attaining pupils carry out simple experiments about force and friction and record their results using non-standard units. The majority of pupils are confident users of information technology and use it well within other lessons. They respond appropriately to the on-screen instructions and use either the keyboard or mouse to effect appropriate changes. Higher attaining pupils use computers independently – setting up their program and printing off the final results. Scrutiny of religious education folders shows that pupils have a good understanding of religious festivals and that these are derived from different beliefs and cultures. In assemblies pupils sing hymns with enthusiasm and respond well to a request for a few moments of reflection.

8. Art is used effectively across the range of the curriculum with the result that pupils make very good progress. They are frequently called upon to use their artistic skills in other subjects such as English or design and technology. In this latter subject pupils also make very good progress, achieving very well in relation to their previous knowledge. For example, one higher attaining pupil dismantled a small pedal cycle and in so doing realised the cause and effect between the brake lever, cable and the brake pad at the wheel.
9. Within humanities, pupils achieve well and make good progress in understanding concepts such as Britain being an island within a much wider world. Pupils' natural curiosity is harnessed to enable them to make full use of field trips within the locality. Music is used extensively across the school, either as a vehicle for learning rhymes and concepts or as a backbone to lively and interesting assemblies. Within assemblies, pupils maintain a beat on triangles, while in classes other pupils clap in time to songs and beat out a rhythm on a drum. Achievement in physical education is very good. All pupils show great confidence in their ability to balance. Higher attaining pupils throw a ball with some accuracy over a distance of up to five metres. Others bounce a ball to a partner, using a hoop as a target and guide. Key Stage 1 pupils, particularly, make very effective progress in a wider range of activity. They balance on benches confidently and move over and under gymnastic equipment with great confidence and ease. Religious education is fully incorporated within the planning done by teachers and as a result pupils have a very good understanding of their life and its spiritual dimension. Where appropriate, pupils learn about religious festivals from many faiths. Christian festivals predominate, but pupils also know about Divali as well as Jewish festivals. In their assemblies pupils spend a few moments on reflection and appreciate, through prayer, their thanks to God as well as their friends and family.
10. Pupils effectively use their growing skills in communication in other subjects. In physical education lessons, for example, they are expected to explain what they have done during the lesson. Some of the higher attaining pupils accurately describe the effect of exercise on their body, especially the heart. Throughout the school pupils are expected to make choices in what they do - this could be either which biscuit they will have to accompany their drink, or choosing which part of their task they will do next. Such an approach by teachers is excellent preparation for the next stages of learning and ensures that pupils become active learners.
11. Pupils make very good progress in their personal and social skills. They chat confidently to adults as well as to each other. In the playground they share the use of toys and often play co-operatively together. In lessons they take turns in the use of various pieces of equipment, such as computers, and in discussions they listen well to the views expressed by others. In like

manner, they also show touching levels of concern for their fellow pupils. Lunchtimes are pleasant social occasions where pupils learn to use knives and forks appropriately and use the time to develop communication skills.

12. Overall, the achievement of pupils in all aspects of the curriculum is very good. There is no significant variation in the achievements displayed by pupils of different needs. The inspection team could find no evidence of unsatisfactory progress within any aspect of either the academic or personal curriculum provided for pupils. When compared against the initial statement of special educational need for pupils and their subsequent individual education plans, this judgement is endorsed.
13. Improvements in pupils' achievements since the last inspection have been brought about in science. The positive achievements children make in their knowledge and understanding of the world are maintained in the skills of simple experimentation they undertake. Mathematics, also, is a subject where pupil achievement has increased. With the formal introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy in September 2000, there can be every expectation that this will improve further.
14. Parents, in discussion with the inspection team, indicate satisfaction with what their children learn at school. The services provided by other professionals, such as speech therapists, make a very effective contribution to pupils' overall achievement through widening the range of their communication ability.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

15. Pupils have very good attitudes to school. At the start of the day, they arrive in their classrooms clearly looking forward to their work. They settle quickly and enjoy the routine of greeting both each other and the staff. They are treated with courtesy and respect by staff and they respond very positively to the quality of the school's ethos both in the classroom and around the school. In class, their concentration and commitment to work are very good. In activities, such as silent reading and art work, they consistently show that they can get on with tasks without direct supervision. They also enjoy working together, both as a whole class and in small groups. Very good relationships with staff and each other encourage them to make confident contributions to oral work. A further benefit of these relationships is that pupils are confident to ask questions, without fear of failure or embarrassment. As a result their knowledge and understanding is increased.
16. Several instances of difficult behaviour, including tantrums and a few violent outbursts, were seen during the inspection but staff quickly and effectively dealt with these. Pupils respond very promptly to correction and realise when their behaviour is unacceptable. Individual behaviour management plans, drawn up to meet the needs of those pupils whose statements indicate significant emotional and behavioural difficulties, are applied very consistently by teaching and support staff and pupils respond very well to the clear boundaries that are laid down. There have been no exclusions of pupils over the past year.
17. Pupils are encouraged to take on as much responsibility as possible for their learning. They make very good use of the support which is offered but are also keen to do things on their own initiative. They keenly volunteer for tasks, select their own learning materials, help each other or with jobs in the classroom, such as clearing away equipment. In one instance, a pupil who is probably the smallest and youngest in the school returned the register to its rack in the library. The efficiency with which this was done was a credit, to both himself and the staff who had enabled him to do it. As a result of these very positive attitudes and the opportunities which pupils are given to act with increasing independence, there are clear gains in their personal development, not only in areas such as dressing themselves after physical education activities but also in taking responsibility for their own actions. On several occasions, for example, pupils apologised to others for inconsiderate behaviour and, in general, very good standards of behaviour and courtesy were seen around the school.
18. Pupils' attitudes to school are reflected in the attendance figures. These show that attendance levels are very good and above the average for this type of school. Late arrivals are caused,

usually by taxis being caught up in traffic difficulties, such as that experienced by a number of staff and inspection team, when a local gas main began to leak. This very good attendance makes a very positive contribution to the progress and continuity of pupils' learning.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

19. The quality of teaching throughout the school is of a consistently high quality, resulting in good and very good progress by pupils. During the inspection, teaching was judged to be excellent in almost 10 per cent of lessons, very good in 37 per cent and good in 83 per cent of lessons. Overall, teaching was satisfactory or better in 98 per cent of lessons. The teaching within Key Stage 1 and under-fives provision showed little significant variation in overall quality, except that for under-fives children the ratio of excellent teaching was slightly higher. Such figures, and the reality they portray, represent a significant improvement since the last inspection, when there was a high proportion of unsatisfactory teaching throughout the school. Parents also, through their replies to the questionnaire and comments at the pre-inspection meeting, agreed that the teaching is of high quality and an aspect of the school's work they are most pleased with. Significantly, and unlike the time of the previous inspection, the staff are described as "stable and fully in role". The latter aspect is very evident in the work they now do.
20. The commitment of both teachers and support staff is an important factor in ensuring the progress and achievements of pupils. The quality of relationships and the high degree of professional expertise and understanding results in lessons of high quality that extend pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. Together, teachers and support staff share and record information on a regular basis and the quality of teamwork and co-operation within lessons is exemplary.
21. The overall improvement in the quality of teaching has been brought about by several factors. There has been consistent effort to ensure the quality of planning throughout the school. The long and medium term curriculum plans now indicate clear objectives and opportunities for pupils. They ensure that learning is across a broad base and all elements of the statutory curriculum are provided. The level of detail contained in the lesson plans is considerable, indicating that teachers have a very clear understanding of the academic and personal needs of their pupils. This results in lessons which are very focused on clear objectives and which include detailed expectations of each pupil. Consequently every pupil in each class is fully aware of his or her part in their learning, a responsibility that each of them takes very seriously. When observing lessons it was evident to every member of the inspection team that each pupil was intensively engaged in learning. Even when washing hands after a lesson, pupils were urged to "smell the soap" – so that no opportunity to broaden their experience would be wasted. While such an activity was not part of the planned curriculum, it is evidence of the alertness of staff to extend the knowledge of their pupils' whenever they can.
22. Parents are especially pleased with the progress their children make in communication skills. This is in large measure due to the skilled way in which the National Strategies for numeracy and literacy have been introduced, particularly for Key stage 1 pupils. Teachers have appropriately adapted these, to take account of the particular needs of their pupils. While the strategy for numeracy is not as well developed as that for literacy, it still provides a good focus for a series of well-balanced and demanding lessons.
23. An influential factor in the improvement of teaching has been the monitoring procedures put in place by the senior management team. As a result of these, in which all planning is scrutinised weekly, lessons are more effectively focused and include expected outcomes, in terms of what pupils will understand. Assessment procedures are included in this planning, with the result that outcomes can be objectively monitored and future teaching approaches modified if necessary. This is a very significant variation over the practice observed at the last inspection where the quality of assessment was judged to be poor.
24. Teaching of English and communication skills is consistently good, with some excellent examples of teachers' expertise being noted. Perhaps the greatest of these strengths is the ability of most teachers to increase the understanding of pupils through a series of astute and

open-ended questions, to which the pupils feel obliged to reply. As a result, fruitful and sustained dialogues are maintained. Teaching of mathematics and numeracy is very good for under-fives pupils and good at Key Stage 1. A common thread to this teaching is the manner in which teachers engage pupils in their learning through practical and well-targeted activities. The teaching for under-fives pupils is slightly more effective because the activities are better matched to their needs. At Key Stage 1 there is some evidence that higher attaining pupils are insufficiently challenged by the tasks they are expected to do. Science teaching is satisfactory, but the subject knowledge of some teachers is insufficient to ensure that activities are always well matched to pupils' needs and the rate at which they learn is consequently slower. A further weakness is that, on occasion, insufficient time is allowed for pupils to answer questions.

25. The quality of teaching observed in other subjects and lessons is also of a high standard. Teaching in art and physical education is very good and that for design and technology is good. Insufficient evidence was available in the cases of ICT, humanities and religious education to make firm judgements about the quality of teaching. However, the outcomes, in terms of pupils' knowledge and understanding, indicate that these subjects also benefit from similar good quality teaching. Some of the more significant strengths noted in these lessons include, very good planning that fulfil the requirements for each subject and the insistence on high standards of work and behaviour from pupils.
26. Teachers and support staff employ considerable skill in the management of pupils' behaviour. Even for children so young, behaviour is at times very challenging. Where incidents do occur, staff respond in very even and quiet tones which serve to keep the incident to as low a key as possible. Distressed pupils readily respond to this and incidents are very quickly brought back to normal. The work done by learning support staff is very important in this regard. Often they are deployed on a one to one support for pupils and the work they do in successfully challenging and managing pupils' behaviour is an important contribution to the smooth running of classes. Unsatisfactory behaviour by pupils is not a significant part of classroom life, but where they present a more robust challenge, such as in classes which include pupils within the autistic spectrum, they are well managed by staff and their needs are sensitively handled. Effective management of pupils is common throughout the school. In one incident, typical of all behaviour management, a pupil was told off firmly and directly about damage done to a book that he had taken home. Despite the pupil's attempts to digress, the teacher held firm to her view that such damage was unacceptable. To emphasise her point she demanded that the pupil "look at me when I am speaking". Eventually, the pupil apologised for the damage and returned to his task. In other lessons, where pupils resisted settling to work the phrase "I choose, then you choose", was often heard. In a physical education lesson for Year 1 pupils within the autistic spectrum, very good group management was seen. The teacher, by using brightly coloured mats, ensured that the pupils stayed within boundaries she set. By modulating her voice she gained the pupils' attention and then ensured they fully understood her instructions with the follow-up instruction of "Look at me". In such lessons, pupils make very good progress because they are fully attuned to the demands made on them.
27. Throughout the school, pupils make very good progress both within lessons and over time. Individual education programmes (IEP) are used very effectively to focus the work done by pupils and skilled questioning by teachers draws out from pupils their knowledge and understanding. In a lesson for Reception pupils sand on a table was used as a background for writing the letter 's'. Consequently, pupils were fascinated as they drew this letter in the sand and simultaneously rehearsed the sound. In another class for Year 2 concerning the 'oo' sound, pupils took a full part in the lesson summary and readily answered the teacher's question about "What have you been doing today?"
28. The comprehensive planning practice, common throughout the school, enable pupils to learn a range of different skills and knowledge in an almost seamless manner. The full range of the National Curriculum requirements as well as Early Learning Goals are included within this planning. As a result lessons that may have a literacy focus also include aspects of multi-cultural education, geography and information and communication technology (ICT). For example, in a lesson for Year 2 pupils, which featured the story 'Handa's Surprise', pupils enacted the market scene of an African village. They chose their fruit, named it appropriately as a pineapple, passion fruit, avocado or banana and used their number skills to offer the

correct payment. Simultaneous to this, pupils also used the computer for related work. In such lessons pupils extend their knowledge and understanding very effectively.

29. Teachers have a very good knowledge of the subjects they teach, except in science, where the lack of subject knowledge by some teachers does not allow them to teach the subject with confidence. With this exception, teachers otherwise have developed imaginative techniques to encourage pupils' learning. Their experience, as well as expertise, makes them aware of all the opportunities that can be used to enhance pupils' progress. They effectively use any opportunity to develop pupils' learning even though such opportunities are out of context to the immediate task. Their real skill is in retaining the focus of the task, so that learning does not become random or undirected. Their knowledge of pupils and their individual needs is very good. In this they co-operate closely with parents. Assessments are regularly undertaken and the results obtained are used to determine the next phases of both learning and teaching. Detailed notes are maintained of significant events in pupils' learning and these contribute to comprehensive termly and annual reports. ICT is effectively used both to prepare lessons and further pupils' knowledge, although the incidence of its use within some lessons is not as great as it could otherwise be.

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

30. The school's curriculum is very good overall. The school provides a very broad range of interesting and stimulating opportunities for learning. These include a wide range of musical and artistic experiences, drama, swimming and visits within the local community. A range of therapies, including speech and language, music, physiotherapy and occupational therapy is available to meet pupils' specific needs. Speech and language therapy makes a particularly significant contribution to the curriculum through the quality and level of support provided. These learning opportunities are highly relevant to the pupils' needs. This is particularly the case in English and mathematics where the development of a coherent, consistent and effective approach to the teaching of literacy and numeracy actively promotes good communication skills and fosters good personal and social development. The school has established a modified Literacy Hour very effectively and the Numeracy Strategy is being introduced well throughout the school.
31. The curriculum shows a good balance of subjects and activities, and takes account of the National Curriculum programmes of study and the Early Learning Goals for young children. Statutory requirements, including the provision of religious education, are fully met. All subjects now receive appropriate consideration in ways that allow pupils to build on their previous knowledge, understanding and learning. The school has developed a two-year cycle of themes, which provides a stimulating range of contexts through which the curriculum is taught. These are planned well so that different subjects may contribute and be fully explored. For example, the story of "Handa's Surprise" in literacy lessons is supported well by a study of Africa in geography, and African singing and playing in music.
32. The curriculum for the youngest pupils is very appropriately founded on the Early Learning Goals. The work is planned meticulously to provide a well-balanced, relevant curriculum that takes account of the individual needs of each child. The very good range and breadth of activities offers pupils the opportunity to develop a broad range of skills and provides a good foundation for their future learning.
33. The school has been highly effective in responding to the findings of the previous inspection. All of the issues raised have been dealt with very effectively. The staff have worked hard together to ensure that there are clearly defined links between the planning for pupils, their individual education plans, assessment of their progress and the curriculum.
34. Provision for pupils with additional or more complex special needs is very good. Individual education plans for these pupils refer closely to the pupils' statements of special need and annual reviews and provision is very well matched to need. Behaviour management plans, in particular, provide very helpful guidance on specific difficulties and strategies to address them.

For pupils with severe speech and language difficulties, there is therapy of very high quality and very good liaison between therapists and teachers. Very effective support is also provided for those pupils in need of physiotherapy and occupational therapy. For pupils with a disorder on the autistic spectrum, teaching and classroom support are highly effective in the way they address pupils' individual targets, particularly in raising pupils' social awareness and ability to follow the structure of the day's timetable. There is currently, however, inconsistent use of alternative communication methods such as signing or picture exchange schemes to support and extend communication skills. The school is aware of the need to further explore the potential of strategies such as these.

35. Pupils with difficulties on the autistic spectrum, because of the opportunities offered to them, show good gains in their ability to communicate and relate to their peers and teachers. Overall, these pupils make very good progress towards the objectives set out in their statements and annual reviews. In a small number of cases, the extent and rate of pupils' progress is such, that they have reached a "plateau" in their development in their current placement and now need to move on to other, more specialist provision. Currently, the school experiences delays in onward placements for such pupils. While it would not be claimed that an extended stay in the school is detrimental, the substantial delay experienced by some pupils could retard their progress and place them at a disadvantage at the start of the next phase of their education.
36. There is very effective provision for pupils' personal, social and health education embedded in the relevant contexts of necessary daily routines, such as registration, preparation for lessons, lunch times. These occasions are well organised and are enhanced by the very good relationships between all concerned. Pupils exercise choice regarding drinks and snacks and during these breaktimes it is common that they take turns and share. In cookery and at lunchtimes they learn to eat correctly by handling cutlery properly. The start and finish of physical education lessons are used with good effect, to teach undressing and dressing skills. Sex education is taught where appropriate within personal and social education sessions, in line with the Governing Body's policy and the school is developing, with local advisers support, an appropriate foundation for drugs education.
37. Equality of access to, and opportunity within the curriculum, has a high profile in the school. The school ensures the needs of all pupils are fully met and that they have equal access to all areas of the curriculum and opportunities to succeed in them. They have a high expectation that the curriculum will meet the diverse nature of special educational needs at Rosebank. Arrangements and activities which are woven into the basic curriculum, such as school visits, integration programmes and therapy programmes, are carefully planned, monitored and adjusted so that an appropriate balance is maintained between addressing the individual needs of pupils and their right to a broad and balanced curriculum. In these ways the school very effectively reinforces the relevance of its provision to individual pupils, children feel safe and able to concentrate on their learning.
38. The ability of the school to promote extra-curricular activities is restricted by the need for pupils to travel on home-school transport. However, the school makes very good use of the community by using the local garden centre, parks, swimming pool and nearby forest. Visits further afield have included the seaside, Beeston Castle and the Sea Life Centre. All have been carefully planned to reinforce specific areas of the curriculum, and provision is further enhanced by the presence of visiting musicians and performing artists, who make a positive contribution to pupils' cultural development. The visit by the musician from Ghana is a good example of the provision the school makes to widen the horizons of its pupils. The school's curriculum is greatly enriched by extensive links with the community. These purposeful links make a very positive contribution to pupils' learning. Younger children visit a local baby clinic and post office. Such visits give them a basis on which their future role-play is enacted. Participation in events, such as the millennium pilgrimage, is particularly effective. Through this Rosebank pupils will receive a gift of a willow-woven bench from Marbury Park Rangers and in their turn pass on a gift of music to the local primary school. This latter is inspired by working with a Ghanaian storyteller.

39. The school has continued to develop its links with mainstream schools. Pupils visit a local primary school weekly for social development sessions. These make a very positive contribution to the development of pupils' communication and social skills and prepare them well for future placement at other schools. Pupils from the classes they join are welcomed, in their turn, to Rosebank. In return they share special drama and poetry projects very successfully. Events such as the drama day led by the LEA adviser, when pupils from the two schools undertook a journey on an aircraft, broaden the horizons of all and are sufficiently well structured to ensure that Rosebank pupils have particular learning targets to achieve whilst enjoying a new experience.
40. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is very good. A daily assembly brings pupils and staff together to share music, story, prayer and once a week, a celebration of pupils' achievements. These assemblies give pupils a valuable sense of the school community to which they belong. In lessons, there are opportunities for pupils to share appreciation of a variety of experiences that surprise and enthral them. Looking at a spinning top, for example, in a science lesson, stroking rabbits on a visit to a local garden centre and feeding fish they had bought, all created a fascinated interest among the children.
41. The social and moral development of pupils is also very effectively promoted. Very clear teaching of values such as respect for others, honesty and accepting the consequences of their actions is consistently evident. Teachers and support staff take time to draw attention to unacceptable behaviour by pupils and to discuss it with them. Taking turns, sharing toys and helping each other are all encouraged in lessons and during break times. Pupils clearly know right from wrong and often employ this understanding in their dealings with each other. Adults provide very good role models through way in which they treat all pupils with respect and patience. Pupils are given opportunities to perform tasks such as helping the staff to prepare the classroom and materials for lessons, and in lessons such as PE, they clear away equipment afterwards.
42. A very good range of activities to enhance pupils' understanding of other cultures is provided. Numerous examples of work in geography, art and music are evident in displays around the school and in pupils' folders, which promote an appreciation of the traditions of other cultures. Eating Indian food in "Our Indian restaurant", making a dragon for Chinese New Year celebrations and singing a North American Indian "rain song" are examples of the breadth of cultures which pupils sample. Sessions with a visiting poet and visits to local cultural centres provide good experiences of their own cultural tradition. The outcome to this intensity of rich experiences is a group of pupils who are, at their own level of understanding, knowledgeable about the much wider world.
43. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development was favourably reported at the time of the last inspection. It is evident that these high standards have been maintained.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

44. The school cares extremely well for its pupils and closely monitors their academic and personal development. The results are used to supplement or vary subsequent courses of action with regard to pupils' development. This compares very favourably with the report from the last inspection, which criticised the infrequency and quality of academic monitoring. The links made between the targets identified in the individual education plans and the targets for academic progress are now very clear and the school's overall assessment of pupils' needs and progress is very good.
45. The assessment of pupils' academic and personal development is closely linked with very effective systems and practices that extend pupils knowledge and understanding. This means that all staff identify and are aware of how well pupils are achieving and the progress they make in all subjects, as well as other areas of development. There is detailed and well-organised recording and monitoring of what pupils can do and how well they improve. Throughout the school, teachers, support assistants and therapists very successfully monitor pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science. Profiles have been developed that break down areas of learning into very small, identifiable steps. Progress, in this way, is

accurately and effectively measured. In all classes assessment is a continuous process and records, regularly and accurately, pupils' responses and reactions to the work they are doing.

46. The school uses the local education authority devised system for baseline assessment with reception aged pupils. National Curriculum tests are carried out for all Key Stage 1 pupils. The school has a comprehensive policy for assessment and has introduced profiles for all foundation subjects. Overall the school has made considerable improvements in assessment procedures since the time of the last report and the practice is now well integrated into the work of the school. This fully supports an aim of the school as a local authority assessment facility. The links between the baseline assessment of performance, in relation to annual review targets and the overall assessment of pupils' attainment and development are insufficiently clear. Currently they do not effectively identify the real and broad progress made by the majority of pupils.
47. The school provides very good levels of care for its pupils. All staff have pupils' welfare to the fore in their thinking and they work together extremely effectively to ensure that this is achieved. The school is a welcoming, accepting and positive thinking community in which pupils are helped to make sense of their world. Through this they grow in confidence and make good progress in their learning.
48. Effective procedures are in place to ensure child protection. Staff are well trained in how to respond should they have any concerns, records are kept appropriately and there is good liaison with external agencies. Day to day arrangements relating to health and safety are very good, and all staff are alert to potential problems. A senior member of staff greets all pupils at the start of the day and checks them out as they leave the building. This provides a good opportunity for teachers to have a word, as necessary, with the children's escorts and also maintains with absolute clarity who remains on the premises. The high ratio of adults to pupils, including one to one support for some, ensures that pupils remain safe while working or playing outside. The school responds quickly to any concerns. For example, a pupil became ill shortly after arriving at school. The procedure for looking after the pupil and to inform his parents was smooth and effective. As a result, the pupil was quickly, though unwillingly, taken home to recover. Daily recording of any incidents, administration of first aid and medication is equally effective and recording procedures encourage swift access to information whenever it is needed. As yet the school has not produced a guide that would give new or supply staff a clear idea of their responsibilities within the context of health and safety. Consequently, although the practice is caring and thoughtful, staff are unsure as to where the responsibility lies and who should do what within this context. These are procedural matters, of which the school is now aware.
49. The school has put in place highly effective measures that ensure good discipline and behaviour. The policy, which is currently under review, is a thoughtful document that provides useful guidance for staff about possible strategies and techniques to avert confrontation and maintain the dignity of both pupil and adult. Many pupils have behaviour management plans (BMP), which are regularly evaluated for their effectiveness. Through these the behaviour of all pupils is constantly monitored, with the result that any potential problems are swiftly dealt with. Staff are consistent in their expectations and management of pupils' behaviour, treating outbursts of frustration and temper in a calm and positive manner. The result is that pupils generally behave well and the school operates as a happy community. Staff also closely monitor pupils' academic and all round personal development. They compile and regularly review pupils' detailed individual education plans, drawing up concise and achievable targets that allow them to build up a clear picture of how much progress individuals make. They then use this information effectively to determine the support they offer them.
50. Attendance levels at the school are very good and above the average for pupils of this type of school. This is the result of very good monitoring procedures implemented by support staff. Where no information about absence is received from pupils' escorts, contact with the home is quickly established in order to determine the reason for absence. Pupils' good attendance thus helps them make steady progress from day to day and has a very positive effect on their learning.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

51. There is a strong and active partnership between parents and the school that makes a very positive contribution to pupils' education. From the outset, the headteacher assures parents that they are regarded as the ones who have expert knowledge about their child, and that their opinions and concerns will be sought and taken seriously. Parents, at the meeting prior to the inspection, went to great lengths to emphasise that this is not just a statement of an 'ideal' but it is actually "How it is". Great efforts are made to ensure that parents can attend review meetings to discuss their child's progress with educational professionals. It is common practice that parents nominate the date for the review meeting. Staff maintain very good contact with parents throughout the school year, despite the fact that most pupils are brought to school by taxi, some from a considerable distance away. It is unsurprising, therefore, that parents are very supportive of the school and grateful for the way it is helping their children to develop. This was made very clear by the warmth of statements made about the staff of the school by parents at the pre-inspection meeting.
52. The prospectus and the information pack provided for parents of children new to the school are well produced, easily read documents that include useful guidance on the school's policies and activities. These help allay parents' concerns and apprehensions about their child attending a special school. Within six weeks of a pupil's first arrival, the school holds a meeting with parents to agree the specific targets their child needs to concentrate on, thus ensuring that parents are kept fully abreast of the formal aspects of their child's education. The reports that emerge from pupils' annual reviews are very detailed and highly informative. However, the feature that parents like the most about the school's communication with them is the 'Chat Books'. These pass to and fro between parents and teachers on at least a weekly basis, giving a broad outline of activities, incidents and people met during the week or weekend, so that those who provide for the child know of their interests and experiences. The quality and detail of the information contained in the chat books is very good and enables parents to gain a full picture of the work done by their child, as well as his or her overall development.
53. Parents respond well to this high level of information that flows from the school. The Friends Association raises considerable extra funds that are used to augment resources and facilities. Most recently, for example, the association has decided to buy large play equipment for use in the playground. A significant number of parents help in school on a weekly basis, displaying pupils' work, helping in classrooms or providing whatever practical support is needed. Some parents organise meetings and coffee mornings which are a welcome source of information to other parents about specific topics, such as autism. This group invites occasional guest speakers. From such initiatives parents gain the support of others with experiences similar to their own. Overall, parents and school work together in harmony in the best interests of pupils; each is confident that the other will inform them of concerns and that in this spirit of openness they can overcome any difficulties and help the pupils progress.
54. Through the responses to the questionnaire, issued prior to the inspection, it is clear that the majority of parents have a strong belief that the school is working effectively with their children. It is significant that the strengths identified by parents have also been evidenced as strengths by the inspection team. This is particularly so with regard to the quality of teaching and the effective manner in which the school keeps them well informed.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

55. The headteacher leads the school with considerable expertise and has a determination to raise standards across the range of school activity. In this, a talented and dedicated senior management team ably supports her and as a result the school has an ethos in which the efforts of both staff and pupils are fully appreciated and extended. Governors also play their part in supporting the work of the school and their focused activity allows it to function within a supported atmosphere. Since the last inspection the senior management team has been further strengthened by the addition of a senior teacher. Consequently the expertise of the team is considerable and this, in large measure, has ensured significant improvements in school practices. Together, they have ensured that staff morale is high and that each member

knows what is their contribution to the overall effort. Of the parents spoken to, both prior to and during the course of the inspection, all were overwhelmingly appreciative of the work done by the school management. They feel fully part of the work of the school and describe the effort of the headteacher as resulting in “the feeling of a large family”.

56. There is good delegation of clear responsibilities to staff and this is reinforced by budgetary provision that encourages them to plan realistically for the development of their subject. While these amounts are not overgenerous, staff feel that any case they put for additional funds would be sympathetically heard. This approach has clear benefits because planning of subjects and their provision, can be done against a realistic and known background of funding. As a result, resources throughout the school are good and the pupils' progress is enhanced through use of good quality and well-chosen items. Where additional resources are provided, the senior management team carries out effective monitoring to ensure that these have a positive effect on teaching and learning.
57. Teaching, also, is monitored through a weekly scrutiny of plans. This is carried out by the deputy headteacher. This ensures that the breadth and balance of the curriculum is maintained and pupils receive their full entitlement across the whole range of subjects or Early Learning Goals. The weakness in this provision is that it does not include formal monitoring of classroom practice and as a result the professional needs of staff cannot be fully identified and set against the needs of the school development plan. Regular school improvement meetings held by senior management and governing body, in part, compensate for this shortfall. However, despite the significant improvement in teaching since the last inspection, it remains an area for further improvement.
58. Collectively, the governing body and senior management share a commitment to provide a school in which the welfare and education of the pupils is paramount and the raising of standards remains central. In this they ensure that all statutory requirements are fulfilled. The governing body includes among its members individuals with considerable financial and educational expertise and these skills are used effectively to support the effort of staff and senior management. Parent governors are especially active in their support. They make frequent visits to classrooms or to the Friday assembly. By this means they have a clear picture of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and can report to meetings of the governing body from a base of considerable knowledge.
59. Since the last inspection, the governing body has appropriately delegated some of its activity to sub-committees who in turn report to termly meetings of the full governing body. This has proved a very effective means of guiding the work of the school and ensures that decisions are based on thorough and sound knowledge. They support the work of the school as 'critical friends' and ensure that staff retains a high sense of professional expertise and commitment to their pupils. With the assistance and considerable expertise of the bursar, governors ensure that the principle of best value is applied. The cost of goods and services are researched, prior to purchase, and once in place their effect is monitored by both senior management and governing body. School improvement meetings, attended by senior management and governors, are used effectively to critically examine the work of the school and where necessary make adjustments to the school development plan.
60. The development priorities chosen by the school are both appropriate and have a significant impact on raising standards throughout the school. This is exemplified in the teaching standards that now prevail. The senior management and governors effectively identify school improvement through the broad areas of 'environment, personnel and curriculum.' Through a process of self-evaluation in these areas the senior management ensure that performance is consistently challenged and new targets are set. As a result, considerable improvements have been made since the last inspection. These include introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, a library area which has been re-stocked, and improvements to the ICT curriculum. Further improvement in the latter is anticipated with the award of funding from the National Grid for Learning (NGfL). The library area is now a very pleasant location, well used by pupils to extend their knowledge and use of books. The process of self-evaluation and target-setting has also highlighted the need for further adaptations to the accommodation. This results from the requirement of the local authority that the school should, from the forthcoming

academic year, admit Key Stage 2 pupils as well as increase the number of pupils within the autistic spectrum. Currently the accommodation cannot support the effective provision for this increase because of the location and layout of some of the classrooms they would be required to use.

61. There is a sufficient number of qualified and experienced teaching and support staff to effectively teach the curriculum. Provision of additional therapies for pupils with particular special needs is very good. The school has managed recent staff changes very well and effective strategies are in place which have reduced staff absence. There is a comprehensive induction programme which enables new staff to be fully informed about school policy and practice. This induction is carried out progressively and is well monitored. All staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities. Professional development interviews take place annually and a comprehensive programme of staff development is available. This includes professional development days for all staff. Their recent visit to the Albert Dock in Liverpool, its galleries and museum, was used to develop a team ethos as well as provide an additional source for school topic work. Almost half of all teachers are trained in the use of the Derbyshire language scheme and the majority have received basic training in the teaching of pupils within the autistic spectrum.
62. The ethos of the school is underpinned by very good professional relationships between staff and as a result they function as a well-integrated team. Support staff make a significant contribution to this team and in their work they add greatly to the positive outcomes experienced by pupils. Therapy staff work very well with teachers and support staff, as well as with pupils, providing advice and support. Teachers and support staff are deployed very effectively, understand their roles and those of others and share a strong commitment to serve the needs of the pupils. Since the last inspection induction, whole staff training and the increase in learning support provision has improved.
63. The adequacy of the accommodation for the number of pupils, their specific needs and the curriculum is currently excellent. The school makes excellent use of this accommodation to provide a good education for its pupils. The bursar and caretaker, as well as his staff maintain the premises to a very high standard. The physical environment has a positive effect on the self-esteem of the pupils, who in turn respect the places in which they work. Classrooms and open display areas are bright, well organised and provide stimulating environments where pupils can effectively work. The grounds are well resourced to provide a quality extension to the overall learning environment. The provision of stimulating play areas, with large equipment, enable pupils to extend their physical and social skills as they experience a range of challenges provided by the equipment.
64. The provision of resources overall is very good. There are some inadequacies in the provision of work sheets in mathematics and some of the texts have not been replaced. However with the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy this situation is expected to improve. Religious education resources are developing, though currently there are insufficient artefacts that would stimulate the interest of pupils. Provision of hardware for information technology is good and the range of software is very good; much of this is well chosen in order to meet the wide range of needs of pupils in the school. Resources are both well organised and accessible. The use of resources around the school, the subject and class displays and quality presentation of pupils' work add considerably to the learning environment and stimulate pupils to work harder as they see their work displayed with care and pride.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In order to continue to improve the quality of education and pupils' progress the governors and headteacher should:

- 1) Further effect a rise in teaching standards by extending the current monitoring procedures, to include classroom observation of teaching practice. From this teachers should be given clear indication of their performance that enables them to plan their future professional development within the context of the school development plan. (paragraphs 23, 56)
- 2) Address the inconsistency of communication methods for pupils within the autistic spectrum, so those pupils will be better able to make known their individual needs and take more effective part in lessons and group discussion. (Paragraph 34)
- 3) Enter into discussion with the local authority in order to determine and plan the admission of a growing and diverse pupil population. Consideration should be given to ensuring that the accommodation would support this diversity of pupils' needs. (paragraph 59)
- 4) Determine, along with the local authority, early identification of future placements for pupils so they continue to make progress in both their education and personal development. (paragraph 35)

The governors and senior management may also wish to include the following in their action plan. These issues are of a more minor nature.

- Ensure that all staff, both new as well as supply teachers, are made aware of health and safety procedures through a formal record of the current good practice. (paragraph 48)
- Clarify the real progress that pupils make, by more effectively linking the improvements noted at annual review to the baseline assessment criteria required by the local authority. (paragraph 46)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	53
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	74

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
9	37	83	98	2	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	No of pupils
Number of pupils on the school's roll	46
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	16

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	19
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	12

Attendance

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
	%		%
School data	5.47	School data	0.04

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

Attainment of pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 – 1998-9

Teacher assessment – percentage of pupils gaining these levels.

	Disapplied	Absent	W	1	2	3
Speaking and Listening	0	0	73	27	0	0
Reading	0	0	64	33	0	0
Writing	0	0	91	9	0	0
Mathematics	0	0	64	27	9	0
Science	0	0	64	27	9	0

Tests – Percentage of pupils gaining these levels.

	Disapplied	Absent	W	1	2	3
Reading task	0	0	73	18	9	0
Reading & comprehension						
Writing task	0	0	82	18	0	0
Spelling					9	
Mathematics	0	0	64	18	9	9

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	50
Any other minority ethnic group	0

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YN – Y2

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	5
Average class size	6.25

Education support staff: YN– Y2

Total number of education support staff	12
Total aggregate hours worked per week	298

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1998
	£
Total income	524797
Total expenditure	523408
Expenditure per pupil	10,905
Balance brought forward from previous year	14,409
Balance carried forward to next year	15,798

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	46
Number of questionnaires returned	17

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	88	12	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	88	6	6	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	59	35	0	0	6
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	47	29	0	6	12
The teaching is good.	88	12	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	94	0	6	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	94	6	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	53	35	6	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	82	18	0	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	88	12	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	76	12	0	6	6
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	71	18	6	6	0

Other issues raised by parents

There were two written responses included with the returned questionnaires. Both of these were unequivocal in their support for the school. At the meeting held for parents, before the inspection, no issues were raised which the parents wished the inspection team to pursue.

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

65. The quality of provision for children under five in the nursery and in the early years is very good. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when it was considered to be satisfactory and children made satisfactory progress in all the areas of learning. Children are now making good progress and this prepares them very effectively for the next stage in their education.
66. Achievement in language and literacy is good. Children effectively develop their interaction and communication, understanding routines, events and songs sufficiently well to anticipate what comes next. For example, they know that there is a brief opportunity to look at books before other activities start after break. They enjoy looking at books and share them with adults, sitting, listening and concentrating. They develop an understanding of how books work and, with prompts, are able to follow the story. Children enjoy listening to the 'big books' and are keen to contribute to discussions. Children show interest in pictures and recall sounds and words learned in previous lessons.
67. Staff welcome children in the mornings with either speech and signing, or symbols. Through this means, children learn to recognise simple signs and gestures to communicate their wishes or contribute to activities. Most respond to their name when the register is called, either verbally, by gesture, or by showing a card on which their name is written. Children listen and respond appropriately to the teachers' questions and develop an awareness of the need to wait and take turns. The very good use of clear questions and an appropriate level of language, supported by very effective signs or gestures, helps pupils develop their understanding so that they respond to adults' questions with relevant answers. Adults' precise use of language reinforces pupils' actions when they ask them to "push, pull, go round and round" when making shortbread rectangles in cookery. During a carefully structured printing activity using sponges, the teacher says to the pupil, "Again" and reinforces this as the child prints another star. Very soon the child is repeating "Again, again" as he prints more stars. In physical education, children are asked to tell the others what they are doing on the apparatus. They respond with careful use of appropriate words and sentences. Children write letters in sand, with paint or chalk, and progress to writing them with pencils and crayons. Some concentrate well to write their name and simple sentences with carefully formed letters.
68. There is a good level of achievement in numeracy. Children scan inset puzzles to see which piece fits into which space. They anticipate when to clap 1,2,3 in number songs and in their familiarity with the songs show an awareness of addition and subtraction. They count one to five consistently and count how many are in the class by touching everyone on the head, showing good one-to-one correspondence. These skills are used at other times, such as registration, and because of this pupils have a good understanding of number.
69. Children learn what a rectangle is and recognise other basic shapes, some developing their recognition of shape, for example triangles and squares when drawing fish. When in the splash pool children gain valuable experience in understanding, "full, empty, and half-full" by pouring water into a series of containers. Children sequence the events of the day, for example what comes next, before and after play.
70. Creative development is good. Children enjoy music and singing plays an important part of the day's routines and activities. They join in activities with pleasure and enthusiasm, trying hard and successfully, to match actions to words. They show delight when they are chosen and their name is mentioned in the song. Children enjoy painting and make deliberate choices of colours. One uses a comb to make waves on her painting of the sea, others have fun splashing the paint on to the paper. Staff encourage pupils to look and observe when they are working. Children make attractive collages using glue, sand and paint. The majority of children enjoy the opportunity to explore materials and so develop good sensory and tactile skills, but some find this difficult at first. Pupils respond very positively to working with clay

and use the support given by staff well as they talk about models of fish, their fins and eyes. They are rightly very pleased with their final effort.

71. Physical development is promoted very well and children achieve at a good level because of the structured and calm way in which lessons are taught. Children climb, roll, jump, curl up small, stretch, do star jumps, balance on poles and benches. They build their movements into a simple sequence as they move over and under appropriately arranged apparatus. Children control their movement well and extend their agility and imagination as they use the apparatus. Many spontaneously applaud those who demonstrate their skills and confidence. In lessons held outside higher attaining pupils control the direction of the ball when hitting it with a bat to an adult. Children pedal tricycles confidently and move purposefully across the playground, but are not always able to judge carefully how to avoid other obstacles, such as cones. Higher attaining pupils however, successfully remain within the simulated road markings on the playground. Staff and physiotherapists, and the occupational therapist, work very well together on programmes to extend pupils' capabilities and this has a clear impact on their learning and levels of awareness. Children's fine motor skills are developing well. They select equipment for mixing and cutting in cookery lessons and, with supervision, use a small electric mixer. The skilled adult support and guidance they receive helps them learn how to correctly hold paintbrushes, pencils and crayons. Children use scissors with care and follow straight lines when cutting. Higher attaining pupils successfully follow simple curves.
72. Children's achievement in knowledge and understanding of the world is good. They are developing a good knowledge of living things because they show good awareness and increasing observational skills, especially when on visits. For example, when visiting the garden centre to buy fish, they demonstrate an understanding that seeds in packets produce flowers and, when they come to a pond, they expect to find in it the fish they have come to buy. When working at the computer, some pupils operate programs independently and appropriately and are aware that the mouse controls events on the screen, although sometimes they need adult support to operate it accurately. Teachers use every opportunity to develop pupils' language and understanding. They enable pupils to understand the link between pushing and pulling when making toy cars move. Teachers construct simple experiments that enable pupils to work out which objects might float or sink, and as an aside, they include discussion of the shape of these objects. In discussions about weather pupils understand that the symbols on their weather board represents the actual weather. Higher attaining pupils know that when it rains the sign needs not only a cloud but also raindrops. The very clear structure to routines and sequenced events of the day enable pupils to acquire good understanding of what is expected of them.
73. Scrutiny of past work done by children, as well as examination of previous individual education plans, indicate that pupils make good progress as they move from the nursery to the reception phase of their education. This occurs because of the highly effective and challenging opportunities made available to them. Children, in their turn, are encouraged to learn through their own success. By the end of Reception, children are well prepared to enter the formal phase of the National Curriculum at Key Stage 1.
74. Children respond well in school and develop a good attitude to work. They are interested and responsive, showing curiosity in objects and things they see. Children answer the adults' carefully phrased questions and enjoy group activities, such as ring games. They accept they have to take turns and thoroughly enjoy the game as one child chases another in "Duck, duck, goose." At circle and registration times, pupils develop their awareness of each other and begin to interact by choosing the next person to be named in their song. The warm, welcoming atmosphere of the start to the day encourages speaking, listening and sharing and children settle very happily into their group each day. Children help to clear away the mats after physical education lessons, working co-operatively. They understand their role as monitors and go independently to place the class register in the stand at the library. When having snacks and drinks they sit quietly and make choices of both drinks and biscuits. At lunchtime they sit with others and eat sensibly. When drinking in a café they behave well, most sitting still. Children sit quietly with others from the play group, giving out cups for all who are there with an awareness of the responsibility they have been given. Caring attitudes

are encouraged. When the teacher says that a child is not happy and asks, "How can we help him?" two children respond immediately, "We'll look after him."

75. The quality of teaching is good and frequently very good or excellent. Teachers and learning support assistants work well together as very effective teaching teams. They plan very carefully to provide suitable opportunities for children to learn and develop skills. Any difficult behaviour is managed well and children respond appropriately to suggestions, choices and praise given by staff. Individual tasks are planned and organised well with good quality resources and an accurate match of activity to the needs of each child. Teachers know the children very well and keep a focus on learning at all times. Full attention is given to each child's targets and individual learning plan. There is also a good balance of activities within each lesson.
76. The curriculum is very broad and balanced and has full regard for the early learning goals. Resources are good and the outside play area is stimulating and used well. The needs of each child are very carefully assessed. Individual programmes are planned and delivered in such a way that they promote children's learning and build on developing skills. The weekly visit of local children to the playgroup is a successful arrangement for children to integrate in a structured and very well supervised and resourced situation. This is a very good link with the community. Partnership between parents and the school ensures that parents are fully involved in any assessment and target setting. This has a beneficial effect on the progress made by children.

ENGLISH

77. Pupils' progress is good, often very good, and an improvement on the previous inspection when it was considered to be satisfactory overall. Since the previous inspection the school has successfully introduced the National Literacy Strategy, which has been adapted well to meet the particular needs of the pupils. This, the improvements in teaching and the meticulous matching of planning to targets on individual education plans, have impacted well on the quality of pupils' learning.
78. Pupils make good progress in their ability to communicate their needs and thoughts to others. Clearly established routines, such as registration, provide very good opportunities for pupils to listen to and answer questions. There is a lively response to discussions about the weather. Teachers waste no opportunities to extend discussions to enable pupils to give correct answers and see the links between them. For example, the story they are reading leads to discussion about exotic fruits they are looking at and the people in the country where these fruits are found. Teachers insist that pupils look at them before dialogue commences and develop their skills through open-ended questions and explanations about language, for example, "four becomes fourth, five becomes fifth." Excellent use is made of attractive and interesting support materials, many made by staff, which very effectively extend pupils' vocabulary.
79. Pupils achieve well against the targets in reading set for them in individual education plans. The very youngest enjoy listening to stories, responding particularly well when the teacher uses puppets to reinforce elements of the story. Pupils' enthusiasm for the big books is clearly evident when one pupil, who though initially reluctant to join the group activity, comes as soon as he hears the teacher say, "We have a new book today." Pupils predict the character they may see on the next page when they see the end of the monkey's tail in the tree. Those who read age-appropriate books respond well to the carefully phrased questions of the teacher. They show understanding of what they read and the contents of the story. One higher attaining pupil fluently reads the passage they have shared in the lesson and this included many unfamiliar, long words. By the end of the key stage, lower attaining pupils handle books well and effective dialogues with teachers help them take part in sustained conversations about the story. They read short phrases such as, "some berries, some pineapples," and reinforce their reading effectively with the writing of some words. A number of pupils are able to read back their own writing and pick out letters on a letter line confidently. Imaginative strategies enable pupils to learn sounds and names of letters. There is a focus on particular letters for example, w and s, and pupils, using different senses, explore sounds and objects that begin with these letters.

80. Pupils make good progress in writing skills because they are provided with a range of challenging activities that match their individual requirements well. Writing progresses from “practice” writing to matching the pupils’ names with lines, going over or under a model, and then attempting letters for their name. By the end of the key stage, pupils enjoy the responsibility of writing words on the board and are developing a good understanding of writing as an important means of communicating messages. When writing, some use a mixture of correctly formed letters and “practice” writing. The number of words which more correctly match the word they are trying to write increases because of the regular reinforcement of vocabulary and consistent teaching to pupils’ individual targets. Pupils are developing an understanding of capital and small letters. They know when their name is written correctly by the teacher and when the capital letter is missing. Pupils are aware that they are expected to “have a go” when trying to spell words and they make good attempts at words, for example, *milky* and *smooth*. Through actual experiences, such as visiting a centre for owls and walking amongst trees, pupils write simple, imaginative poems about owls and blossom, using information gained and observations made. They write creatively and humorously about characters such as “The Grots.”
81. Pupils’ response in English is almost always good. They work hard, show interest in the activities provided for them and take pleasure in their success. When they watch a television programme, which is very relevant to the topic they are following, pupils’ enthusiasm is apparent in squeals and giggles. They are fully involved in joining in with the sentences they read on the screen, as well as performing the actions. Concentration levels are very good, leading to good progress in speaking and reading simple sentences.
82. Teaching is consistently good and is very good or excellent in almost fifty per cent of lessons. The teachers’ ability to utilise a range of imaginative and structured learning opportunities to develop pupils’ communication skills in lessons, and outside of school, enables pupils to make good, and frequently very good gains in their learning. Teachers are secure in their knowledge of teaching English and plan their work very thoughtfully. They use literacy across the curriculum very well, providing pupils with opportunities to reinforce their understanding of vocabulary in every lesson. Teachers’ management of behaviour is very good and this enables lessons to proceed at a good pace and provides opportunities for pupils to learn to manage their own behaviour. Teachers and learning support assistants both work very effectively together and, along with therapists, provide a good quality of stimulation and challenge to pupils.
83. There is good use of information technology in English. Appropriate programs are used well to aid pupils in tasks, such as matching initial sounds successfully and to help them learn spelling patterns. Work in these lessons gives additional opportunities for pupils to practise their skills on the computer.
84. Role-play and drama make a strong contribution to the development of pupils’ communication skills. For example, an excellent role-play of a market scene supports language work from “Handa’s Surprise” very well. Pupils work well with the LEA advisor, on structured drama projects with pupils from a local school. They also enjoy making contributions to assemblies.
85. The curriculum, with its adapted literacy hour, is very good and enables teachers to respond to the individual needs of pupils. There are good resources and selections of information and fiction books in the library. Class book-corners are interesting and used well by the pupils. The subject is managed very well and parents are involved very effectively and productively in pupils’ learning through the very useful reading diaries and “chat books”, as well as through a full knowledge of their child’s targets.

MATHEMATICS

86. Achievements in mathematics are good. On entry to the school, pupils’ understanding and skills are at a very early stage of development. Many have severe communication difficulties

that make it very difficult for them to take part in number songs, counting games and activities, which require an understanding of concepts such as “more” and “fewer”. They respond very well, however, to the many opportunities provided for them to use numbers, to improve their awareness of time and work out simple problems. At the start of the school day, for example, they count the number of children and adults present. Their ability to join in number songs improves rapidly and these are used very effectively by staff to help pupils recognise numbers and put them into a correct sequence. As they progress to Year 1, pupils match and sort objects in a variety of different ways. They recognise and name a growing number of flat shapes. Their mathematical vocabulary shows good development. They use words to describe positions and compare different lengths and quantities with increasing accuracy.

87. The quality of teaching is very good for under-fives children and good for pupils at Key Stage 1. This slight variation is accounted for when the needs of higher attaining pupils at Key Stage 1 are considered. Based on the appropriateness of current resources, some of their needs cannot be fully met. Teachers are particularly effective at introducing and reinforcing new words, not only in numeracy sessions but also in other areas of the curriculum. Words such as “circle” and “calculator”, for example, were used in one class when Reception-age children were working on words beginning with the letter “C”. In Year 1, higher-attaining pupils make sets, add these sets together, count reliably to ten and beyond and identify ordinal numbers with increasing confidence. Teachers’ planning provides a very clear picture of the development of these skills and the record of pupils’ progress towards individual targets in numeracy show good gains in their ability to count on and back, and to estimate as well record their answers. Teachers make very good use of practical activities and resources to add interest to lessons. Pupils much enjoyed a session, for example, which involved finding pairs of socks and hanging them on a line, as part of their work on counting in twos. By the end of Key Stage 1, higher-attaining pupils work successfully in addition and subtraction to ten. They are confident in using numbers up to twenty and in their work on shape, space and measures, they recognise and name common 3-D shapes. They are also use coins to make up varied amounts and a few higher attaining pupils understand and apply terms, such as “halves”, “quarters” and doubles. In statutory assessment at the end of the Key Stage in 1999, a small but significant minority of pupils was approaching the level appropriate for their age and one pupil attained this.
88. Good pace in lessons and the imaginative use of resources in teaching are major factors in pupils’ positive attitude to mathematics. Teachers generally enjoy very good rapport with pupils and they make good use of this to question and challenge pupils in lively oral work. In a small minority of the lessons observed, the pace of activities and the demands made by them were excessive, particularly for pupils with complex learning difficulties and learning was insufficiently reinforced as a result. In most cases, however, lessons provide good opportunities for practice and repetition. Although the National Numeracy Strategy has not yet been fully implemented, there is a clear planning framework through which teachers build effectively on what pupils know and understand. Draft numeracy documents are currently being considered by staff and these provide a very good planning base and scheme of assessment for the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy at the start of the next academic year. The co-ordinator of the subject is fully aware of the need to enhance the range of learning resources available for higher-attaining pupils and so increase the effectiveness of the challenge they are given.
89. The rate of improvement in standards in mathematics since the last inspection has been good. The frequency of good teaching has increased and this has resulted in more effective challenges for pupils, with a consequent beneficial effect on their progress.

SCIENCE

90. The quality of learning is satisfactory in the Early Years and Key Stage1. Pupils, in relation to their prior attainment, make satisfactory progress over the time they are at the school. In the

Early Years, pupils increase their knowledge and understanding of materials. They use their senses especially of sight, touch and smell to investigate a range of materials in different states. They accurately detect the difference between rough and smooth materials. They investigate sinking and floating materials and develop fine motor and pouring skills when exploring capacity. They know that ice melts and feels cold. One pupil knows that by putting an ice cube in water, the temperature is lowered. On a visit to a garden centre pupils find out about and observe living things. They know that seeds grow flowers and goldfish are living things and need feeding. At Key Stage 1 pupils investigate the movement of toy cars and the bear in a box. They compare movement on different surfaces and make measurements using non-standard units. They carry out simple tests with objects of different shapes and weights when placed in water. From this they learn about the supporting qualities of water and what happens when different forces are applied. Pupils have a secure understanding of their senses and how they can be used in their learning.

91. The behaviour of pupils in lessons is satisfactory. They respond well to adult help and work effectively in small groups. Higher attaining pupils work independently and are often fascinated by their own lines of enquiry. They take turns appropriately, for example, when exploring the melting of the ice ball. The majority stay on task for a long time, exploring what happens as they become involved in learning. A mechanical spinning top mesmerised one boy in the lesson about forces. He became totally engrossed to see the effect of pushing the plunger up and down. In a lesson where pupils had to work out how many small teddies were needed to pull big teddy, all pupils successfully identified the moment at which the combined force began to work. Teachers give very clear instructions to pupils and as a result pupils maintain a good focus on their work throughout lessons
92. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall with some good features. Although some teachers have good subject knowledge and give pupils challenging tasks from which they learn and understand, not all organise activities effectively to offer pupils this same challenge. Where teachers' knowledge of the subject is insecure they do not extend pupils' learning. Further weaknesses exist where pupils are given insufficient time to answer questions and understand more difficult concepts. When pupils are not practically engaged in the activity it becomes more difficult for them to answer the 'how, when and why' questions that follow. All teachers and support staff know their pupils well and using this knowledge they effectively focus on the individual needs of their pupils. Good lessons are well planned and include clear expectations of what pupils will learn. Assessment, in all its respects, is very good. It is used consistently well to inform future planning, record achievement and monitor progress. Targets in pupils' individual education plans determine learning opportunities. Teachers allocate support staff appropriately to make the best use of learning opportunities for pupils. The expertise of these staff is considerable, particularly in the management of behaviour, and their contribution enables pupils to concentrate effectively on learning. Questions, phrased in appropriate scientific language, are well used to motivate pupils and extend their learning. In discussion with pupils all staff encourage pupils toward making correct choices and where incorrect answers are given they skilfully use these as a starting point for correction.
93. The curriculum for science is well adapted and suited to the needs of the pupils. There is an up to date policy in place and helpful schemes of work that closely follow the early learning goals and the National Curriculum for pupils at Key Stage 1. All attainment targets are embedded in the planning which is regularly monitored by senior management. The co-ordinator is well qualified, experienced and enthusiastic about the subject. She has drawn up an effective development plan for the subject which should enable further improvement. The subject is well resourced in terms of materials and information technology and the accommodation, including the display areas, is effectively used for both teaching and learning.
94. Since the last inspection, there has been significant improvement in the way in which pupils make progress. They have become more effective learners because of the improvements in teaching standards. While progress remains satisfactory there is evidence to indicate that pupils more fully understand the outcomes of their learning. Teaching was judged, at that inspection, as unsatisfactory in some 75 per cent of lessons. While teaching standards still have room for improvement, the evidence indicates substantial and growing good practice.

Learning is no longer the random activity suggested in the last report and there is better use of practical tasks.

ART

95. The quality of learning in art for all pupils is very good and as a result, when compared to their prior attainment they make very good progress. Art is used effectively across other subjects, including English, where pupils paint castles to illustrate fairy stories. In mathematics also, they identify shapes and link these to form different figures. In the Early Years pupils make good progress in drawing skills and painting. They assemble different materials to make attractive collages linked to the theme of the sea. They construct and decorate large models. Good examples of which include dragons' heads, the three little pigs houses and a big red train, complete with station buffet. They use the environment and what they have seen on visits to the forest to develop their own ideas. At Key Stage 1, pupils have developed well their sense of colour through use of paint and crayons. Seeing their reflection in a mirror, they successfully use observational skills to compose self-portraits. They print using shapes for different effects and identify patterns in their work. The whole school is involved in producing displays for the main hall. All pupils' work is highly valued and much time is spent displaying it on walls and shelves around the school. This has a positive effect on pupils and their attitude to further work.
96. The behaviour of pupils is good. They enjoy working with materials especially paint. Some are reluctant to combine materials but do eventually respond. In one lesson a pupil felt unable to touch or mix the soft paints on the table and make a pattern to print. With encouragement he persevered and was so successful the outcome amazed and enthralled him. Pupils respond well to praise, take turns and play well together. One reception pupil enjoyed his modelling so much he sang as he worked. Pupils with challenging behaviours respond well to the programmes used to manage them and successfully return to working productively. Pupils take pride in their work and are frequently happy to talk about it. Sometimes when pupils are too enthusiastic they can splash the paint but respond well when corrected.
97. The quality of teaching is very good. Lessons have a clear purpose, with activities and planning clearly linked to previous learning. Resources are selectively introduced and high standards of behaviour are expected and maintained. Teachers have high expectations and successfully match challenge to ability and previous attainment. The methods used are very effective in engaging pupils on tasks and encouraging progress. Basic skills are well taught and the management of pupils is very good. Teachers and support assistants work well together and share the responsibility of assessing pupils' skills and monitoring the progress made. All staff ably capitalise on unplanned opportunities which, nevertheless, extend attainment and achievement.
98. Art is well developed across the school with well-planned schemes of work to meet the needs of all pupils. The quality of display around the school is excellent, highlighting the respect for the pupils and their work. The subject is well co-ordinated and very well resourced. Art has a high profile round the school and contributes well to pupils' social and cultural development.
99. Since the last inspection there has been good improvement in the quality of teaching. As a result the improvement made by pupils is also good, where previously it was judged satisfactory. Planning done by the co-ordinator now, more effectively, guides the work of other teachers and this ensures progress and continuity throughout the school. The co-ordinator now makes herself aware of the provision through formal monitoring of individual teachers' planning.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

100. The quality of learning is good in the Early Years and Key Stage1. When compared to their prior attainment, pupils also make good progress over time. In the Early Years pupils build and construct using a wide range of objects, such as large plastic bricks. They choose their resources and adapt and change their work as they proceed. They choose tools and use

methods to shape, assemble and join the materials they are using. Exploring texture and shape, they express and communicate their ideas through their designs. In a lesson, which had a literacy focus, pupils designed and made seaside pictures using different textures and shapes. They decorate snakes choosing different shapes, colours, and decorations in order to make the eyes. At Key Stage 1, pupils successfully design baskets and combine materials to make these, choosing colours with a good degree of independence. They shape dough to make fruits and through this means develop their fine motor and observational skills. One pupil made a very realistic pineapple that he also photographed. One pupil disassembled a bicycle and, in so doing, identified the moving parts, especially the gears, levers and component parts. He successfully matched the required spanners to the different sized nuts and bolts in order to undo them. The majority of pupils use tools safely and with accuracy, especially when cutting and shaping.

101. The behaviour of pupils is good because they enjoy designing and making. As a result they concentrate well on tasks for long periods. From this, their rate of progress increases. When cutting they try hard to do it accurately and are very pleased when they succeed. They think carefully about what they are doing, especially when they choose materials or try something new, such as weaving natural materials in order to make patterns. In cookery lessons they really enjoy stirring and mixing the ingredients and are pleased when they produce biscuits as an end result. While cutting these they engage in discussions about the shape of the biscuits.
102. Teaching is good overall, with some very good and excellent teaching in both the Early Years and Key Stage 1. As a starting point, teachers have very clear expectations regarding the outcomes to their lessons. In their group management they use appropriate language that enable the pupils to make choices and talk about what they are doing. Teachers effectively extend this dialogue to include reasons why some of the design features are necessary. Through these carefully constructed questions they successfully encourage links between what pupils have previously made in other lessons to what they are currently making. For example, in a lesson when making biscuits, a pupil understands the link between hard butter and the fact that it has been in the refrigerator. He goes on to make the link by realising that heat from his hands makes it so soft that it melts. These lessons effectively support elements of the science lessons, which have also dealt with material in different states. In the lesson where sandwiches were made for 'Mr Gumpy's Outing', the organisation and management of the lesson was exemplary. This resulted in very high standards of achievement for pupils, because each was very clear about their part in providing different parts of the picnic. Teachers' planning is clear about the focus of the activities and because it is well linked individual education plans. Progress for each pupil is considerable. Teachers and support assistants carefully record achievements and through this means they can ensure the progress made by pupils. Support assistants are well deployed and, through their expertise in pupil management, make a significant contribution to all aspects of teaching and learning. Lessons are well organised, with a good balance between teacher directed and independent learning. This is especially so at Key Stage 1. The pupils make good gains in personal and social skills because teachers are aware of these possible opportunities and develop them fully when they occur.
103. The curriculum for design and technology is well adapted to the needs of the pupils in the school. The policy in place is due for review but the schemes of work closely follow the Early Learning Goals and the National Curriculum for pupils at Key Stage 1. All attainment targets are embedded in the planning which is regularly monitored by senior management. It follows from this that pupils receive a suitably broad and well-balanced curriculum.
104. The co-ordinator is qualified, experienced and enthusiastic about the subject. Areas for development have been identified, such as the need to identify explicit resources that will extend pupils' learning. This is especially the case for Early Years children. The subject is generally well resourced, in terms of materials and provision of information technology, and the accommodation including the display areas is effectively used to extend teaching and learning opportunities.
105. Since the last inspection the quality of teaching has improved. The quality of planning has also improved and this, more effectively, influences the work of teachers and enables them to incorporate design and technology learning within their more general themes. Because

teaching is so much better the attitude of pupils to lessons has also improved. Teachers manage resources more thoughtfully and this encourages pupils to concentrate on tasks at hand.

HUMANITIES

106. Pupils make good progress in the development of their basic geographical skills and knowledge. In observing and talking about the local area, for example, they are using simple geographical terms when identifying different features of the environment. There is very good use of the locality which stimulates their curiosity about features, such as canals and woodland. Photographs in their records of achievement show them exploring these with enthusiasm. Knowledge of other parts of the world is also extended through a series of activities within the termly themes. Year 1 and 2 pupils, for example, enjoyed a session on the different methods of cooking rice in Malaysia and Kenya. They showed a clear appreciation of the importance of climate and its effects on the customs of other peoples. Teaching makes very good use of practical methods to present and explain facts about other countries and in this lesson the teacher and support assistant wore traditional Malay and Kenyan costume as they demonstrated the different cooking styles. The lesson fully engaged the pupils and ended with pupils using chopsticks to eat the rice, at least, in some cases, until the enjoyment of the food required the use of fingers! In such lessons the quality of teaching is good.
107. No lessons with a specific historical content were observed during the inspection but teachers' planning and the pupils' records of achievement reveal a good range of activities, to promote ideas of old and new when looking at themes, such as domestic life in different periods. As part of a topic on "Change", for example, pupils have produced accurate drawings of the dollytubs and dollypegs used in an "Edwardian washing day". There are very good links with other subjects of the curriculum. Art and music, for example, are used very effectively in pupils' study of aspects of American Indian culture. Both geography and history make a very strong contribution to pupils' cultural development.
108. Since the last inspection good improvement has been made to the provision. Activities, which sometimes are included within themed lessons, now have a clear focus and outcomes are appropriately identified. This results in pupils gaining a clearer understanding of the world in which they live.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

109. There were no discrete lessons taught to groups or classes during the week of the inspection and so it is not possible to directly comment on the quality of teaching. Information and communication technology (ICT) is effectively taught within the context of other lessons and pupils learn appropriate skills through the tasks they do. Based on a scrutiny of work previously done by pupils, as well as seeing the use of their skills within other lessons, it is possible to judge that progress for all pupils is good and for higher attaining pupils, especially in Key Stage 1, it is very good.
110. Pupils under-five, especially those of Reception age are becoming confident users of the technology. In Class 5, for example, some pupils operate the computer independently and use their reading skills effectively to follow the requirements of on screen instructions. Through the use of multi-media CDRom these pupils make very good progress in both their reading and computer skills. It is helpful to the pupils that in this class, as in others, all the relevant parts of the computer are appropriately labelled. This increases their understanding and awareness of the computer as a collection of parts (screen, keyboard, disc drive), that together provide a single response. Pupils' knowledge of the keyboard and its major functions is very good. They know that individual letter keys provide corresponding on-screen letters and that through use of the mouse, the cursor can more quickly be moved around the screen. Higher attaining pupils, at Key Stage 1, open required programs by selecting the necessary icons and competently work through on-screen instructions. Some of these pupils also print off their work on completion

111. In Year 1, pupils use art programs to develop their knowledge of colour. Using the 'Doodle' program they compose simple line drawings. Higher attaining pupils then infill their drawing with colour. As their skill develops they progress to draw imaginative images of Goldilocks and Daddy Bear – these latter require much more advanced co-ordination skills. Lower attaining pupils use supporting My World software to draw heads, through the use of software templates. Higher attaining pupils in Year 2 use CDRom to effectively research information about favourite fairy tale characters.
112. Where pupils were observed using computers within other subjects it was noticeable that their level of concentration was very good. In an individual case the pupil is very reluctant to use anything other than the computer and staff are careful to ensure that his access is appropriately and strictly controlled. All pupils have a careful regard for the equipment and as a result they often use it when unsupervised. Such is their level of keenness that they consistently remain focused on the task they are given. This in large measure accounts for the very good progress they make.
113. The use of computers is incorporated very effectively into the wider academic curriculum. In mathematics, for example, pupils collect data, such as favourite stories or favourite animals, and construct bar graphs using the 'Let's Graph' program. They do this with confidence and interpret their results simply but effectively. Discussion with pupils indicates they know that the highest bar on the graph shows that item to be the most popular. For lower attaining pupils simple counting programs are used to rehearse and enhance knowledge of number sequences.
114. Teachers plan well for the inclusion of ICT within other lessons. Careful monitoring, through detailed record keeping, ensures that every pupil receives a thorough and balanced provision in both knowledge and use of computers. The co-ordinator has developed an accurate and objective recording system that enables him to monitor the progress of individual pupils. Careful management of resources has enabled the purchase of programmable toys, such as trucks, which take up to thirty separate commands. Higher attaining pupils graduate from this to the use of the roamer. The overall provision of teaching and outcomes is well monitored through visits to classrooms. It is an advantage that the co-ordinator teaches throughout the school on a weekly basis and is thus able to familiarise himself with standards overall.
115. Teachers' competence with computers varies but the majority are confident in their use of individual programs. The lack of a computer technician or anyone else with a detailed technical knowledge is a handicap when failures occur within some of the hardware. However, the co-ordinator receives good support, in this regard, from the Cheshire Micro Unit. The school is soon to receive funding through the National Grid for Learning (NGfL) and this will greatly enhance the provision of hardware throughout the school as well as increase the skills and competence of teachers.
116. Very good improvements have been made to the resources and their management since the last inspection. The subject now benefits from a good system of monitoring and the purchase of programmable toys has extended the range of opportunity and challenge for pupils. The level of competence of some staff remains an issue yet to be fully addressed. However, the imminent inclusion of the school within the NGfL scheme should effectively address this.

MUSIC

117. When compared to their previous attainment, pupils make good progress in developing musical skills and understanding. The majority achieve well in learning songs, developing a sense of rhythm and learning to play a wide range of percussion instruments. The provision for music has improved since the previous inspection and all elements of the programmes of study are now included over the year.
118. Pupils play a range of tuned and untuned percussion instruments to the rhythm of action songs. They recognise the instruments used previously to make to a particular noise for their

story, for example Mr Noah making his ark or the sound of rain. They match pictures to the actual instruments and follow the teacher's directions to play when their verse is sung. One girl waits well to play the ocean drum at the precise point it is required. When singing and matching actions to lively African music, pupils enthusiastically follow the instructions. "Did you see my hands pushing and pulling?" asks one boy eagerly at the end of the song. Younger pupils enjoy ring games and action songs. They demonstrate that when they know their songs well, they are able to choose an action, for example, jumping or clapping for others to follow.

119. Very careful attention is given to the selection of music for body awareness and music and movement lessons. Teachers select music and songs that exactly match requirements for lessons. To do this they sometimes compile their own tapes and this results in better focused lessons. This leads to pupils building on previous learning well so that, when they are asked to point to a body part or move in a particular way, they do this confidently. Pupils await the change in the music with pleasurable anticipation.
120. Music has a high profile in the school and is used on many occasions. Early in the morning music greets everyone. Sometimes the music is lively, and sometimes it is calm and reflective. Music is an important part of registration when pupils welcome each other and sing the names of their friends. The songs are a highly effective way of getting pupils to look at and show awareness of each other. Staff encourage pupils to sit appropriately, listen to and look for directions. Pupils respond by joining in enthusiastically, showing interest and singing along confidently. When pupils sing, "Let's sing a song about..." pupils glow when their name is chosen.
121. Music is used in many ways. For example, to reward pupils for a task completed well. Their reward is to handle and experiment with a drum and a rainmaker, trying to keep time to the rhythmic African music on the tape. Music is used well in assemblies, for entry to as well as at the end. During these occasions music and songs are effectively used to bring a sense of community to the occasion. For example, in one notable assembly, pupils and staff sang a three part round that emulated the journey of a steam train. The effect was magical, with pupils continuing to contribute their part as they made their way from hall.
122. Pupils enjoy the wide range of musical experiences they receive. They listen well and sustain their concentration so that they are able to anticipate and join in appropriately with very good support from adults. The pupils who receive music therapy benefit greatly from this type of opportunity as it extends their ability to communicate.
123. Teaching in lessons is good. Lessons are planned well with full attention to individual targets. The wide range of resources is of good quality and they are used well to give pupils opportunities to explore instruments and their sounds. The balance of activities involving music is good.
124. The subject is co-ordinated well and the important part that music plays in the life of the school is emphasised in the choice of "a gift of music" as the school's contribution to the Millennium Pilgrimage. This will be produced in a workshop with a Ghanaian musician and will enhance further the pupils' cultural and social development through music. Improvements have been made to the overall quality of teaching and as a result the progress of pupils is also good.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

125. The provision for both Early Years children and those at Key Stage 1 is very good, and as a consequence pupils make very good progress.
126. Children in Nursery and Reception groups make very good progress in their physical development and movement skills. The outcome of very good planning by teachers enables these children to be effectively challenged across a range of physical activity, with the result, that by the time they enter Key Stage 1, they have high levels of achievement. There is no significant difference in the attainment of all pupils, however, the quality of movement by higher attaining children is better.

127. Physical education is well incorporated within other areas of the curriculum, such as music and movement. In this they rock from side to side in time to the music and respond very well to the taped instructions. When working in pairs they also keep good time and co-operate well with their partner. On demand to the music they slither along on their tummies, with higher attaining pupils managing to effect this movement through good use of their elbows. Through this means they are gaining a good knowledge of their body and how to move in a co-ordinated way. The older pupils within this age group develop very effective responses to the challenge set by teachers, when they introduce apparatus. These higher attaining pupils produce imaginative routines of linked movements using the theme of 'over and under'. As a result of skilled teaching pupils begin to explore the potential they have and as a result they successfully complete actions, such as balancing on a beam or controlled landings when jumping from a trestle.
128. At Key Stage 1, ball skills are well developed in many pupils and they successfully bounce or roll a ball to a partner. Higher attaining pupils throw a ball accurately over a distance of up to five metres. Striking of a ball is more difficult for many pupils, but this technically difficult skill for young pupils is accurately achieved by some of the higher attaining pupils. Teachers adapt the activity for lower attaining pupils by encouraging them to throw a beanbag into a container. This skill is further developed when they throw the beanbags at a target, such as a small basketball ring. This demands that the throw is much more accurate and the majority of pupils accomplish it. At the end of lessons pupils take part in a discussion of what effect exercise has on their body. The majority of these know that the heart rate increases and higher attaining pupils know their own pulse points.
129. Pupils throughout the school make effective progress in developing their confidence and skill in water. In the splash pool Early Years pupils become accustomed to water and gain in confidence as a result. Although this pool is too shallow to allow swimming, the children pretend that this is what they are doing. Through this means they effectively rehearse skills that they develop further at Key Stage 1. Higher attaining pupils at Key Stage 1 move independently in the water and some of these swim distances of up to ten metres. It is a noticeable achievement by pupils that they show great confidence in water.
130. Pupils' attitudes to lessons are very good. Enjoyment and involvement is a significant feature of all lessons. They remain fully engaged in their task and as a result they make very good progress. Skilled teaching, based on sound identification of individual need and potential, ensures that pupils are given specific targets which they work on throughout the duration of the lessons. For example, in a lesson for Nursery children there are frequent demands on teachers to "Look at me!", as children successfully accomplish a skill – such as balancing on a beam or jumping from hoop to hoop with arms folded.
131. Teaching is good throughout the school. Lessons are thoughtfully constructed so as to encourage full development of pupils' skills across the range of their attainment. This effective and detailed planning allows pupils to make the maximum possible progress both over time as well as within individual lessons. For example, in a lesson of ball skills for Year 2 pupils the teacher gradually introduced skills relating to the throwing of a ball. As the lesson proceeded and the rate of pupils' learning diverged, she effectively introduced different challenges that enabled all pupils to achieve and extend their own performance. This good understanding of both the needs of the pupils and the way in which they learn is a significant factor in the good progress pupils make. Management of pupils' behaviour is also very good. This is done proactively through the provision of effective challenges to pupils, but where individual pupils become distressed or unruly, teachers and support staff remain calm, in both manner and voice. This has the effect of defusing potentially volatile situations. At the same time they explain firmly to pupils that their behaviour is unacceptable. In one case, a pupil who was particularly successful in demonstrating a difficult balance then began to show off. The suggestion by the teacher that the lesson might be stopped, was immediately successful.
132. The pace of lessons encourages full involvement by pupils. Activities are appropriately used to develop and extend particular skills, and concentration of pupils is maintained by good timing of these. At the end of lessons teachers' require pupils to explain what they have learned. The discussion on heart rate would be a good example of this. In this, a teacher effectively focused

the pupils' attention on what they had learned and in the ensuing discussion higher attaining pupils explained the effect exercise has on their body, and even where a pulse might be taken. Where pupils successfully achieve in an activity this is immediately used as a demonstration point, allowing others to learn through copying, while at the same time increasing the pupils' self-esteem.

133. The arrangements to monitor pupils' progress are very good and these provide an effective base of knowledge on which further teaching can be based. This, in large measure, accounts for the well-targeted teaching within lessons and the consequent very good progress for pupils. The co-ordinator provides effective leadership for the subject and through her scrutiny of plans drawn up by other teachers, ensures that the full range of the subject is taught to all pupils. Resources are good. These are used both appropriately and effectively in both indoor and outdoor lessons
134. Since the last inspection improvements have been made in the quality of teaching and its consequent effect on pupils' progress. Teaching is now consistently good or better. Through use of stimulating and well-chosen activities teachers have ensured that pupils' attitudes to their lessons are better than last reported. The detail of lesson planning now ensures pupils' entitlement to a quality curriculum.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

135. There were no lessons in religious education during the inspection, so it is not possible to judge the quality of teaching or pupils' progress in these. The subject is taught within the context of other lessons and the planning of these indicates that the overall provision meets the requirements of the Cheshire Approved Syllabus.
136. Knowledge of other faiths and traditions is well promoted through the study of festivals, such as Divali. Pupils deepen their knowledge of the Christian faith through well-targeted themes for assembly and their spiritual dimension is promoted through the frequent use of prayer, both within classrooms as well as assemblies. These reinforce the understanding among pupils of the values that the school promotes, such as caring for others and valuing them as individuals. Assemblies provide good occasions for pupils to reflect using appropriate hymns and songs. Lessons in personal and social education also provide important aspects of the agreed syllabus, such as respect for other people.
137. Planning for learning is largely based on the locally agreed syllabus and is interpreted within plans drawn up by individual teachers. While these, in conjunction with other provision, are effective in ensuring that pupils receive a wide and relevant religious education, they cannot ensure the consistency of learning throughout a pupil's stay at the school. Further recording and monitoring of the provision and learning needs to be undertaken before this can be effective.