

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **GOLBORNE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Golborne

Near Warrington

LEA area: Wigan

Unique reference number: 106420

Headteacher: Mr C G Cutler

Reporting inspector: Mrs M Gough  
22361

Dates of inspection: May 8<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> 2001

Inspection number: 214281

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Talbot Street Golborne Near Warrington
Postcode:	WA3 3NN
Telephone number:	01942 726059
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs J Christopher
Date of previous inspection:	May 1999

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
22361	Marina Gough	Registered inspector	English as an additional language	The school's results and achievements. How well are pupils taught? What could the school do to improve further?
31729	Bernard Harrington	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
31807	David Carpenter	Team inspector	English Art and design Equal Opportunities	
10228	Sue Russam	Team Inspector	The work of the special educational needs Unit Special educational needs	
21265	Frances Gander	Team Inspector	Science	
10182	Barrie Cooper	Team Inspector	The Foundation Stage	How well is the school led and managed?
27568	Midge Davidson	Team Inspector	Geography History Physical education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to the pupils?
8263	Margaret Forsman	Team Inspector	Information and communication technology Religious education	
7983	Iain Johnston	Team Inspector	Mathematics Design and Technology Music	

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## REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>6</b>
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?</b>	<b>11</b>
The school's results and achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
<b>HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>THE SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS UNIT</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b>	<b>30</b>

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

The school is situated on the outskirts of Golborne and caters mainly for pupils aged from 4 to 11, from the local area. There are 417 pupils on roll, almost all of whom are of white ethnicity. Only one pupil has English as an additional language. There are 107 (26%) pupils on the school's register of special educational needs (above average). Sixteen pupils have statements of special educational needs (well above the national average). The school has an LEA designated unit for pupils who have complex learning difficulties. Thirteen pupils are currently placed in the unit, which can accommodate 26 pupils. Eighty-four pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals, representing 22% of the school population. This is above the national average. The school is aware that, for a variety of reasons, a significant number of parents do not claim free school meals, and estimates that the actual number of pupils eligible for free school meals is considerably higher than the records indicate. The area is one of high unemployment, and the school recognises that some pupils do not have the same advantages at home as others, and does its best to compensate for this. Pupils' attainment on entry to the school is below average overall.

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

This is an effective school, which gives good value for money. Standards have improved, and are now in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages in science, and in English at Key Stage 1, although there is still more work to be done in English at the end of Key Stage 2, and in mathematics in both key stages, where standards are below average. Pupils achieve well, and reach their full potential. Teaching is a strength, and is of a consistently good standard throughout the school. Pupils' behaviour is good and they have positive attitudes to school and to learning. The leadership and management of the school are good overall, and the headteacher enjoys the full support of the Governing Body.

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

- Standards are above national expectations in art and design at the end of Key Stage 1 and in design and technology at the end of Key Stage 2.
- Pupils of all abilities are enabled to achieve their full potential.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good throughout the school.
- Provision for pupils who have special educational needs in mainstream classes and in the special needs unit is good.
- Pupils of all ages have positive attitudes to school and are keen to learn. Their behaviour is good.
- The school provides a very good curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage, and a good range of learning experiences for pupils in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.
- The school is very caring, and uses assessment well to track pupils' progress and attainment.
- Links with parents are good.
- The leadership and management of the school are good.

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

- Standards in mathematics at the end of both key stages, and standards in English at the end of Key Stage 2.
- The role of the deputy headteacher.
- The management of the special needs unit.
- Long-term financial planning.

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

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school's last full inspection took place in May 1999. At that time the school was deemed to have serious weaknesses. The school has fully addressed the key issues identified in the last report and no longer has serious weaknesses. There have been significant improvements in the quality of teaching. Standards overall have improved, although there is still more work to be done in both key stages in mathematics, and at the end of Key Stage 2 in English. Curriculum planning has been reviewed and coverage of subjects is now good. Key Stage 2 pupils have benefited from the extra time in lessons each week and now spend the right amount of time on each subject. Support staff are more efficiently allocated to classes. The school improvement plan now covers a two year period. It has clear priorities, is costed and there are deadlines for completion. All statutory requirements are now met. The school has made very good improvement in the last two years and, because of very high levels of staff commitment, is very well placed for continued development and further improvement.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
English	E	D	E	D	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
Mathematics	E	E	E	D	
Science	C	D	E	C	

The table shows that, on the basis of the 2000 end of Key Stage 2 National Curriculum tests, pupils' attainment is well below the national average in English, mathematics and science. Standards in English and mathematics have been relatively stable for the past three years, but standards in science have dropped each year. In comparison with similar schools, the pupils' performance is below average in English and mathematics and average in science. The school's Key Stage 2 results are depressed by the high percentage of pupils who have special educational needs, as those pupils who attend the special educational needs unit are all entered for the tests, high levels of pupil mobility, and high levels of pupil absence during the test period. The school sets appropriately challenging targets for Key Stage 2 pupils which are usually achieved. The inspection findings present a more positive picture than the 2000 end of key stage test results, and reflect the improvement in standards over the past two years. They indicate that pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations in science, and below national expectations in English and mathematics.

The school's end of Key Stage 1 2000 test results for reading, writing and mathematics indicate that pupils' attainment in reading is below the national average, their attainment in writing is in line with the national average and their attainment in mathematics is well below the national average. In comparison with similar schools, the pupils' performance is average in reading, above average in writing and well below average in mathematics. The inspection findings reflect the progress the pupils have made over the last year, and indicate that their

attainment is in line with national expectations in English and science, although still below expectations in mathematics.

Pupils' attainment in information and communication technology and religious education is now at the expected level at the end of both key stages and there has been good improvement in both of these subjects since the time of the last inspection. Standards are in line with national expectations in art and design at the end of Key Stage 2, design and technology at the end of Key Stage 1, and in geography, history, music and physical education at the end of both key stages. Standards are above national expectations in art and design at the end of Key Stage 1, and in design and technology at the end of Key Stage 2.

Pupils attain the Early Learning Goals in each of the six areas of learning by the time they transfer to Key Stage 1 at the end of the Reception year. This represents good achievement from a low starting point.

Pupils of all ages and abilities, including those who have special educational needs, make good progress and achieve well. Occasional dips between the National Curriculum end of key stage test results from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2 do not reflect lack of progress. They occur because pupils from the Key Stage 2 special needs unit are entered for the Key Stage 2 tests, and most do not achieve the expected level, especially in English. There has been good improvement in standards since the last inspection, although there is still more work to be done to raise attainment in mathematics in both key stages, and English in Key Stage 2 to the national average.

## **PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Attitudes to the school	Good. The vast majority of pupils have positive attitudes to school, and to their learning, and take an active part in all activities.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Most pupils behave very well in class, and observe the school rules. There are occasions when older pupils do not have enough self-discipline.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships amongst pupils and between pupils and staff are very good and help to create a pleasant learning environment. Older Key Stage 2 pupils conscientiously take responsibility for jobs around the school.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. Attendance is below the national average.



## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
91 lessons seen overall	good	good	good

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

There has been a significant improvement in teaching since the last inspection. During the inspection the quality of teaching was good overall. It was very good in 20% of lessons seen, good in 53% of lessons, satisfactory in 25% of lessons, and unsatisfactory in 2% of lessons. The amount of unsatisfactory teaching seen during the inspection is insignificant in terms of the whole-school picture, and is concentrated in one class. The teaching of English and mathematics is good, and literacy and numeracy skills are effectively promoted across the curriculum. Work is well matched to pupils' levels of ability, ensuring that higher and lower attaining pupils are appropriately challenged. Good support is given to pupils in mainstream classes, and those from the unit, who have special educational needs, enabling them to take a full and active part in lessons. There are particular strengths in the way in which teachers organise pupils' learning, and manage the pupils. Relationships between teachers and pupils are very good. The quality of learning is good and pupils of all ages are enthusiastic. Pupils work hard and respond well to their teachers' requests.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The school provides a good curriculum for both key stages which covers all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. A good amount of time is given to each subject. The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is very good.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils from mainstream classes and from the special needs unit make good progress and benefit from good levels of support and guidance. Pupils from the unit are well integrated into the life and work of the school.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. The school has only one pupil who has English as an additional language, and the provision is good.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good overall. The school makes very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development, and good provision for their cultural development. Good links with the local community enrich the pupils' learning.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. Pupils are well cared for, and their health, well-being and safety are the shared concern of governors and staff. Procedures for child protection are in place, but are not fully understood by all staff. There has been no recent staff training for this aspect of the school's work.
How well the school works in partnership with parents	Good. Parents receive good levels of information about their children's progress and feel welcome when they visit the school.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher has successfully led the school through a difficult period of change, and has kept staff well motivated and focused. Curriculum co-ordinators have a good overview of their areas. The role of the deputy is not sufficiently developed
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. Governors are fully involved in the work of the school and provide good levels of support. All statutory requirements are met.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. The school has a very well established programme for monitoring and evaluation, enabling strengths and weaknesses to be identified and addressed.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Very good use is made of the available finances and the school ensures best value when making spending decisions. However, the school has little room for manoeuvre within the budget, and does not have a long-term plan to show how the finances will be managed over the next few years if the budget continues to decrease. The school gives good value for money.
Staffing, learning resources and accommodation	The school has a good number of suitably qualified staff for the number of pupils on roll. The accommodation is spacious, but old, and its upkeep drains the school's budget. There are enough resources to support teaching and learning.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parents are very comfortable about approaching the school with problems or concerns and agree that they are warmly welcomed by the headteacher and staff.</li> <li>Parents appreciate the way in which the school promotes good behaviour through the use of rewards.</li> <li>Parents are pleased with the amount of information they receive about their children's progress.</li> <li>Parents are pleased with the way in which the school cares for their children.</li> <li>Parents agree that relationships in the school are very good.</li> <li>Parents are pleased with the progress their children make.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A small number of parents do not think that the school provides enough extra-curricular activities.</li> <li>Some parents are not pleased with the amount and frequency of homework and do not think that their children are given enough time to complete the set tasks.</li> </ul>

Parents are pleased with the education the school provides and the inspection findings support the parents' positive views of the school. The school provides a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities, and an appropriate amount of homework for each age group.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Pupils' attainment when they start school in the Nursery class is below the expected level, especially in terms of language development. Many Nursery children are reluctant speakers, and some have poorly developed spoken language skills. Pupils benefit from good teaching in the Nursery and Reception classes, and make good progress across all areas of their learning. When pupils transfer to Year 1 at the end of the Foundation Stage, their attainment is at the expected level in the six areas of learning: personal social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematics, creative and physical development and knowledge and understanding of the world.
2. The inspection findings indicate that Key Stage 1 pupils make good progress and, by the end of the key stage, their attainment is in line with national expectations in English and science, although it is below national expectations in mathematics. Teaching is good, and has a positive impact on pupils' learning, and pupils of all abilities achieve their potential. Standards have improved overall since the last inspection. The school's end of Key Stage 1 2000 test results for reading, writing and mathematics indicate that pupils' attainment in reading is below the national average, their attainment in writing is in line with the national average and their attainment in mathematics is well below the national average. In comparison with similar schools, the pupils' performance is average in reading, above average in writing and well below average in mathematics. The inspection findings paint a more positive picture of pupils' attainment than the 2000 test results, and reflect the improvement, in terms of pupils' attainment and progress, that has taken place over the past year as the result of better teaching and staff changes.
3. The inspection findings indicate that pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is below national expectations in English and mathematics, and in line with national expectations in science. Standards are lower in English at the end of Key Stage 2 than at the end of Key Stage 1. This is because pupils from the Key Stage 2 special needs unit do not usually attain the expected level, and this pulls the overall attainment down at the end of Key Stage 2. The inspection findings present a more positive picture than the 2000 National Curriculum end of Key Stage 2 test results, and demonstrate improvement since the last inspection, when standards in English, mathematics and science were at a much lower level than they are now. The improvement since the last inspection is the result of better teaching and a broader and more balanced curriculum.
4. Although pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 on the basis of the National Curriculum 2000 test results was well below the national average in English, mathematics and science, in comparison with similar schools, the pupils' performance mirrors the inspection findings, with English and mathematics below average, and science at an average level. Over the past few years, standards have been at a consistently low level in English and mathematics, and have dipped in science because the school has given more time to English and mathematics. The school sets appropriately challenging targets for Key Stage 2 pupils which are usually achieved. The end of Key Stage 2 results are adversely affected by the high percentage of pupils in the school who have special educational needs, including the pupils from the special educational needs unit, high levels of pupil absence during the test period, and high levels of pupil mobility during Key Stage 2.

5. In information and communication technology and religious education, there has been a significant improvement in pupils' attainment since the time of the last inspection, and pupils are now attaining the expected level in each of these subjects at the end of both key stages. Standards have also improved significantly in design and technology, and in music. The last inspection report states that pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 in these subjects was below national expectations. The school has worked hard to ensure that the curriculum is more closely matched to the needs of the pupils, and to improve teaching in these areas. Standards are now in line with national expectations in music at the end of both key stages, and in line with expectations in design and technology at the end of Key Stage 1 and above national expectations at the end of Key Stage 2. In art and design, standards have improved at the end of Key Stage 1 and are now above national expectations, and have been maintained at the end of Key Stage 2 where pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations. In geography, history and physical education, pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages, and pupils are now making good progress as the result of recent initiatives and developments in teaching and curriculum planning.
6. Pupils who have special educational needs in mainstream classes and in the special needs unit benefit from good levels of support and make good progress, enabling them to achieve the targets on their individual education plans. No pupil in Key Stage 1 or Key Stage 2 has English as an additional language. There is no significant difference between the attainment of boys or girls, and the needs of both higher and lower attaining pupils are well met.
7. Although there is still some work to be done in terms of raising standards in English at the end of Key Stage 2, and in mathematics at the end of both key stages, the school has worked hard to improve standards overall since the last inspection, and is now well on course for even further improvement.

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

8. Pupils of all ages and abilities have good attitudes to their work. They enjoy coming to school and are enthusiastic about new learning. Most parents agree that their children like school and are making good progress. In lessons, pupils demonstrate a commitment to learning by concentrating hard and persisting at tasks even when they become difficult. At times, pupils become so engrossed in their work that the noise level in the class reduces to that of a whisper. Such positive attitudes to work enable good progress in lessons.
9. The good standard of behaviour described in the last inspection report has been maintained. In class, at play, and around the school, pupils are well behaved. In those lessons where the level of challenge is very high, pupils' behaviour is especially good, enabling lessons to proceed at a good pace. A few pupils in most year groups lack self-discipline, but because their behaviour is very well managed, they rarely cause disruption to the learning of others. The vast majority of pupils understand the need to follow the school's code of conduct, and the class rules, and are tolerant of classmates whose behaviour is sometimes inappropriate. Parents agree that behaviour is good. The school is aware of occasional incidents of bullying which are dealt with speedily and effectively. Very good procedures are in place for monitoring and managing behaviour, but in the past year, a pupil was permanently excluded from the school after all other sanctions had proved ineffective.

10. All pupils benefit from the very positive relationships that exist in school, and the very good role models provided by adults. The school provides a secure learning environment, and teachers encourage pupils to be adventurous in their learning. From an early age pupils are encouraged to make choices and decisions, and to progressively take more responsibility for their actions. Pupils are very appreciative and respectful of the work of others, and celebrate the achievements and successes of their classmates. Some older pupils take responsibility for jobs around the school, such as acting as monitors, and running the tuck shop, but such opportunities are limited.
11. Attendance is below the national average and is unsatisfactory. The school is making efforts to improve attendance and to reduce lateness by contacting parents through newsletters. However, many parents arrange family holidays during term time, and this adversely impacts upon pupils' learning. The school is particularly concerned when pupils are absent during the end of key stage National Curriculum test period, and is working hard to educate parents to ensure that their children are not absent at this time. The rate of attendance at the time of the last inspection was similar to the national average, and has declined.

#### **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?**

12. During the inspection the quality of teaching was good overall. It was very good in 20% of lessons seen, good in 53% of lessons seen, satisfactory in 25% of lessons seen and unsatisfactory in 2% of lessons seen. The amount of unsatisfactory teaching seen during the inspection is insignificant in terms of the whole-school picture, and is concentrated in one class. The school is aware of the problem and is giving appropriate support to the teacher concerned. The overall quality of teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection, and this is reflected in the improvement in pupils' learning and in their achievements.
13. The teaching of children in the Nursery and Reception classes is good overall, and some very good teaching was seen in these classes during the inspection. The school has worked hard since the last inspection to ensure that the provision for the Foundation Stage children reflects the most recent national guidance. Teachers are very successful in the way in which they promote learning through practical and first-hand experiences. Structured play activities are used very effectively to engage the children in conversation, and to help them to develop personal, social and emotional skills. In both the Nursery and Reception classes, teachers and classroom assistants are very skilled in the way in which they extend the children's learning by asking them carefully phrased questions. Adults are very sensitive in the way in which they pick up incidental opportunities that arise during the course of the day and develop them to extend the children's learning. For example, during the inspection, one of the Nursery children noticed that the water in the water tray appeared to be green, whilst the same water in a clear container appeared to be blue. With careful prompting, the child explained that the water was actually blue, but appeared to be green in the water tray, because the tray was yellow. Children in the Foundation Stage receive a good start to their education, and are confident and successful learners.
14. The teaching of literacy and numeracy in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 is good, and time is used very effectively, ensuring that lessons move at a good pace, which helps the pupils to maintain high levels of concentration. There has been some effective monitoring of teaching and learning in literacy and numeracy over the past few years,

and this has had a positive impact on teaching in these subjects, and has helped teachers to become more confident and adventurous. The consistently good quality of teaching and learning in literacy and numeracy is starting to have a positive impact on standards in these subjects. Currently, Key Stage 2 pupils are taught in ability groups for literacy and numeracy, but this practice has not proved to be effective and is being changed in the near future. Teachers encourage pupils to use their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects, and make good effort to provide opportunities for pupils to use information and communication technology in their work across the curriculum.

15. In Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 there are particular strengths in the way in which teachers organise their classes and manage the pupils. There is a good combination of group, individual and classwork, and this gives pupils the opportunities to learn in different ways. Very good use is made of introductory discussions to encourage pupils to develop speaking and listening skills, and to encourage them to value the views and thoughts of their classmates. In some classes, good opportunities are provided for pupils to critically evaluate their own work and that of others, but this practice is not consistently promoted throughout the school. Where the best teaching occurs, emphasis is placed on pupils developing independent learning skills, such as making choices and decisions, selecting their own resources, and choosing how to present their work. This approach is most evident in the upper part of Key Stage 2 and prepares pupils well for their transfer to secondary education.
16. Overall, teachers make satisfactory use of ongoing assessment to highlight what needs to be done to raise standards, and to address weaknesses in pupils' learning. In both key stages, some teachers make particularly effective use of their ongoing observations when planning the next stage of pupils' learning. For example, in an art lesson seen during the inspection, one Year 6 teacher identified that the pupils needed further practise in mark-making skills, and adapted subsequent plans to ensure this issue was addressed. However, not all teachers are sufficiently skilled in using their observations to highlight areas for further development, and in the class where unsatisfactory teaching was seen during the inspection, insufficient attention was paid to noting the strengths and weaknesses in pupils' learning.
17. Teachers in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 generally have at least a satisfactory knowledge of all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education, but there are occasions in both key stages when teachers who perform very well in literacy and numeracy lessons are not as effective when teaching other subjects. Although the monitoring of teaching and learning has been effective in picking up strengths and weaknesses in relation to literacy and numeracy, it has not yet focused on teaching across the curriculum, and subject specific strengths and weaknesses have not yet been identified. The school now has good quality schemes of work in place to support teachers' planning which is comprehensive and useful.
18. Teachers throughout the school have very good relationships with the pupils, which are based on mutual respect and trust. Teachers set very clear expectations of behaviour and this helps to create an effective learning environment. Marking of pupils' work is positive, but does not always show how pupils can improve their work further. There is generally a good match between the set tasks and pupils' levels of ability, and this means that all pupils are fully challenged to do their best. Teachers make effective use of support staff, and ensure that they are well briefed and clear about their role in lessons. Support in mainstream classes for pupils with special educational needs is good. It is effective in enabling pupils to participate fully and with confidence in all learning tasks. Teachers make effective use of individual education plans to inform their

planning and match the work they provide to the pupils' individual needs. There are no pupils in Key Stage 1 or Key Stage 2 for whom English is an additional language.

19. Pupils in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 respond well to the teaching, and the vast majority work hard in class. Where teachers' expectations are especially high, pupils produce neatly presented work, and work at a fast rate. Most pupils settle quickly to their tasks, and take a full and active role in lessons. This is particularly true in practical sessions where pupils are most enthusiastic and keen. The completion of homework varies amongst pupils, but most older Key Stage 2 pupils recognise the value of completing additional tasks to help them in their learning. In lessons where creativity is celebrated, pupils are confident about pursuing their own ideas and produce original work.
20. The school has worked hard since the last inspection to improve the overall quality of teaching throughout the school and has been most successful. At the time of the last inspection teaching was described as satisfactory throughout the school. It is now good, with very good features, and this is evident in the improved standards and the improvement in pupils' learning.

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

21. The school provides a very good curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage that is very well planned and incorporates all of the nationally recommended areas of learning. This enables the children to make good progress towards the Early Learning Goals, and to achieve their full potential.
22. The curriculum for Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 pupils is good, and has improved quite dramatically since the last inspection when there were weaknesses in the overall curriculum provision. Teachers have improved their methods of planning, and this ensures that there is greater progression in pupils' learning, enabling them to build upon and consolidate their previous learning. The improvement has been effected by the development of good schemes of work for each subject, which successfully combine national and local curriculum planning guidance. Teachers of parallel classes plan well together so that all pupils of the same age follow similar lessons. The National Literacy Strategy and National Numeracy Strategy have been fully implemented, and teachers successfully promote literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills through other subjects.
23. The school meets statutory requirements, and all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education are taught for an appropriate amount of time. The school has worked particularly hard to provide a broad and well balanced curriculum, and makes very good use of the time available. Teaching time in Key Stage 2 has been increased and is now in line with national recommendations. Good links are drawn between subjects. For example, in Year 2, pupils successfully use their art skills when drawing pencil pictures of buildings as part of their ongoing geography project. Pupils in both key stages enjoy a good balance of activities that successfully promote their physical, emotional, intellectual and creative development.
24. There are satisfactory opportunities for pupils to attend extra-curricular activities. Sporting activities are particularly well represented and include soccer, netball and 'kwik-cricket' for older pupils. Teams of both genders frequently take part in music festivals and sports competitions. Older pupils have the opportunity to visit a residential centre in the Lake District where they take part in outdoor and adventurous activities.

The choir has recently represented the school in a local festival, and such opportunities are valuable in promoting pupils' confidence and making them feel proud of the school to which they belong. The school also supports pupils' learning in other ways, by entertaining visiting coaches for sport, using creative arts groups and making some visits to the local area to support curriculum activities in geography.

25. The school makes satisfactory provision for pupils' personal, social, and health education. Although a formal programme for the presentation of personal, social and health education has not yet been developed, some teachers have received training in elements of the subject, and key topics, such as sex education and drugs awareness, are presented through other subjects such as religious education and science. Through the 'Healthy Schools' initiative, pupils have acquired a good understanding of health issues. Pupils' personal development is formally monitored and recorded. Year 6 pupils evaluate their own annual progress reports, and their comments, along with teachers' comments, are made available for parents' consideration. The weekly 'Listening Council' enables Year 6 pupils to contribute to decision-making in school and to discuss issues that they consider relevant.
26. The school has good links with the wider and local community, and pupils regularly visit museums and other places of interest. Links with the Education Business Partnership are excellent and have a strong impact on pupils' learning. A good example of this is the 'mini-market' project which Year 6 pupils are engaged in after they have completed their National Curriculum tests. The pupils' literacy, numeracy and design and technology skills are successfully developed as they make and sell items to raise money, which they use to buy leaving presents for the school. Pupils have in recent years raised considerable amounts of money to purchase much valued items such as a CD player and digital camera. Through these links, pupils have visited a number of centres, such as Worthington Lakes, Pennington Flash and Leylands Farm, which have provided very good opportunities for raising their awareness and enhancing their learning. Several teachers have undertaken placements with commercial organisations, and by disseminating the information that they have gathered, have helped to reinforce the school's links with industry and the business community.
27. The school has good sporting associations with other primary schools in the area and well established transfer arrangements with the main receiving high school, which enable pupils to feel confident about starting in the secondary school of their choice. The school welcomes student teachers from a local teacher training institution, and this provides pupils with further opportunities for learning and social development.
28. The provision for pupils' spiritual moral social and cultural development is very good overall, and has many strengths. The school meets statutory requirements for collective worship and religious education. The very good overall standard of provision has been maintained since the last inspection, and provision for pupils' spiritual development has improved.
29. The school provides very well for pupils' spiritual development. It ensures that pupils gain knowledge and insight into the values and beliefs of others, through religious education lessons and assemblies. Pupils are encouraged to reflect upon their personal experiences and to develop spiritual awareness through prayer and stillness. Techniques such as 'visualisation', where pupils picture their thoughts in their minds, help pupils to articulate their feelings. Awareness of the world and its wonders is consciously taught in many classes. Teachers quickly build on spontaneous responses of awe and wonder in lessons, as when younger pupils found the complexity of Islamic



patterns amazing. The joy of singing is fostered throughout the school, and this is most evident when pupils who have taken part in music festivals describe their experiences.

30. Provision for pupils' moral development is very good. All pupils are aware of how their behaviour impacts on the well-being and happiness of others. Pupils understand the reasons for rules and expectations of behaviour in their classrooms, and in the community generally. The school actively promotes good behaviour to enhance pupils' social skills. There is a consistent approach to the rewarding of good behaviour and to the consequences of inappropriate behaviour. Assembly themes are planned well in advance with clear messages of right and wrong. Teachers help pupils understand that moral issues can also be subjects for debate. Older pupils, for instance, engaged in role-play to consider opposing views on animal rights. Parents feel that the school promotes very positive attitudes and values.
31. The provision for pupils' social development is very good. The school places great importance on helping pupils to form positive relationships and to recognise that relationships have to be worked at throughout life. Pupils are encouraged to recognise the qualities of their friends through a variety of approaches. For example, Key Stage 1 pupils have built a friendship wall where each pupil praises a friend. Older pupils in Key Stage 2 acknowledge kindness and help with 'warm fuzzy' stickers. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility, for example, in the Tuck shop, and in the Year 6 Listening Council. The school helps pupils to learn about social responsibility through involvement with the community. Key Stage 1 pupils share their Harvest collection with local residential homes and Key Stage 2 pupils make a monetary collection for a local charity, which they choose themselves.
32. The provision for pupils' cultural development is good. Financial shortages restrict trips, visits and visitors but pupils are offered a good range of experiences overall. Pupils benefit from the input of specialist musicians such as the 'Key Strings' and the dance group, 'The Great Zulu Nation'. The school has developed European links, and a partnership with two Polish schools is well established. The school's web-site provides ready access to a number of world-wide links and attracts contacts from former pupils in different parts of the world. The school is involved in local cultural events, such as the local Music Festival, and takes part in an annual ecumenical service with the other Golborne primary schools. The school promotes the heritage of the locality and actively involves pupils in community life.
33. The overall curriculum provision for pupils throughout the school is better than it was at the time of the last inspection, and the school has improved at a very good rate in this aspect of its work. The improved curriculum planning is already starting to have a positive impact on pupils' attainment and progress, and the firm foundations that have already been laid, place the school in a strong position for further improvement.

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

34. The school cares well for all pupils. The school's procedures for child protection are satisfactory. The deputy headteacher has been nominated to deal with child protection issues and is supported in this role by the headteacher. The school has adopted the procedures of the LEA and both the headteacher and the deputy have experience of dealing with matters of child protection. Systems and procedures for identifying and reporting pupils who may be at risk are stated in the staff handbook. A few staff have received training on child protection issues, and no governor has responsibility for this important aspect of the school's work.

35. The school has a good and comprehensive health and safety policy which ensures the health, safety and well-being of pupils. Several teachers and supervisors have received first-aid training and detailed records are kept of all illnesses and injuries reported. Welfare staff have responsibility for replenishing the first-aid boxes, and for the care of pupils during break and lunchtimes. Detailed information about pupils with specific medical needs, and the appropriate emergency treatment, is displayed in the staff room. Regular risk assessments of the premises are undertaken and any hazards identified are presented to the Governing Body for resolution. Daily assessments of the premises enable the headteacher and caretaker to manage the effects of the vandalism from which the school suffers regularly.
36. The school has good procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance, and is working hard to improve attendance and to reduce lateness. However, in spite of the school's efforts, a minority of parents do not recognise the benefits that regular attendance at school can make to the development of their children. The school has good links with the education welfare officer, and during the inspection, she made a presentation during assembly, reminding pupils about the value of attending school regularly.
37. There are very good procedures in place for monitoring and promoting good behaviour, and for eliminating oppressive behaviour. Support from an LEA initiative provides the school with strategies for managing pupils with behavioural difficulties and provides behaviour management support for teachers. Pupils are familiar with routines for dealing with any incidents of bullying and know that adults in school will respond to any concerns that may arise.
38. Teachers are very caring of the pupils in their charge and know them well. They respond sensitively to the emotional and social needs of pupils, supporting and encouraging them in their work. The school has developed good assessment procedures, which effectively supplement the teachers' informal knowledge of the pupils, and enable teachers to have a full picture of the pupils' strengths and weaknesses. Good levels of information are kept about the quality of work pupils achieve, and their behaviour and personal development. Good assessment systems have been developed, which have been introduced sensitively and systematically by the assessment co-ordinator and headteacher. Emphasis has been placed on developing methods of monitoring and tracking pupils' achievements in literacy and numeracy in order to raise standards in these subjects.
39. All subject co-ordinators have begun to initiate and implement procedures for monitoring pupils' progress and achievements. Up to date portfolios of samples of pupils' work have yet to be established to provide teachers with more detailed information about the quality of pupils' work within subjects and throughout the school. The assessment co-ordinator is aware of the value of matching pupils' work to National Curriculum levels in order to evaluate more closely how standards within the school reflect those found in schools nationally. In the Foundation Stage, good use is made of information about what the children know, understand and are able to do when planning the next stage of their learning. However, not enough use is made of baseline assessment procedures and information to evaluate how well these children are achieving in comparison with other children of a similar age in different schools.
40. Throughout the school, pupils' achievements are shared and celebrated. There are comprehensive systems in place which record pupils' successes in such a way that it encourages them to achieve more. Good opportunities are provided for discussion

between teachers and individual pupils about how well they are doing and how they might do better, although this good practice is not always evident in the way in which pupils' work is marked. Good targets are now being developed for classes, groups and individual pupils. These generally focus on attainment but, for some, targets related to behaviour and attendance are being developed. In general, the targets are clear and can be easily monitored for success. In discussion pupils are keen to achieve their goals.

41. The school implements effective assessment procedures to identify pupils with special educational needs and comply with the Code of Practice. The information is used effectively and consistently for reviewing the appropriateness of pupils being retained on the school's special educational needs register or deciding what further help they may require. Good links have been established with external agencies to ensure the provision outlined in statements of special educational needs is implemented. The special educational needs co-ordinator is responsible for liaising with a wide range of other professionals, parents, carers and other schools. These duties are undertaken diligently, as is the organisation of annual review meetings. The school meets its statutory requirements as outlined in all pupils' statements of special educational needs. All statements and reviews are up to date and specified provision is implemented effectively, including access to additional staffing. However, whilst the school provides special needs pupils with a broad and balanced curriculum, a small number of individuals do not have full access to the whole of the National Curriculum because of the practice of withdrawing them from a classrooms for additional literacy and numeracy help.
42. The way in which the school cares for pupils was a strength at the time of the last inspection, and there has been further improvement since that time. This is a very caring school where the well-being of the pupils is of paramount concern.

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

43. The school works well with parents and, in general, parents are pleased with the work of the school and know that the school expects their children to work hard and to achieve their best. They believe that the teaching is good and agree that the school is well led and managed. The majority of parents state that they are welcomed by the school, particularly at the end of the day, and most find the school very responsive to concerns and suggestions although, occasionally, they would like more feedback to let them know whether their concerns have been resolved. Views about homework are mixed, with some parents stating that the right amount of homework is set, and some wanting more homework for their children. A number of parents would like more extra-curricular activities. The inspection findings support the parents' positive views of the school, and indicate that the rate and amount of homework, and the range of extra-curricular activities provided are satisfactory.
44. Good links have been established with parents, and they receive a good quantity of written and verbal information. The school prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents provide parents, and parents of prospective pupils, with substantial information about the life and work of the school. Curriculum information is provided for all parents through the prospectus, new parents' meetings, and the headteacher's presentations at the beginning of each school year when parents have an opportunity to see their children's work and to meet the next classteacher. Good quality reports are provided three times a year, in the form of mini subject reports in December and March and as the end of year progress reports in June. The provision of a reply slip

encourages parents to respond to these reports by giving their views on their children's progress. Consultation evenings are held twice each year and parents are invited to come into the school at any time to voice concerns and offer suggestions. Despite the school's best efforts, a few parents feel that they are not kept sufficiently well informed about how their children are getting on and do not feel that the school works closely enough with parents. The inspection findings do not support this view.

45. The school encourages parents to help in school and to share in the education of their children. Several parents and friends help in school on a regular basis, providing valuable assistance for teachers and pupils in such roles as librarian and information and communication technology support technician. All pupils have reading diaries and are encouraged to read at home. The school has run a very successful 'Parents as Educators' course, which has enabled a number of parents to become familiar with the literacy and numeracy strategies, helping them to support further their children's learning at home. Some parents are valued by the school as critical friends in the development of school policies and brochures. An active Parent Teachers' Association provides a range of fund-raising activities and social events which allow parents to become involved and support the school further.
46. The good links with parents have been maintained since the last inspection.

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

47. The leadership and management of the school by the headteacher and key staff are good overall and have improved significantly since the last inspection. All of the key issues identified in the last inspection report have been successfully addressed. Standards overall have improved, although the school recognises that there is still more work to be done in both key stages in mathematics, and at the end of Key Stage 2 in English. Curriculum planning has been reviewed and coverage of subjects is now much better. Key Stage 2 pupils have benefited from the extra time in lessons each week and class timetables have been audited to check that the right amount of time is being spent on each subject. Support staff are more efficiently allocated to classes where they are most needed. The school improvement plan now covers a two year period. It has clear priorities, is costed and there are deadlines for completion. All statutory requirements are now being met. The school has made very good improvement in the last two years, and has been well supported by the LEA. All systems are in place for performance management.
48. The headteacher is very hard working and has successfully led the school through a difficult and challenging period of change. Pupils, parents and staff find him very approachable and caring, and value the strong sense of direction and purpose he provides within the school. The headteacher has formed a strong senior management team that meets regularly and provides a good forum for discussion and decision-making. Staff are kept well informed about proposed developments, and are encouraged to express their views about all aspects of the school, including the school improvement plan. The vast majority of teaching and support staff are committed to continuing to improve the school and raise standards further, although the regular and persistent absence from school and staff meetings of two members of the teaching staff, is having a negative impact upon school development and ethos. Covering for short but frequent terms of absence is involving both the headteacher and deputy headteacher in extra class teaching, and reduces the amount of time they can spend on their own areas of work.

49. The role of the deputy headteacher is not fully developed and is unsatisfactory. Too little of his time is spent directly involved with pupils in the classroom, raising standards and improving pupils' progress and attainment. His job description does not place sufficient emphasis on these aspects of his role. Much of his energy is devoted to 'initiatives' involving out of school agencies, which rarely have a direct impact on the school's educational provision or the standards pupils achieve. The deputy has no formal teaching commitment, and this is not cost-effective.
50. The quality of the monitoring and evaluation of teaching, learning and standards is very good, and has been firmly established for the past five years. This area of the school's work is co-ordinated by a very able and committed teacher who plans a programme of monitoring and evaluation based on the school improvement plan and areas identified by subject co-ordinators and the senior management team. The headteacher and deputy headteacher regularly visit classrooms to assess the quality of teaching and learning. Staff are given verbal and written feedback, which clearly identify strengths as well as areas for development. Subject co-ordinators are released to observe the quality of learning in their subjects and they feed back to the whole staff. The senior management team regularly reviews the teachers' planning books and link these to a scrutiny of pupils' work. The monitoring and evaluation programme is having a positive impact on school improvement. It has enabled subject co-ordinators to develop their role and to gain a greater knowledge about standards, and about how well their subjects are being taught. The previous report highlighted the lack of an Early Years co-ordinator. The situation is still the same, as the Foundation Stage does not yet have its own named co-ordinator, although one of the teachers has been encouraged to assume many aspects of the role. The present situation does not give the nominated teacher sufficient authority to fully develop and carry out the role.
51. The school's management and provision for pupils who have special educational needs is good and statutory requirements are fully met. Staff who have received specialist training are particularly effective in the contribution they make to teaching and learning, especially when they are deployed to support pupils in whole class lessons. The additional support provided for pupils with statements of special educational needs is most effective when used to enable pupils to be taught alongside their classmates. The special educational needs co-ordinator is an experienced teacher and has the opportunity of working with pupils with special educational needs both in mainstream classes and the specialist unit. This enables her to monitor and evaluate the work of colleagues and the use they make of individual education plans. There is a satisfactory policy for special educational needs. Special educational needs features in the school improvement plan and there is a named governor with responsibility for this aspect of the school
52. The Governing Body is very supportive and shows a keen interest in the management of the school. Governors are kept very well informed about all aspects of the school through discussion and the headteacher's report which is presented at every meeting of the Governing Body. The finance committee carefully monitors spending and financial control is very good. The role of governors in monitoring the school's spending against income has become increasingly important as the school's finances are affected by a falling role, vandalism, the costs of running old buildings, and short but frequent terms of absence of two members of staff. Governors have a clear idea of the budget priorities, but have not yet formulated a strategic plan to show how, over the next few years, the long-term financial situation is to be managed. This is crucial in ensuring the smooth running of the school in the future. The Governing Body is fully involved in the production of the two-yearly school improvement plan mainly through the finance and curriculum committees. Governors review progress at every meeting.

Several governors have curriculum links in areas such as literacy and numeracy. The strengthening of the role of the Governing Body has helped the improvement of the school over the past two years.

53. The school makes good use of all the specific grants that have been allocated during the last year, such as the funding for information and communication technology. This has a beneficial impact on the raising of standards of pupils, but the school is not very successful in raising money from other bids. Many applications for grants involve the school matching the amount being offered and the school does not have a surplus in its budget with which to do this. Because the school has to manage the budget very carefully, the principles of best value are used well. The school considers all options when purchasing goods and services. It compares itself with other schools, consults with parents and in order to raise standards has evaluated its monitoring and asked itself challenging questions. Satisfactory use is made of information and communication technology in the daily administration of the school. However, teachers do not yet use the full range of the resources available to them on the Internet when planning lessons and experiences for pupils.
54. The match of number, qualifications and experience of teachers to the needs of the school is good. Teachers have initial training that covers most areas of the curriculum and this is an improvement from the last inspection when the expertise of staff was undermined by the employment of temporary teachers. The exception, at the present time, is science, where there is no permanent co-ordinator. However, all teachers teach the subject well and the subject is being overseen by the headteacher and this has had positive impact on the standards that pupils achieve. Teachers' qualifications are appropriate for the age range of pupils. There are adequate numbers of learning support staff in the school and they are used effectively to support classes where there are pupils who need additional support.
55. Many of the staff are very experienced and have been employed at the school for a number of years. However, in the last year, five staff have either left for other employment or have retired and, as part of a cost cutting exercise, have been replaced by two new teachers, who have brought new expertise to the school, in mathematics, for example. This is having a positive impact on standards in this subject. However, the number of continual short term absences of a few staff over a three year period adversely affect the continuity of pupils' education and subsequently their attainment and progress.
56. The adequacy of the accommodation is satisfactory overall, but its condition and decoration are unsatisfactory. The building is large enough for the present numbers of pupils, but its rambling and disjointed design does not provide an effective learning environment. For example, although there are many rooms, some are too small, such as the room designated for teaching information and communication technology at Key Stage 2. The building is large and old, and is in constant need of repair and upkeep, as well as protection from vandalism. The school has two good-sized libraries, and a very secure and attractive play area for children in the Foundation Stage. The classrooms and the corridors are very attractively decorated with displays of pupils' work and this effectively supports their learning. Corridors are used well to support pupils' learning, especially in the Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1, and have improved the quality of the overall provision for these pupils since the last inspection. For example, attractive bays have been created for small group work for design and technology, art and unstructured play. However, as in the last inspection, the whole school is in need of re-decoration. Despite the best efforts of the caretaker and cleaning staff, many areas,

such as the edges of rooms, are dirty, and floor coverings are in need of replacement as tiles are broken or worn.

57. The range and quality of the resources are satisfactory overall. The amount and quality of the books in the library have improved, and because of national initiatives and funding the school has increased its resources in information and communication technology. There has been a decline in the school's use of the cultural heritage that surrounds it because of a shortage of funds, and there are now fewer visitors than previously.
58. In the light of the good quality of teaching and learning throughout the school, the positive attitudes and good behaviour of pupils, and the improving standards, the school is deemed to be giving good value for money.

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

59. The school has made very good progress since the last inspection and no longer has serious weaknesses in any aspect of its work. However, there is more work to be done in some areas, and these areas will form the basis of the school's action plan.
- The Governing Body, headteacher and staff should raise standards in mathematics throughout the school, and in English at the end of Key Stage 2.  
*(paragraphs 2, 3, 4, 87-99)*
  - The Governing Body and headteacher should develop the role of the deputy so that he has more impact on raising standards in the school.  
*(paragraph 49)*
  - The Governing Body and headteacher should improve the management of the special educational needs unit by ensuring that the Head of the unit:-
    - is more involved with its day to day running;
    - has the time to carry out associated administrative duties and to maintain the necessary records;
    - takes a more active role in monitoring the quality of teaching and learning within the unit.*(paragraphs 60-69)*
  - The Governing Body and headteacher should make a long-term financial plan to ensure that strategies are in place to enable the prompt response to expected changes in the budget over the next few years.  
*(paragraph 52)*

#### **Other minor issues which should be considered by the school:-**

the school should continue in its efforts to improve attendance *(paragraph 11)*;  
the school should nominate a co-ordinator for the Foundation Stage *(paragraph 50)*;

### **THE SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS UNIT**

60. The special educational needs unit is an LEA provision which can cater for twenty-six pupils between the ages of five and eleven. At the time of the inspection, thirteen pupils were attending the unit. Of these pupils, one is a child of Reception age, who works in the Reception class, with individual support from a learning support assistant. The

remaining pupils are all Key Stage 2 pupils, who receive specialist teaching in the unit for literacy and numeracy each morning, and who are then integrated into mainstream classes for some of the afternoon lessons. The pupils have a range of difficulties, which impact upon their academic achievement. Although the unit is designated for helping pupils with moderate learning difficulties, pupils with more wide ranging problems are referred. At the time of the inspection a small minority of pupils attending the unit had behaviour problems and some had communication and hearing impairment. There are fewer pupils in the unit than at the time of the last inspection. Because of the small number of pupils referred to the unit, teaching groups are very small. They would not be viable if other lower attaining pupils from mainstream classes were not also withdrawn from their class lessons to benefit from additional help in the unit.

61. Although standards of attainment overall are low, the progress the pupils make in relation to their prior attainment is good. In literacy lessons, which are well taught, pupils make good progress. In a lesson with pupils from Year 3, the teacher's high expectations and lively teaching style motivated pupils well. Pupils readily explained the difference between fiction and non-fiction books when working on fantasy stories and reading 'Mimi and the Dinosaur.' When teaching is less dynamic, pupils' level of learning is at best satisfactory. In a lesson with pupils from Year 4, pupils were not secure in their understanding of vocabulary associated with books such as 'author' and 'illustrator.' Pupils in this group are adept at manipulating staff and distracting them from the main point of the lesson. At times, adults are not sufficiently firm when confronted by this type of behaviour.
62. In numeracy, the oldest pupils make good progress in developing their knowledge and understanding of measuring angles using protractors. They recognise and accurately mark right angles and are beginning to recognise different types of angles, such as obtuse and acute. In the Year 6 lesson, teaching was good because the teacher had made effective use of individual learning targets to ensure that the work pupils were given was of an appropriately challenging standard. Pupils were expected to use the correct vocabulary when explaining their work. Good use was made of homework, which was eagerly accepted by all pupils, who were keen to do well and to please their teacher.
63. Teachers' planning documents and an evaluation of pupils' work indicate that both the literacy and numeracy strategies are being used within the unit. However, planning is based upon a curriculum for much younger pupils. This is unsatisfactory for the Year 5 pupils, as only one pupil in this group of six has a statement of special educational needs and has a place in the unit. The remaining pupils are withdrawn from class, and are therefore not participating in the same level of learning experiences as their classmates.
64. Pupils have positive attitudes and a willingness to learn. The majority of the pupils are caring and supportive of each other and treat school resources and the environment with respect. Some pupils, however, spend too much time off task, daydreaming, chatting to their friends or finding excuses to leave the classroom, and they are not always quickly redirected to their learning. When pupils from the unit receive help and support in mainstream lessons they behave very well. A strength of the provision the school makes for pupils from the unit is the high priority it places upon them having a clear identity as a member of their year group. They are therefore secure and confident to fully participate in mainstream lessons every afternoon. The attitudes of other pupils towards those who have difficulties are very positive. Pupils readily help each other and no one is excluded or made to feel out of place.



65. At the time of the last inspection, teaching in the unit was generally satisfactory. Since then, the quality of teaching has improved and is now mostly good. Pupils have more opportunities to use information and communication technology and to work independently. However, teachers' expectations of what pupils are able to do could still be higher and the management of pupils' challenging behaviour is not always secure. When pupils return to their class groups for afternoon lessons they are also taught well. Teachers from the unit continue to make valuable contributions to pupils' learning when they teach alongside their mainstream colleagues and support small groups of pupils working on independent learning tasks.
66. The inclusion of pupils from the unit into the main school ensures they are taught all the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. In these lessons, they make similar progress to that of their classmates. The school meets its obligation to ensure that pupils with special educational needs are included in a daily act of collective worship. The provision for their social, moral and cultural development is very good because of the high priority the school places upon their inclusion in all of the school's activities.
67. Good systems of assessment are now in place to identify and diagnose the difficulties pupils are experiencing. The outcomes of the assessment procedures are used well to devise targets in individual education plans. These are regularly evaluated to assess pupils' progress towards achieving their targets. This information is recorded and shared at annual review meetings. Parents are kept well informed about their children's progress and they are encouraged to be involved in helping their child to learn at home. The unit receives good support from a wide range of visiting professionals, especially the behaviour support team, educational psychologist and speech and language therapist. Parents are pleased with the education their children receive in the unit.
68. There have been significant changes in the day to day management of the unit since the last inspection. Together with a change of personnel deployed in the unit, the changes have culminated in a decline in the leadership and efficiency of the unit since then. The head of the unit no longer has any teaching commitment with pupils in the unit, but is a full-time classteacher within the main school. This is unsatisfactory. No time is available for the head of unit to monitor the quality of teaching and learning nor to undertake administrative duties, such as maintaining up to date documentation and pupil records.
69. Pupils in the unit benefit from having access to good accommodation and an adequate level of materials and resources to help them with their learning. The unit is very generously staffed with qualified teachers and support assistants who have between them a commendable number of years' service in the teaching profession. The current pupil to staff ratio is inefficiently low. The school is aware of this and is making creative use of the time it provides for some classes to benefit from being taught by two teachers in the afternoon.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	91
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	37

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
-	20	53	25	2	-	-

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR– Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	21	375
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	84

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR– Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	16
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	107

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	1

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	31
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	27

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.0
National comparative data	5.2

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.5
National comparative data	0.5

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2000	28	26

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	21	20	24
	Girls	23	24	23
	Total	44	44	47
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	81 (83)	81 (88)	87 (81)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	20	24	24
	Girls	23	23	23
	Total	43	47	47
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	80 (90)	87 (85)	97 (92)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2000	37	33

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	17	16	27
	Girls	21	17	25
	Total	38	33	52
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	54 (58)	47 (49)	74 (70)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	19	14	25
	Girls	19	12	21
	Total	38	26	46
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	55 (44)	38 (60)	67 (53)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

### **Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	1
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	332
Any other minority ethnic group	0

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

### **Exclusions in the last school year**

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

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

### **Teachers and classes**

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	20
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20
Average class size	26

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

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	192

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: Nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	25

Number of pupils per FTE adult	10
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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Financial information**

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	970042
Total expenditure	988470
Expenditure per pupil	2483
Balance brought forward from previous year	778
Balance carried forward to next year	-17650

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	429
Number of questionnaires returned	207

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	52	41	5	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	51	43	4	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	41	52	5	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	32	49	15	2	2
The teaching is good.	50	46	3	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	40	50	9	0	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	49	45	5	1	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	54	42	2	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	29	54	13	1	3
The school is well led and managed.	38	49	6	2	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	44	48	5	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	25	44	17	1	13

## **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**

70. The children's attainment when they join the Reception classes is very varied, but is below average overall. Many children have only limited speaking and listening skills, and some come to school with little social experience or breadth of knowledge.
71. The Nursery class has a great impact on the performance of the children in all six areas of learning and they make very good progress. This is as a result of a consistently high standard of teaching from both the Nursery classteacher and the Nursery nurse. They form a quite exceptional team and work together very successfully. They give the children in their care tremendous support and offer a very varied and stimulating curriculum. Work is carefully planned to meet both class and individual needs. Adults manage the class very well and have very high expectations of behaviour and performance. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection and is now good with some very good features.
72. The Nursery teacher and Nursery nurse regularly assess the children's progress and development. If there are any concerns, parents are informed so that they can offer their children extra support at home. The Nursery classroom is well organised with a good range of resources. The outside play area is large and has both hard and grass play areas with a sandpit and flower border. This is used as a carefully planned resource, which contributes to all six areas of learning. Equipment for indoor physical education is rather heavy and old-fashioned and is not ideal for Nursery children. The Nursery currently has forty-four part-time children who attend either in the morning or afternoon.
73. The school has one Reception class, and one mixed-age class consisting of thirteen Reception class children and ten Year 1 children. The Foundation Stage children continue to make good progress in these classes as a result of good quality teaching. There has been an improvement in the quality of teaching since the last inspection. Teachers have very good relationships with the children and work well with Nursery nurses and support assistants. Work is well planned to cover the six areas of learning for the Foundation Stage in both Reception classes. The teacher in the mixed age class is skilful in planning for both Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 and providing children in different key stages with appropriate learning experiences. Teachers assess the children's progress regularly and keep detailed records of what they can do. They use the information on attainment on entry to the Reception class when planning the next stage of learning, but do not draw enough comparisons between the school's baseline results and those nationally. Each child has a detailed record of achievement, which is started in the Nursery and continued through Foundation Stage. It provides the Year 1 teachers with much valuable information.
74. Most children achieve the early learning goals in all six areas by the end of the Foundation Stage with a small number achieving beyond them. Children who have been identified with special educational needs do not achieve the same standard but still make good progress as a result of the extra help and support they receive in class. This matches the standards found in the last inspection.

## **Personal, Social and Emotional Development**

75. Children in the Nursery and Reception classes have very good relationships with their teachers. They are provided with very good role models by staff, who work together very well and create a calm and happy atmosphere. They form very good relationships with the adults who teach them. The children quickly learn to take turns and work and play well together in pairs and groups. When playing outside, most children in the Nursery are happy to share toys and take turns on their bikes and cars. During the apparatus lesson in the hall, seen during the inspection, the children listened to their teacher well and happily followed well-established routines. The children respond very well to the praise and encouragement they are given. Most are able to change independently for physical education sessions, and to dress again afterwards. Snack time provides the children with an important social activity.
76. In the Reception class, a lesson seen during the inspection about Jesus' friends was very successful in emphasising both the importance of friendship and concentrating on the positive aspects of other peoples' personalities. In discussion sessions, the children are keen to answer questions, and are also good at listening to one another. In art activities, they demonstrate initiative and independence when finding their aprons and selecting resources. Children in the Foundation Stage are thoughtful, kind, aware of the needs of others and are very happy following the routines established in the classrooms.

## **Communication, Language and Literacy**

77. Many of the children join the Nursery class with limited speech. However, for most children, this quickly develops through activities, such as the role-play in the café, where children have learned to take orders, serve food to their customers and charge at the end of the meal. Children are encouraged to talk and share experiences when they first come to school in the morning. The children are very keen to tell their news to the adults and the other children. Story time sessions are very successful in introducing children to the excitement of books. During the inspection, the story of 'The Tiger Who Came to Tea' created huge excitement and interest with several of the children able to suggest an ending. When outside, the children quickly slip into the role of a member of the police force or a lollipop person. They understand that books give them information or provide them with stories. A small group activity, seen during the inspection, in which the teacher showed the children the seeds inside a melon and a pear, was effectively linked by the children to an information book in the classroom. Some of the children in the Nursery can already identify single letter sounds and a few read whole words. They understand that words carry meaning, and some can write their own names.
78. In the Reception classes, most children know letter sounds and nearly all write their names. They are encouraged to do so on every piece of work. Their letter formation is usually accurate and they are beginning to understand the importance of keeping letter size the same. They are increasingly confident when reading and the higher attainers read with expression. They are provided with lists of appropriate words to learn at home. Children write simple words and are beginning to write their own stories and news. Most know that a capital letter starts a sentence and explain the purpose of a full stop. Children really enjoy listening to poems and, in a session during the inspection, joined in with a poem about crocodiles and enthusiastically mimed the 'snap' at the end.

## **Mathematical Development**

79. The Nursery children are given every opportunity to count and become used to the idea of numbers. When playing outside, the teacher chalks numbers from one to twenty on the paving stones, so that the children can play counting games. In the classroom, children count beads and put them in patterns. They learn the shapes and names of numbers through handling wooden numbers and placing the right number of pegs in holes on the back of them. Water play includes the use of measuring jugs and sand play includes moulding the sand into different shapes.
80. In the Reception classes, the children begin to gain a more formal understanding of number. Most can count confidently to ten and some can count beyond. A few children are able to find two numbers that add up to ten, with a small number achieving more than this, for example, adding three numbers to make numbers up to twenty. Most children sort objects by different criteria, such as rough and smooth, and put themselves into different groups on the basis of gender or eye colour. The children name and recognise simple two-dimensional shapes, such as circle and square. They show a satisfactory understanding of terms like 'more than', 'less than' and 'longer and shorter'.

## **Knowledge and Understanding of the World**

81. The children in the Nursery are given many opportunities to learn about the world in which they live. They are fascinated by the large number of seeds they find in a melon, compared to the much smaller number inside a pear. Whilst not all respond positively to the suggestion that they should try eating fruit for snack, they all understand that it is better for their health than eating a sweet or a biscuit. Their ongoing topic includes the opportunity for them to grow cress and plant seeds outside. A recent visit to Wigan Pier, with its historical associations, helped the children to understand how life has changed over time. Good use is made of computers to play simple games, which familiarise the children with the keyboard.
82. In the Reception classes, the children predict which type of ball might bounce the highest and then put this to the test. They find out which wrapping keeps bread fresh for longer. The children understand how the post is sorted and delivered following their visit to Leigh Delivery Office. They observe differences and similarities in birds and animals loaned from a museum. This work extends well to the naming of their own body parts. Most children are confident when using the computer and use a mouse to move objects on the screen. Children name parts of the computer and carry out simple word processing tasks. Throughout the Foundation Stage, the children demonstrate an increasing curiosity about the world around them.

## **Physical Development**

83. Children in the Foundation Stage are given good opportunities to develop co-ordination skills. In the Nursery, the children build models out of boxes and work out the best ways to cut and glue to fix them together. They demonstrate good manipulative skills when using play dough. They use a variety of toys outside and learn how to pedal cars and ride tricycles. In physical education lessons, they demonstrate good balance and climbing skills. They are aware of the effect of exercise on their bodies, and realise that exercise is good for them. They understand the importance of warming up before starting physical activity. Most children move in different ways and respond quickly to instructions from their teacher.



84. In the Reception classes, the children effectively build upon what they have learned in the Nursery class. They know how to hold and control pencils and use scissors successfully. They find more difficulty in using spatulas for clay cutting. They have considered the needs of their pets and designed and made suitable houses for them. During the inspection, the children very much enjoyed their first experience of the year of playing outside on the grass, and they became very excited at the prospect of playing in such a large open space. The children kick balls to one another with increasing accuracy. In indoor physical education sessions, they practice and extend the physical skills they have learned in the Nursery. The children are limited in some aspects of their apparatus work in the hall because the equipment is old-fashioned, heavy and difficult for the children to move.

### **Creative Development**

85. The children in the Nursery class are given a good range of creative experiences. Painting is available as one of their daily 'choosing' activities. The children are uninhibited when painting, using bright colours boldly. They are keen to explain what they have painted and most name the colours they have used. Imaginative role-play takes place not only in the classroom café, but also when playing outside using road signs and the zebra crossing. The 'policeman' is keen to stop the 'criminal cars'. The children have made their own 'shakers' and use these and other instruments to make their own music.
86. In music, the Reception children try to identify which animal is being represented in the 'Carnival of the Animals'. Even when they fail to identify the animal correctly, they give good reasons for their choice. The children are good at picking up the mood of the music. They make their own music to represent other animals, for example, using shakers and bells to imitate chickens. Reception children make animals out of clay, often finding it easier to use their hands than the tools provided. Creative work is well linked to other areas such as the attractive and colourful paintings of what God made in the world. Reception role-play gives children the opportunity to act out a visit to the theatre and to buy tickets at a railway station.

### **ENGLISH**

87. The results of the 2000 end of Key Stage 1 National Curriculum tests in reading and writing show that pupils' attainment in English is below the national average in reading and average in writing. In comparison with similar schools, standards are average in reading and above average in writing. At the end of Key Stage 2, the results of the tests for the year 2000 show that attainment in English is well below the national average. Compared with similar schools, the pupils' performance is also below the national average. The inspection findings indicate that standards for the present cohort of Key Stage 2 pupils are likely to be much improved, although still below average and that pupils' overall attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is in line with national expectations. Standards in spelling are average throughout the school. Pupils of all ages and abilities are making good progress because of good teaching and learning, and standards have improved overall since the last inspection, although there is still more work to be done at the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils with special educational needs make similarly good progress, and there are no significant differences between the performance of boys and girls.
88. Speaking skills vary throughout the school, mainly as a result of the limited vocabularies of many of the pupils, and are satisfactory overall. Pupils of all ages are

often willing and confident in discussion sessions, and their general vocabularies are often good, but many of them struggle with subject vocabulary. During the inspection, pupils in Key stage 1 were observed debating some of the differences to be found in the celebration of the New Year in China and Britain. The teacher very effectively drew directly on this enthusiasm to praise individual contributions and to raise the self-esteem of her pupils. By the end of Year 6, pupils are much more confident with subject vocabularies, and this helps them to express their ideas more clearly. During the inspection, pupils in one Year 6 class were deeply engaged in the merits of the styles of different authors when considering the way in which images in the shared text were presented. They were also very sympathetic to the experiences of one of the characters in the text, 'The Present Takers', showing maturity in their understanding of the problem of bullying. Listening skills are good throughout the school and reflect the teachers' high expectations of behaviour. Questions are answered politely and other pupils listen to the answers before making their own contributions. Pupils of all ages follow instructions without difficulty and, where they are not certain, will ask sensible questions in order to clarify the instruction given. Standards in speaking and listening have clearly benefited from the successful implementation of the National Literacy Strategy and teachers in all classes have shared in achieving this.

89. Reading skills show some variations across the school but standards are on an upward trend in both key stages, and are satisfactory overall. Pupils are making good progress in this area of their learning. Library facilities are available in both main buildings of the school and are used frequently and with enthusiasm by all pupils. Pupils throughout the school are able to operate the computerised lending and stock control system, a fact that they demonstrate with commendable pride. The school has done a great deal of work in promoting the reading as a pleasurable activity amongst its pupils, and the results were apparent during the course of the inspection. Pupils in both key stages recall events in current and favourite stories and are keen to speculate and predict outcomes. However, many of the older Key Stage 2 pupils do not have the higher order skills of skimming and scanning, and this sometimes hampers them in their work in other areas where they are carrying out research. The library system is encouraging wide ranging choices in reading and pupils reach Year 6 with an impressive range of preferences. Pupils have been successfully encouraged to broaden their exploration of literature and are familiar with the work of Alan Garner, Anne Fine and others. The school makes every effort to involve parents in encouraging their children to practise reading at home, and several parents regularly help in the school libraries. The high quality displays around the school are used as vehicles for drawing attention to language and are very clearly and helpfully labelled by the teachers.
90. Standards in writing have been prioritised as an area for development and the improved quality of teaching is having a discernible impact in this area of pupils' progress. However, standards in writing at the end of Key Stage 2 could be even higher. The school policy of drafting and using separate books for each area of the English curriculum has allowed pupils to focus clearly on the development of their skills and their rate of progress in each area of language. Teachers have high expectations and these are reflected in the marking of work which is always encouraging and which in the best cases enables the joint setting of targets for improvement. By the end of Key Stage 1, good teaching has enabled pupils to produce well-drafted pieces of work. Limited vocabularies often prevent pupils from extending their writing further, but the significant impact made by the teachers is in giving pupils the confidence to move forwards in their work. During the inspection, Year 1 pupils of all abilities were proud to share their sentence work with one another and visitors, and those requiring additional help had used well chosen and carefully marked work sheets. By the end of Year 2, pupils are extending their writing and are able to use dictionaries and carry out research

in reference books before writing their accounts. The work building around the China topic is allowing pupils of this age to produce thoughtful and well-researched pieces of work. In Key Stage 2 pupils are broadening their experiences of writing and their skills are more sharply honed, although their attainment is still below average in this aspect of their English work. Pupils discuss the content of books in terms of the writer's intentions and apply the results of these discussions to their own work. Pupils in each year have produced good portfolios of work and by the end of Year 6 more pupils are approaching a higher than average standard on a more regular basis. A noticeable feature of the quality of the work produced is that those pupils who have been in the school the longest are delivering the best work. Teachers help their pupils by including level descriptors, method sheets and target setting. The quality of the marking and the use of homework show a strong commitment to the raising of standards in most classes. As a consequence, pupils are responding with very good examples of genre writing, including some fascinating work on the creation of suspense. The higher attaining pupils are developing the ability to produce work in the style of their favourite authors.

91. The teaching of English, and of literacy skills across the curriculum is good throughout the school. This represents an improvement over the findings of the previous report, which described the teaching as satisfactory in the majority of lessons seen. The school has successfully implemented the National Literacy Strategy and has been very successful in speeding improvements in the quality of English across the curriculum. Pupils in Year 6 are now divided into sets for the teaching of English and this is helping in the quest for improved standards. As these pupils approach their National Curriculum tests they do so confident in the knowledge that their teachers have provided them with a very secure foundation for success. In lessons, pupils show high levels of motivation and enthusiasm and have benefited from being able to reflect on their work and participate in the setting of targets for future improvement. Pupils with special educational needs are well integrated into their classes and teachers' planning closely follows their individual education plans to help them with their progress.
92. The co-ordinator for English has an excellent overview of the teaching of the National Literacy Strategy throughout the school and has a very secure knowledge of the subject. In addition to overseeing the work of her colleagues, the co-ordinator maintains good quality assessment records and has a very clear understanding of the progress being made by pupils in both key stages. Marking is detailed and helpful to pupils in measuring their performance and assists in the setting of targets for improvement. In the past, the school has benefited from having poets in residence and work done by pupils in Key Stage 2 is currently entered for the national Poetic Voyages competition. Additional motivation comes from the participation in Poetry Day, World Book Day and from the appearance in school of theatre and drama groups, including the recent, highly successful visit of the 'Mighty Zulu Nation' performance group. Inspection evidence indicates that the school is well placed to raise standards in English further, especially at Key Stage 2.

## **MATHEMATICS**

93. The national tests for mathematics in 2000 showed that the standards attained by pupils at the school were well below the national average at the end of both key stages. Although the standards of attainment seen in mathematics during the inspection are still below the national average at the end of both key stages, it is clear that there has been considerable improvement since the previous inspection. Much of this improvement has taken place in the very recent past, and has been the result of the

result of a clear action plan for the raising of standards and a more consistent approach to teaching and assessment. Higher attaining pupils in Year 6 are attaining at least the national expectation and around fifteen per cent of them are working at an above average level in numeracy. Pupils of all ages and abilities make good progress as they move through the school as the result of good teaching. However, although recent developments have impacted positively upon standards in number, there are still weaknesses in other areas of the mathematics curriculum.

94. The significant number of pupils with special educational needs at the end of Key Stage 2, affects the results of the national end of key stage tests. In addition, there are high levels of pupil movement into and out of the school during Key Stage 2, and in the year 2000, there were also high levels of pupil absence. These features have had an adverse effect on the schools results. The recently devised action plan, which includes a more rigorous scheme for mathematics throughout the school, is already having a positive impact upon teachers' expectations for higher attaining pupils.
95. The inspection findings indicate that pupils have more experience of number than of other aspects of mathematics, and this is why their attainment in this area of the mathematics curriculum is higher than in other areas. By the age of seven, pupils have an appropriate knowledge of multiplication tables and of using a hundred square. They understand the concept of less than and more than, and counting forwards and backwards in tens. Most pupils are able to work out the 'double' of a number and 'near doubles', and use this information effectively when undertaking mental addition and subtraction. Teachers have appropriate expectations, and lessons move at a brisk pace, which keeps the pupils on task. The challenge of the activities and the quality of the purpose-made resources enhance pupils' learning. During the inspection, pupils in one class were effectively using coloured flash cards to represent hundreds, tens and units so that a number, such as two hundred and eighty nine, could be represented using a two hundred card, an eighty card and a nine card. This activity gave pupils a clear understanding of both place value and of partitioning. More able pupils use appropriate mathematical vocabulary with confidence, although too many pupils do not readily use mathematical vocabulary to explain their ideas. Teachers make good use of 'time limits' to encourage pupils to work more quickly and the pupils respond well, responding positively to the challenge and making good progress. Appropriate worksheets are used to support pupils' learning, and they are usually fixed into exercise books before the lesson begins so that they remain in order and are good evidence of regular improvement in the standard of pupils' work.
96. By the age of eleven, most pupils use an appropriate range of computational skills with reasonable accuracy. In mental arithmetic sessions, the teachers provide stimulating activities and create a good working atmosphere, which encourages the pupils to respond quickly and confidently. Mental sessions are brisk, and during the inspection, pupils were observed mentally working out multiplication and division using numbers up to one hundred. Pupils make good use of prior learning to find their answers and are beginning to develop their own strategies for solving numerical problems. An analysis of their work during the current year shows that pupils have covered a very wide range of mathematical topics in line with the expectations of the Numeracy Strategy. However, there are still not enough opportunities for them to use and apply number in real life situations, and this is one reason why many pupils have difficulty in retaining their knowledge and understanding over a period of time. In a lesson seen during the inspection, pupils were adding to their previous learning about co-ordinates. More able pupils confidently used the appropriate vocabulary, although many were insecure, and there was confusion between the notions of 'translation' and 'transformation'. Some pupils were quickly able to identify rules for changing co-ordinates and a small number

of these pupils are working at a level above the national expectation. However, to make all pupils more secure in their knowledge and understanding, still more work needs to be done on relating mathematics to real life situations.

97. Not enough emphasis is placed on the teaching of other aspects of mathematics, and there have not been enough opportunities for pupils to tackle tasks in a practical way. Too much use is made of worksheets in both key stages. In some cases, these are appropriate and carefully matched to the needs of particular pupils. However, although they address some of the learning needs of the pupils, they do not develop pupils' knowledge and understanding sufficiently, nor do they encourage the pupils to find ways of solving mathematical problems. Most pupils in both key stages appropriately record their mathematics in a formal manner, but there are only limited opportunities for pupils to find their own ways of recording. Opportunities for pupils to make estimations, based on their previous experience and exploration, or for making deductions and proving them, are limited. Where the best teaching occurs, there are some good examples of mathematics being linked to real life situations, and in these activities, pupils' learning is much better. For example, pupils in Year 2 have been conducting a traffic survey in busy and quiet streets in Golborne. They have recorded their findings using a tally chart, and have represented the figures using graphs and tables. This activity has drawn good links with geography and information technology in the use of computers to draw up the graphs. There is also a colourful and well resourced 'Chinese Take-Away' in the corridor outside the classrooms. Pupils work there diligently, taking orders by phone and working the costs from a menu. Older Key Stage 2 pupils have a growing understanding of shape and measurement but their experience is relatively narrow and pupils are not always confident in applying their knowledge when attempting to solve problems.
98. Pupils' response to their work in mathematics is usually very positive. Pupils of all ages enjoy the activities which are prepared for them, particularly if they are both interesting and challenging. Relationships within the classes are very good and pupils work together and show high levels of collaboration. The overall standard of teaching is good. In the best lessons there is a stimulating atmosphere which seizes and maintains the pupils' attention and encourages them to take part. Although teachers' expectations for the attainment of some of their pupils are not yet high enough, they have a much clearer understanding of what should be achieved. In some lessons there are still examples of over-directed teaching, where pupils have insufficient opportunity to work solutions out for themselves and to devise and develop their own strategies for solving problems. In these situations pupils begin to lose interest and the pace of the lessons slows. Teachers' planning is beginning to show the provision of different work both for the large groups of pupils who have special educational needs as well as for the more able pupils. Teachers are secure in their subject knowledge and most have good management skills, which result in high standards of pupil behaviour. The standard of teaching shows a significant improvement on that reported in the previous inspection.
99. The recent appointment of an enthusiastic and well-informed co-ordinator is already having a significant impact upon the quality of teaching and the standards which pupils attain. There is evidence of better standards being reached by higher attaining pupils. The recently produced action plan shows the school's increasing awareness of matters which need to be addressed to continue to raise standards. These include the development of a consistent approach towards the teaching of mathematics, the full implementation of an appropriate scheme which ensures progression in learning as pupils move through the school and the need to relate mathematical learning even more closely to the needs of real life situations, both in other subjects of the curriculum and in the outside world.

## SCIENCE

100. In the year 2000 teacher assessments for pupils at the end of Key Stage 1, the school's overall results were below the national average, but the percentage of pupils who attained the higher levels was in line with the national average. Pupils' attainment in investigation and experimentation was better than in the other aspects of science, and is the result of the emphasis that has been placed on this area following the last inspection. The overall results at this key stage compare well to those of similar schools. Taking the last three years into account, pupils perform better in science than they do in English and mathematics.
101. At Key Stage 2 over the last three years, the results of the end of key stage tests show a steady decline because of the amount of time and effort the school has given to raising standards in English and mathematics and the lack of emphasis on science. In the 2000 tests, the school's performance in science was below the national average but was average for schools of a similar context. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs in the group was above average and included the pupils who are in the special educational needs unit. In addition, the composition of the year group had changed quite dramatically during Key Stage 2 because of high levels of pupil mobility.
102. The inspection findings indicate that pupils' attainment at the end of both key stages is broadly in line with national expectations. Standards in the subject have been very well monitored and results of tests have been analysed. As a result, improvements have been made, such as the introduction of revision classes and the permanent employment of new teachers, and these changes are having a positive impact on standards. There has been good improvement in raising standards through improved teaching and learning. The school has been successful in increasing the percentage of pupils attaining the higher Level 5 at the end of Key Stage 2, although because of the high percentage of pupils who have special educational needs, a high proportion of pupils still do not achieve the expected level. Pupils of all ages and abilities make good progress as they move through the school, from a low starting point, and achieve well in relation to their ability.
103. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' ability to carry out investigations is satisfactory, and those who have special educational needs are given good support to complete their investigative work, although they have difficulty in reading the instructions and recording their results independently. The majority of pupils make sensible predications using their previous knowledge, and make careful observations about the changes taking place. Pupils know that when carrying out tests, conditions must be the same, and that information can be shown by using graphs and charts, as well as by writing. Most pupils have a good understanding of the needs of living things. They understand the differences between living and non-living things, and classify them according to their most distinguishing characteristics. Pupils know that they should eat certain food to remain healthy, and know key vocabulary, such as, carbohydrate, protein and vitamins. They correctly label the main parts of plants and animals, and understand the different stages of growth in humans. Most pupils have a satisfactory understanding of materials and their properties. They know that materials change if they are heated or cooled, and higher attaining pupils understand that some changes cannot be reversed. In physical processes pupils make particularly good progress. They understand forces in terms of pushing and pulling, and explain and construct electrical circuits using switches and bulbs. Pupils explain why seasons occur and how night and day take place.

104. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have made good progress and have gained confidence, and their attainment is in line with national expectations. Pupils make predictions, understand and set up fair tests, test their ideas and record their results using different methods. For example, they use graphs, tables and written descriptions. They are able to write descriptions of what they have done, and use scientific vocabulary well. They work very well in groups to solve problems and draw conclusions from their investigations. Work in books shows that higher attaining pupils are beginning to make generalisations about their observations and discoveries. Pupils' knowledge of living things is good. They carry out research on animals and their habitats, sometimes using information and communication technology to support their learning, and show that they have an understanding of how animals adapt to their surroundings. Pupils name the major organs and bones of the body, identify different joints and understand that exercise causes the heart to pump faster. They know the meaning of germination, how plants attract insects for pollination, and that plants do not breathe but respire. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have made good progress in their understanding of materials, changes and chemical reactions. They investigate solutions, solubility, and filtration and make predications about the amounts needed for saturation. They understand evaporation and are beginning to understand about the molecular composition of liquids, gases and solids. Pupils understand why the seasons occur, have studied the solar system; know that shadows can differ depending on the light source, construct complex circuits using switches, buzzers, lights and pressure pads. They have investigated gravity and understand how friction plays an important part in movement.
105. The overall quality of teaching and learning in the lessons seen during the inspection was satisfactory, and in some lessons it was very good, especially in Key Stage 2. The quality of teaching is similar to what it was at the time of the last inspection. The expectations of teachers, their planning and their knowledge of the subject are good and are consistent across the school. Teachers demonstrate a clear understanding of the requirements of the National Curriculum, knowledge of the different areas of learning in science, and set clear objectives for pupils and give thought to what they will be assessing. As a result, the lessons are purposeful, pupils are aware of what they are to learn and at the end of the lesson pupils' performance, behaviour and learning are reviewed. Pupils respond very well to this and their attitudes to learning are very good. The consistency is also apparent in the quality of the pupils' work in most classes, especially in the depth of knowledge and understanding that teachers expect from pupils. This is also the case with the presentation of work, and the pupils' use of literacy and numeracy skills, such as, the use of class reading of a 'Big Book' for discovering information concerning foods. Lessons comprise a variety of activities, but all start with a whole class review of previous learning, with teachers using questioning effectively to assess what pupils have retained from previous lessons. Information and communication technology is used satisfactorily in most classes, and this is an improvement from the last inspection. It is used mainly for research, as not all teachers are sufficiently confident to use it to produce data for scientific analysis or to monitor changes in conditions.
106. A new national scheme of work has recently been adopted, and the long term planning for coverage of the different areas of learning is good, and meets statutory requirements. This scheme is starting to have a positive impact on standards. The school has continued to develop pupils' ability to investigate with the minimum of direction from the teacher, and during the inspection, there were some very good examples of pupils working in teams, and solving problems, such as in Year 5, when they were constructing electrical circuits. Since the departure of the previous co-ordinator the subject has been overseen by the headteacher. Monitoring of teaching

has not yet taken place but there has been good monitoring of pupils' work, and continual assessment throughout the year, with comparison of results, and good identification of the areas in which pupils are not secure in their understanding. This has resulted in teachers being able to alter their curricular planning to take account of these needs. Resources for teaching the subject are satisfactory, and areas in which there have been shortages, such as the construction of electrical circuits, have been improved, and this has had a beneficial impact on the progress pupils make.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

107. Pupils' attainment is above national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 2. This represents an improvement since the time of the previous inspection, when standards were found to be satisfactory at the end of both key stages. Pupils throughout the school are making good progress in art and design, which is taught regularly in all classes, but there are still some gaps in the learning of Key Stage 2 pupils, resulting from insufficient time being given to the subject when the pupils were in the lower part of the key stage. Displays of pupils' work are very much in evidence in all areas of the school. The scale and vibrancy of these displays do much to relieve the gloom of corridors, classrooms and other shared areas and help to create an attractive learning environment for the pupils. Teachers make very good use of the exhibition of work, not only to celebrate pupils' achievements, but also to promote the development of their knowledge and vocabulary in other subject areas. An especially good example of the wide ranging use of work in art was observed in the Key Stage 1 corridor, where young pupils had painted and explored emotions on the basis of listening to the music of Holst's 'Planet Suite'. The links between art and geography have been successfully pursued in the Rainforest displays and the Year 1 illustrations of Arctic geography.
108. Pupils throughout the school, including those who have special educational needs, make good progress in art and design, because of improvements in the quality of teaching. However, older Key Stage 2 pupils still have gaps in their learning because of previous weaknesses in teaching and in the art and design curriculum taught in the school. Standards are often better in the lower part of Key Stage 2 than in the upper part, despite the current good efforts of teachers in the upper part of Key Stage 2.
109. Basic drawing techniques are given a high priority in the teaching of art and design, and this is particularly noticeable in the work being done in sketchbooks by pupils throughout the school. The regular use of sketchbooks is giving pupils confidence and they draw with great freedom and flexibility of line. Pupils in Year 3 have produced good drawings based on the work of Wainwright and Wiltshire, the best of which are of exceptional quality. They are now developing their activity further by a detailed observational study of the school building, aided by the use of the digital camera. During the inspection, pupils in Year 6 were observed working on the first stages of pencil drawings from life as they placed their subjects in action poses in the school playground. Pupils of all ages are able to embellish their drawings with additional character through the use of charcoal, chalks and pastels, but not all pupils are sufficiently skilled in mark-making techniques to enable them to add shading to show light and shade in their work.
110. Pupils throughout the school have a keen sense of colour, which is evident in the way in which they match and mix colours. Pupils have opportunities for painting large pieces as well as small-scale activities, and this makes them aware of the need to select the most appropriately sized brushes or pencils. In Year 2, portraits of significant figures



from the community are juxtaposed alongside large scale artwork showing important local buildings, such as St Thomas' Church, and work in this area has enhanced pupils' knowledge of their local community. Work with visiting artists, such as Ian Murphy and Isabel Smith, has introduced pupils to the idea of working on a large scale and they are daily reminded of this by work exhibited in the library and in the infants' hall. Printing also figures prominently and pupils have been able to produce prints of mathematical regularity and to work more experimentally with block prints using a variety of media.

111. Pupils in both key stages have a good knowledge of the styles and techniques of famous artists who have worked mainly in the European tradition. They are less secure in their recall of the names of individual artists, painters and sculptors, but they know that it is possible to identify them from an examination of their work. For example, pupils are very clear about the differences between the styles of Rembrandt and Van Gogh, Seurat and Picasso, and older pupils explain differences in terms of the brushwork and layering of paint. Teachers make good use of examples of art from different periods and cultures. As part of the topic about China, pupils have examined the contemplative style of willow pattern designs and, following the visit to the school of the 'Mighty Zulu Nation' performance group, have explored the creative energy of aspects of African art, such as mask design. In design and technology, pupils in Key Stage 2 have produced models of Chinese junks that they have decorated using an appropriate ethnic style. Teachers have been particularly successful in their promotion of the use of language through the art curriculum. Pupils have a good vocabulary in the subject itself, and are able to describe what they see and touch in terms of depth and tone of colour and also in terms of texture. One Year 6 pupil, although unaware of the artist's name, described a painting by Frank Auerbach using an appreciative vocabulary that emphasised his use of depth and texture in creating his characteristic images. There are also good links with the work being undertaken in the delivery of the National Literacy Strategy when, for example, pupils undertake peer reviews of their work in art.
112. Pupils have had good opportunities for working in three dimensions, in the making of models and in their use of clay. The school has the advantage of access to a kiln enabling work in the traditional medium of clay to be fired and glazed. Pupils in Year 5 have also undertaken work using papier maché as part of their exploration of shape, form and space. A piece of work produced with visiting artist Isabel Smith based on a visit to Wigan Pier also acts as a daily reminder of the qualities of three-dimensional work using a variety of materials, both soft and solid, that can be produced.
113. The overall quality of teaching and learning of art and design is good, and some very good lessons were seen during the inspection. Teachers now have a very confident approach to the subject, which is evident in the type of work the pupils produce. In most classes, creativity is promoted and celebrated, although where the teaching is less successful, tasks are over-directed resulting in similar outcomes from all pupils. The co-ordinator keeps extensive representative portfolios of pupils' work, some actual examples and some photographic records. These portfolios allow pupils to revisit their experiences, helping them to consolidate their learning. The time allowed for the coverage of the National Curriculum programmes of study is appropriate and teachers are working very hard in their delivery of the subject. The use of sketchbooks, displays and exhibitions keeps art to the forefront of pupil's daily experience in school and there is a great sense of pride of ownership amongst the pupils when discussing their work. The co-ordinator has a very good overview of the teaching of art throughout the school and keeps excellent records of coverage. Standards are poised to continue to rise as the current examples of good practice move fully across the school.

## DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

114. There has been a distinct and significant improvement in the standards attained by pupils since the previous inspection and the majority of pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 are now reaching standards above the national expectation. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations. The school has fully addressed the issues raised at the time of the last inspection and provision for the subject now fully meets all of the requirements of the National Curriculum. The school ensures that tasks are both stimulating and interesting and that they are closely linked with other areas of the curriculum. The school now has an appropriate scheme of work, which gives good guidance for planning, and ensures the development of design and technology skills as pupils move through the school.
115. In Key Stage 1, teachers ensure that pupils have an appropriate range of opportunities throughout the year. These experiences are appropriate to the pupils' age and prior attainment, and are closely linked with other topics. Pupils in Year 2 have recently designed a 'coat for Joseph', and the evidence of their work shows a preliminary plan with written comments about the resources that would be needed and ideas for how the coat would be made. As part of their work, pupils had to find ways of joining a variety of materials by sewing, stapling, glueing, or using sticky tape. Some pupils made good use of a computer programme to develop repeated and colourful patterns for the decoration of the coat. In another project, Key Stage 1 pupils surveyed machinery and looked at winding mechanisms such as those used in fishing reels, roller blinds and extension leads before beginning the design for a moving representation of 'Incy Wincy Spider' which they were producing for the children in the Nursery. These pertinent and interesting opportunities very effectively stimulate the pupils' interest, and present valuable opportunities for pupils to develop the necessary skills of designing and making. After the models or pieces of work have been produced, pupils have good opportunities for evaluating each other's work, and for critical discussions about possible improvements to the designs. The younger pupils in the key stage are also developing their skills of investigation by finding the best shape for building materials and they have recently been designing biscuits using an appropriate computer programme.
116. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' skills and understanding have developed very well. There some very good examples of their work displayed around the school, connected to a topic on the Second World War. This involved pupils in designing, making and testing model air-raid shelters. The range of different designs shows that pupils have had the opportunity to try out new ideas and to evaluate them. Pupils greatly enjoyed the challenge and opportunity and learned much in the activity. The quality of their writing about their work shows a high standard of knowledge and understanding. Pupils have been able to select and use a wide range of resources and it is plain that pupils soon discovered the relative strength provided by an arched structure. Older pupils have a very good understanding of the need for planning and evaluating their work, and talk animatedly about the tasks they have undertaken, pointing out what they perceive as relative strengths and weaknesses in the finished products.
117. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is good. The support given by the co-ordinator, and through the scheme of work, has given the teachers the necessary confidence and security to tackle very stimulating and interesting activities. Where the best teaching occurs, activities are presented as challenges, with plenty of opportunity for pupils to try things out for themselves and discover their own solutions, often in original ways. The most effective teachers encourage pupils to experiment, and their

class management skills are such that the standard of behaviour remains high even when pupils are engaged in rigorous activity in pairs and small groups. All aspects of the subject are being presented and there are regular opportunities for the development of food technology, often linked with geography, history and religious education. For example, pupils in Year 5 have been considering the various breads used in religious contexts and in other cultures. They have been finding out more about pitta, naan, foccacia, chapatti and others, and the recipes and the traditional ways in which these foods are made. Pupils throughout the school are enthused by the opportunities provided for them. They work well on their projects and there is a high level of positive collaboration, with pupils learning from each other, developing their skills, and using their experience to improve their ideas and designs.

118. The progress in developing the subject since the previous inspection has been carefully monitored and evaluated. This has had a significant impact upon the marked improvement which has been made in this subject.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

119. By the end of both key stages, pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations. Standards are the same as they were at the time of the last inspection. However, the increasing importance given to planning has ensured that pupils are offered a broader and more relevant curriculum, enabling them to make better progress. The recently appointed co-ordinator has ensured that government guidance for planning is used satisfactorily to cover all of the programmes of study of the National Curriculum. Good advice has ensured that teachers give careful consideration to providing work that is carefully matched to the needs of all pupils. Pupils with special educational needs and those from the special unit, who are included for geography lessons, make good progress.
120. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils discuss the jobs that people do that involve aspects of transport, such as the delivery of milk and the collection of rubbish. Pupils look in books and identify pictures of people in the roles they have discussed. They gain an understanding of their local area, and have considered the buildings in local streets. Pupils gain an appropriate understanding of the purpose of maps to mark important places and places of interest, and have drawn some simple maps of their own.
121. Work in Key Stage 2 is characterised by the good use of specific geographical vocabulary. For example, in an introductory lesson about mountains, pupils use words like 'scree', 'crag' and 'geological'. Teachers ensure that pupils' knowledge and understanding of the subject is reinforced by asking searching questions to extend the pupils' ideas. When studying contrasting environments, pupils learn how to describe urban and rural areas, and gain an appreciation of how differences in the locality impact upon other aspects of life, such as leisure. Teachers plan well together, ensuring that children of the same age in different classes enjoy similar experiences in geography.
122. Strong links are made between geography and literacy, especially at the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils record their work in an imaginative way, often in the form of poems and letters. Pupils in Year 6 write to an imagined academic colleague, describing a mountain scene in front of them. This gives good opportunities for a range of responses, from detailed verbal description to annotated pictures. Information and communication technology is used effectively to support pupils' learning in geography. For example, a visit to a local river for a field study became the focus for a computer-generated presentation.

123. Teaching and learning are good overall, and pupils are presented with interesting tasks which stimulate their imaginations and make them keen to learn. Good use is made of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning, and the local area is used well as a resource. At present there are no formal procedures for assessment in place but this is acknowledged by the co-ordinator to be an area for development and samples of work are scrutinised and kept to form the basis for a portfolio.

## **HISTORY**

124. Pupils' attainment in history is in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages, and standards have been maintained since the time of the last inspection. However, the quality of teaching and the successful planning in the subject are now offering pupils a broader and enriched curriculum. An increased level of monitoring is beginning to ensure that all pupil benefit from carefully planned and sequenced lessons.
125. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils confidently discuss the events of the Great Fire of London and understand the value of historical evidence in terms of recreating great events of the past. Pupils give good reasons for the spread of the fire, and remember that Samuel Pepys kept a diary in which he recorded the events at that time. The youngest pupils are beginning to understand about the notion of change, and sort school artefacts based on the criteria of 'now and then'. Teachers effectively use resources, such as pictures, photographs and reference books, to support and increase pupils' understanding.
126. By the age of 11, pupils have a good understanding of events in Great Britain since 1930. The effective link to literacy enables recording to be lively and interesting. Pupils have produced a very good range of stories, letters and poetry, reflecting their understanding of this period of history. This imaginative approach inspires the pupils, allowing them to consider more difficult issues, such as the role of women during the war or what it felt like to be an evacuee.
127. Pupils with special educational needs, including those from the special unit, who are included well in class, are provided with good support to help them in their work. For example, they have additional clues to help their investigations or opportunities to rearrange descriptive sentences. These pupils are well supported by direct teacher involvement and suitable questioning and make good progress.
128. Teaching and learning are good overall. Teachers plan lessons together and share resources well. They use information and communication technology to support learning and to provide group activities during developmental stages of a lesson. During work on Viking town life, pupils are able to interrogate a related CD-ROM, using archaeologists' clues and to use photographs for discussion. In the best lessons, teachers design individual and group work for all the different abilities in the class. Care is shown in the selection of tasks for all pupils. For example, while investigating Ancient Egyptians gods, some pupils used library research skills and others were able to match jumbled sentences to pictures of those gods. Good organisational skills ensure that sufficient resources are available to enable whole classes to carry out research. Pupils really enjoy history lessons. They respond well to the teacher and feel confident to answer questions and express opinions. At Key Stage 2 when they are developing good study skills, a relaxed atmosphere and free discussion enable good progress to be made in their knowledge and understanding of the subject.

## INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

129. Pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages. This represents a good improvement since the time of the last inspection when standards were well below the expected level. The school has made the improvement in information and communication technology a high priority since the time of the last inspection. Through a successful bid for National Grid for Learning support, the quantity and quality of computers and software has been improved. As a result, pupils' learning has improved because they have greater access to computers and to a consistent range of applications. Learning has also improved because the 'New Opportunities' funded training has given teachers a secure understanding of the subject. The implementation of a good scheme of work has ensured that pupils experience the breadth of the curriculum and operate at an appropriate level. The school has built an award-winning web-site, which includes curriculum support areas for pupils in and out of school time.
130. Pupils are now able to make steady progress because the quality of teaching is at least satisfactory and often good. The growth in teachers' confidence and enthusiasm is evident in the good use they are making of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning in other subjects. Teachers in Key stage 1 regularly devise on-screen worksheets for a range of subjects, such as literacy, science and history. These tasks increase pupils' familiarity with information and communication technology conventions, such as selecting the correct answers from drop-down fields, adding text and printing out copies. In Key Stage 2, teachers integrate the use of appropriate applications into the core subjects, such as the use of spreadsheets for calculating shopping bills in numeracy lessons. Teachers in both key stages encourage pupils' independence by imaginative use of peripheral devices, such as the digital camera. In Key Stage 1, for example, pupils were asked to compose a still life arrangement of blue china, print out the digital image and use the print as a basis for their own sketch. In Key Stage 2, pupils successfully used the camera to record the series of movements needed for striking a ball and printed them out as a sequence.
131. Pupils' learning is satisfactory overall and good in some aspects, such as graphics and in the use of 'Logo'. Younger pupils are very confident in the use of painting programs. In discussing how they would create a Chinese style picture, pupils in Year 2 showed a good knowledge of the potential of different tools, suggesting for instance that the shape of a brush could be changed to a wedge for Chinese writing. Older pupils are familiar with writing a sequence of commands for a screen turtle using the 'repeat' command. The teaching requirement that their commands must be understood and implemented by a third person ensures that pupils appreciate the need for accuracy. Word processing skills develop consistently throughout the school so that older pupils have the skills to create multi-media presentations, such as records of a field trip.
132. Because the scheme of work is relatively new, older pupils have not covered all of the elements described in the early stages. Progress in the higher order control and monitoring aspects is not as secure as in other aspects. The comprehensive assessment procedures now in place give teachers an overall view of pupils' individual long-term progress and also keep a check on coverage in each class. These procedures also identify areas missed in previous years.
133. Pupils in both key stages develop personal information and communication technology skills because they have access to computer suites with Internet access. However, the

current procedures for class use of the information and communication technology rooms are largely reliant on additional adult support and do not yet ensure consistent access for all pupils. Although classroom machines are well used, the taught time for the subject is still low. The number of modern machines in the suites is not sufficient for a large group to be taught the same skill at the same time. Consequently, teachers need additional support either in the classroom or in the computer room before they can make use of the facilities. The school is training parent volunteers to assist teachers but there is a lack of other strategies to ensure that pupils gain the full benefit from the new resources.

## **MUSIC**

134. Good progress has been made in raising standards since the previous inspection. The standards of attainment, which were low at that time, are now in line with the national expectations at the end of both key stages. Pupils of all ages and abilities make good progress. The standard of teaching is better than it was, and teachers are well supported by a local scheme which guides their planning and ensures appropriate coverage of the National Curriculum programmes of study.
135. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have an appropriate understanding of rhythm, pitch, tempo, structure and pattern. Teachers use a variety of stimulating activities to reinforce pupils' learning, and to help them to develop an appropriate musical vocabulary. In one Year 2 lesson seen during the inspection, the teacher used flash cards whilst a tape of Chinese music was playing to encourage pupils to focus on and consider various musical aspects and elements. The pupils talked confidently and accurately about what they had heard, with the most able pupils identifying the instruments that were accompanying the singer. Pupils enjoy singing, and have a good sense of rhythm and pitch. They show a satisfactory sense of rhythm, and older pupils effectively use the names of Chinese foods to create rhythmic patterns, which they clap. Pupils are confident about maintaining their own part when taking part in two part rounds to clapping patterns. Some good links are established with other areas of the curriculum, as pupils produce their own posters, conveying their expressions of anger, happiness and calm after listening to pieces from the Planets Suite. Although pupils have some opportunities for composing music, they are often heavily directed by the teacher, and this prevents pupils from fully expressing their own ideas and developing their creative ability. This is an area of the music curriculum which could be developed further.
136. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils continue to make good progress across most aspects of the music curriculum, although, as in Key Stage 1, there are only limited opportunities for them to create their own compositions. Key Stage 2 pupils sing well. They maintain parts with ease and have good performance skills. They display a good sense of rhythm and pitch and the teachers give useful tips on how to keep pitch more accurately. Untuned percussion instruments are used effectively to accompany the pupils' singing. Pupils' desire to learn is enhanced by the enthusiasm of the teachers who work hard to motivate the pupils and to provide appropriate challenge to improve the standard of attainment. Pupils respond well to recorded music, and in one observed lesson they were able to explain confidently the layered texture of the song they listened to where the entries of the singers were staggered. All of the pupils, including those from the special needs unit, are extremely well motivated. They listen attentively and pick out variations in tempo, volume and pitch. In Year 4, pupils' work is currently linked with a geography topic and, in a lesson seen during the inspection, pupils were identifying features of urban and rural areas which could be represented musically. The

teacher gave lots of opportunities for pupils to contribute and discuss their ideas and the pupils responded enthusiastically and well.

137. Overall, the standard of teaching and learning is good, and this represents a significant improvement since the previous inspection. The enthusiastic co-ordinator is establishing an appropriate scheme for the development of music throughout the school, which will support teachers in their planning and ensure that pupils' learning is systematically built upon. The curriculum has been widened to create better links with other subjects and to ensure that it covers all of the requirements of the National Curriculum programmes of study. The school has adequate resources for meeting the needs of the curriculum and has the distinct advantage of two music rooms, which although rather small for large class groups are very useful areas for listening to music in an appropriate atmosphere, and which are well used. Pupils work hard in music lessons and show good levels of application and concentration. They fully participate in all activities and show high levels of enthusiasm and enjoyment. There are some very good opportunities for Key Stage 2 pupils to take part in a local annual music festival. This provides very good opportunities for their social development and encourages all pupils to take pride in their school.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

138. Standards in physical education are in line with national expectations at the end of both Key Stages. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection. There has been good improvement in the subject over the past few years, and the curriculum is now much broader than it was, enabling pupils to have a wider range of learning experiences as they move through the school. Physical education is sensibly planned in blocks of activities to provide opportunities during the year for all aspects of the subject to be taught. Teachers plan their lessons effectively, have high expectations of good behaviour and successfully build upon previously learned skills, in particular in orienteering lessons and class athletics practices. The curriculum is suitably enriched by additional opportunities for older pupils of both genders to attend lunchtime and after school clubs in a variety of games including, soccer, netball, rounders and cricket. The use of skilled teachers and coaches who visit the school contributes significantly to the achievement of the pupils in physical education.
139. During the summer term, pupils in both key stages take part in games and athletics activities. Pupils at Key Stage 1 make satisfactory progress in lessons when developing ball skills. Good use is made of demonstration to improve pupils' performance. For example, in a lesson seen during the inspection, pupils showed inventive ways of rolling a small ball to one another. Helpful comments from the teacher encourage immediate improvement, especially when they praise achievement or effort. Well established routines in most classes ensure effective warm-up sessions when the pupils are often able to demonstrate what they have learned previously, such as sequencing movements at various levels. Overall, Key Stage 1 pupils move with satisfactory levels of co-ordination and control, and show a good awareness of space.
140. At Key Stage 2, older pupils have the opportunity to attend a residential centre, which gives them a chance to take part in outdoor and adventurous activities, which are greatly enjoyed. Pupils further develop these skills when they return to school in well planned and organised sessions. Pupils have good opportunities to improve their orienteering skills in a positive and enjoyable atmosphere. The use of skilled, visiting teachers enables pupils to make very good progress during a series of athletics lessons. They improve their skills for the long and triple jump, effectively sequencing a

hop, step and jump into a successful routine. Pupils follow demonstrations well and practise to consolidate the skills they have observed. Year 6 pupils participate in a series of well organised athletics lessons, where they are able to record their own achievements in throwing and jumping. They learn good skills and practise to improve their performance. They learn to throw both under and over arm, working in pairs, and extend this to distance throwing with a heavier ball. In Years 3 and 4, pupils have the opportunity to attend swimming lessons, where they are trained by Local Authority instructors. By the end of the key stage, nearly all pupils swim the recommended distance of twenty-five metres.

141. The teaching and learning of physical education are good overall, and are further enhanced when lessons are taught by specialist teachers and coaches. Teachers have a secure grasp of the subject, and make very effective use of pupil demonstration to help pupils to improve their performance. Pupils in both key stages are given good opportunities to demonstrate their ideas to their classmates. Where the best teaching occurs, pupils are encouraged to critically appraise their own work and that of others and this enables them to focus on aspects that are of high quality and those which might be improved further. Pupils from the special needs unit are incorporated effectively into lessons and make good progress. They are well supported by their classmates. Pupils enjoy physical education, especially at the end of Key Stage 2, where they measure their own improvement in athletics and successfully demonstrate awareness of the needs of others whom they include in their games and activities. Pupils of all ages work well together in pairs or teams, and show an appreciation of the need for 'fair play'. There is a good balance of competitiveness and personal improvement. Lessons follow a clear structure, which is familiar to pupils and teachers have high expectations of behaviour.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

142. Attainment at the end of both key stages meets the expectations of the Wigan Agreed Syllabus. Pupils have a secure knowledge of the main world religions and understand that belief impacts on how people live their lives. There has been good improvement since the time of the last inspection when standards were well below the expected level. Religious education is now taught regularly in all classes to an appropriate level. The school has made particular improvement in its approach to the attainment target relating to learning from religion. The subject is making a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils of all abilities, including those who have special educational needs, make good progress as they move through the school and benefit from good teaching and a broad and well-balanced curriculum.
143. Teachers in Key Stage 1 successfully choose approaches which intrigue and interest younger children, and this motivates the pupils in their learning. During the inspection, Year 2 pupils appreciated the importance of respecting sacred texts because of the careful and well-informed manner in which their teachers presented the Qur'an to them. Pupils have gained an appreciation of the similarities and differences between places of worship because teachers encourage them to observe closely, and to describe what they see. Pupils recognise that there are statues in Christian churches but not in mosques, and link this idea to differences in beliefs. Their understanding develops well because teachers present ideas in a simple but accurate way, ensuring they fully understand the inherent messages. Pupils' literacy skills are effectively promoted when they are encouraged to use their own words to record their ideas. For example, when writing detailed accounts of the Easter story, younger pupils provided meaningful captions for their illustrations, drawing on their feelings to express how



Jesus and His friends were feeling prior at the time of the Crucifixion. Pupils are learning from religion because they are encouraged to think about relationships and to see how their actions can affect others. Year 2 pupils know there are times when they make choices about their behaviour and that it is important to choose carefully. Although pupils have covered a good amount of work, their recall of what they have learned is sometimes patchy, and those pupils who have limited vocabulary have difficulty in expressing their ideas clearly.

144. Good teaching in Key Stage 2 ensures that pupils develop a detailed knowledge of world faiths. The important features are clearly presented to pupils who are also expected to conduct their own research, for example, about the architectural aspects of important mosques. The quality of discussion between teachers and pupils is high and encourages pupils to draw on their own experiences. Learning in the upper part of Key Stage 2 is enhanced by a series of visualisation lessons. These foster pupils' spiritual development by helping them to develop stillness and an awareness of the natural world. Pupils are encouraged to apply these skills to religious contexts. As a result they were able to visualise and record the sounds, scents and emotions of events, such as Jesus' entry into Jerusalem. The level of challenge to pupils in learning from religion prompts them to think deeply about the impact of belief. Older pupils deal successfully with concepts like 'being known by your fruit'. Younger pupils recognise that there are expectations of behaviour associated with being a believer. Pupils are familiar with the concept of prayer and compose prayers in different forms.
145. The quality of teaching in both key stages is good and has improved significantly since the time of the last inspection. Throughout the school, pupils' knowledge has improved because teachers are more confident in their understanding of the subject requirements. This was an area of weakness at the time of the last inspection. The new scheme of work gives teachers clear guidelines, and they are well supported by the subject co-ordinator. Pupils learn respect for beliefs from the good example set by their teachers. Teachers are prepared to deal with the implicit messages and to pose searching questions. In the best lessons, teachers are confident about sharing their own thoughts with the pupils and this gives the pupils the confidence to express their own ideas. Pupil's learning is good, and they participate well in lessons, taking an active role in discussions, and listening well to the view of their classmates. They work hard and with good levels of concentration. Visits to local churches and special museums enhance the curriculum, especially for Christianity and Judaism, although there is, however, a lack of first hand experience of other faiths.