

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **BICKERSHAW CE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Bickershaw, Wigan

LEA area: Wigan

Unique reference number: 106470

Headteacher: Mr P Radcliffe

Reporting inspector: Mr D A Hill  
3692

Dates of inspection: 18<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> September 2000

Inspection number: 224084

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Voluntary Aided

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Bickershaw Lane  
Bickershaw  
Wigan

Postcode: WN2 4AE

Telephone number: 01942 866317

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs J Clark

Date of previous inspection: June 1998

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr D A Hill 3692	Registered inspector	Science Information and communication technology Music Physical education Equal opportunities English as an additional language	The characteristics and effectiveness of the school The school's results and pupils' achievements Teaching and learning Leadership and management Key issues for action
Mr C Farris 19426	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development Pupils' welfare, health and safety Partnership with parents and carers
Ms J Denton 23610	Team inspector	Mathematics Art and design Design and technology Under-fives	
Ms A Hopwood 4180	Team inspector	English Geography History Special educational needs	Quality and range of opportunities for learning

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Bickershaw CE (Voluntary Aided) Primary School is situated near Leigh, Lancashire in the Metropolitan Borough of Wigan. It is part of the Leigh Education Action Zone. Serving the area immediately around the school there are currently 141 pupils on roll who range from four to eleven years of age. There is an imbalance of boys to girls with 81 boys and 60 girls. The school is smaller than other primary schools and is at present under-subscribed. There are 13 fewer pupils than at the time of the last inspection. There is one intake per year of pupils aged four plus, of whom there are 14, currently attending on a morning-only basis, but all will attend full-time before half term. Overall attainment when pupils start school is below that normally expected of four-year-olds and is well below in speaking, listening and in basic understanding of counting.

The proportion of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is just under 17 per cent and is broadly in line with the national average. Almost all pupils are of white ethnic origin. The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs, including statements (27 per cent), is above the national average. The percentage of pupils with statements of special educational need is in line with the national average.

Pupils are organised into six classes, two being of mixed-age, Years 4/5 and 5/6.

The school has a mission statement, which clearly states that central to its work is the recognition that this is a church school with strongly-held Christian values. Aims include making good provision for the spiritual, curricular, pastoral and social development of the pupils.

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

At the last inspection in June 1998, the school was found to have serious weaknesses in the standards attained in English, mathematics and science, in curriculum planning and monitoring and in leadership and management. All these areas have been successfully rectified. There have been marked improvements in examination results at both key stages. Pupils have good attitudes to school and the quality of teaching is good. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The overall effectiveness of the school is also satisfactory. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

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

- Results in National Curriculum tests are at or above the national average in comparison with similar schools in reading and mathematics at seven years of age and in English and science at eleven years.
- The standard of teaching and learning at Key Stage 2 and in the Reception class is good.
- Relationships within the school and with parents are good. School staff provide positive role models.
- Emphasis is placed on moral development and pupils are effectively taught the difference between right and wrong.
- Support for pupils with special educational needs is strong and these pupils make good progress.
- There is a shared commitment by governors and school staff to further improve performance.

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

- The headteacher, senior management and governors lack a clear vision for the future development of the school and link this to financial planning.
- Improve behaviour management strategies, especially at Key Stage 1. A minority of pupils is disruptive and is restricting the progress of the majority.
- Cultural development of pupils, especially understanding of living in a multi-cultural society.
- Greater opportunities for pupils to take on responsibilities and develop independence.

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

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

There has been more than expected improvement since the school was last inspected in 1998 when it was reported to have serious weaknesses. The quality of teaching has improved and is now good, and teachers have higher expectations of what pupils can achieve. For pupils aged eleven, standards in English and science have shown considerable improvement from being well below average to average or above while, latterly, standards in mathematics have risen. Standards attained by seven-year-olds also show improvement, especially in mathematics. The school has successfully implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and most other initiatives from the Education Action Zone.

The school has made good progress in addressing the issues raised in the last report. Short and medium-term planning is in place and assessments are carried out regularly and analysed to inform curriculum planning. All staff regularly monitor and evaluate the teaching and learning in their curriculum area and this has led to higher standards. Job descriptions are now in place. There is still a need to involve and develop the senior management and governing body's role in formulating a strategic view of the school's development. Targets for improvement to pupils' attainment have been exceeded.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	E	E	D	C
Mathematics	E	E	E	E
Science	D	E	C	B

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

Trends over the past three years (1998-2000), both for infants and juniors, show that standards are improving. The most recent year 2000 unconfirmed test results for pupils aged eleven indicate a continuing upward trend. These results show for eleven-year-olds, attainment in mathematics and English is at the expected national level. Inspection evidence and year 2000 national tests for seven-year-olds also show a good improvement from the 1999 results. In mathematics standards continue to be good. Although there is a larger proportion of pupils achieving average levels, the proportion achieving higher levels is low. Targets for English and mathematics for eleven-year-olds set by the school for this year have been exceeded.

Standards in information and communication technology and in all other subjects are broadly in line with national expectations for seven and eleven-year-old pupils, except for art and design which is below expectation. Religious education will be inspected through the Diocese. Pupils in the Foundation Stage are making satisfactory progress in the four weeks they have attended part-time.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Most pupils like school and most have good attitudes to work, especially in the juniors. A small number of infant pupils find it hard to concentrate.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Mostly satisfactory, but it varies between very good and unsatisfactory in lessons. In the infants, a number of lessons are disrupted by poor behaviour. Behaviour in the playground is satisfactory with no evidence of bullying.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are good. Pupils help each other well, both in class and at play. They are quick to acknowledge success and to offer comfort to a friend who is upset. The range of duties offered by the school to older pupils is less than usually found.
Attendance	Attendance is satisfactory.

Staff know pupils and their parents well and provide good support. However, behaviour amongst a small minority of infants is not well managed and this is adversely affecting the progress of the majority.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

The good start the pupils make in the Reception class is satisfactorily built upon in the infants before accelerating in the juniors where almost all teaching is good or very good. This is effectively raising attainment, particularly in English, mathematics and science. The isolated cases of unsatisfactory teaching in the infants are largely a result of poor behaviour not being well managed. It is early in the term and there is some evidence of a few pupils testing teachers to see what they can get away with, while the staff concerned are equally determined to eradicate poor behaviour. Expectations are particularly high in the juniors and planning is of good quality in all age groups.

Fifty-two per cent of lessons were good or very good and seven per cent were unsatisfactory. Overall, pupils' learning is satisfactory in the infants and good in the juniors.



## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is broad and balanced and offers all pupils a range of worthwhile opportunities, except for the under-fives where opportunities for physical development are limited. There is a strong emphasis on literacy and numeracy. The implementation of the new curriculum is being suitably planned.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Pupils with special educational needs are well taught and make good progress in the juniors and satisfactory progress in the infants. Individual targets are well matched to pupils' needs. Special needs pupils are fully integrated into the life of the school.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The personal, social and health needs of all pupils are being well addressed. There is good provision for the spiritual and moral development of pupils, but the provision for their cultural development is unsatisfactory, with insufficient emphasis being given to multi-cultural education and to an appreciation of the arts.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school provides a satisfactory level of care for its pupils. Pupils are happy in a caring environment. The management of health and safety is unsatisfactory.

The partnership with parents is contributing to the rise in standards. It is a significant strength of the school and could be enhanced further if there was an improvement in sharing information about the curriculum and general issues relating to the life of the school.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Day-to-day management of the school is satisfactory with the senior management team giving good support but the leadership is not sufficiently clear on longer-term strategic development.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Many of the governors have recently joined the governing body. They take a keen interest in the work of the school and are fulfilling their statutory duties but are not proactive in longer-term detailed planning or influencing the direction of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has worked well to evaluate pupils' achievements, especially in English, mathematics and science with good analysis of results. This has had a major impact on the raising of standards.
The strategic use of resources	The school has derived considerable benefit from being a member of the Leigh Education Action Zone, especially with help in the provision of an excellent computer suite. Staffing is appropriate and resources and accommodation, with the exception of the kitchen, are well maintained and used, with the exception of the school field, which is in poor condition.

There is a tendency for the school to react to issues rather than being proactive in developments which would be of major benefit to the pupils. Principles of best value are only recently being applied.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Their children like school.</li><li>• The school expects pupils to work hard.</li><li>• They find it easy to approach the school.</li><li>• The school is well managed.</li><li>• The strong links with the church.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A broader range of clubs and activities.</li><li>• The amount of homework, some feeling too much is set, others too little.</li></ul>

Inspectors support parents' positive views but feel the headteacher, governors and senior management should take a stronger lead in planning the development of the school. While there are few clubs, the use of residential visits and community activities support pupils' learning. The amount of homework set, in line with the homework policy, is broadly satisfactory and matches that in similar schools.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Trends over the last three years (1997, 1998 and 1999) indicate that standards are improving. In the 1999 tests for eleven-year-olds at the end of the junior stage of education, pupils attained standards in English which were broadly in line with the average for similar schools. In science they were above the average for similar schools but in mathematics they were well below the average. When compared with schools nationally, results in English were below average, well below in mathematics and in science were broadly in line. The most recent year 2000 unconfirmed test results for pupils aged eleven indicate a continuing upward trend in pupils' achievements with 73 per cent achieving at least the expected Level 4 in mathematics, 82 per cent in English and 100 per cent in science. In 1998, scores were 48 per cent in mathematics, 38 per cent in English and 52 per cent in science. Inspection evidence supports the current rising trend in pupils' achievements, although it is too early in the school year to predict likely outcomes in the test results when pupils leave the school in July 2001. At present, pupils throughout the school are achieving standards expected for their age.
2. In 1999, national test results for seven-year-olds at the end of the infants were broadly in line with the average for similar schools in reading, below in writing and in mathematics were well above. In comparison with all schools, reading and writing results were below average and mathematics results were well above the national average. The results show a considerable improvement from 1997 test results. Inspection evidence from the scrutiny of work of Year 3 pupils, who took the test in 2000, and unconfirmed test results for the year 2000, indicate a good improvement from the levels attained in 1999, especially in mathematics. Science levels by teacher assessment show that all pupils gained at least the expected Level 2. There are, however, few pupils who are attaining the higher Level 3 in science. There remains room for improvement in writing, with too many pupils attaining lower Level 2 or below and in attainment at higher levels. When children start school their attainment is below that of most four-year-olds, especially in speaking and listening, counting in number and in their personal and social development. From this level pupils make good progress in the reception year. Overall progress is satisfactory up to the age of seven. This accelerates as pupils proceed through the juniors and, by the age of eleven, many have made good progress, although progress by the majority of pupils in all subjects is satisfactory.
3. The school's realistic targets for improvement have recently been exceeded. Projected targets for 2001 are under review being higher in the core subjects than 2000 targets, showing a commitment to continuous improvement. There has also been a considerable improvement in the school's analysis of assessment information and the inclusion in the Middle Infant Screening Test (an additional test which pupils in Year 1 take), the implementation of optional standard tests at Years 3, 4 and 5 and assessments, linked to Qualification and Curriculum Agency (QCA) subjects, are enabling the school to track pupils' progress and to have an early and clear indication of pupils' special educational needs. Analysis has led to a change of emphasis within the literacy hour with more attention being devoted to writing. Analysis of initial assessment on entry is used to plan different activities for pupils in the reception class and is also used to assess progress later in the school year. Overall, boys outperform girls at both seven and eleven. In the junior classes the ratio of boys to girls is 5:3, although there is no difference in teaching.
4. The literacy strategy has had a favourable impact on raising standards. The school is working hard on improving listening skills, although this is negated at times by the

unsatisfactory behaviour and lack of teacher management of some older infant pupils. Tape recorders are being used well to improve listening skills and the use of role play, especially with Years 5 and 6 junior pupils, is making a very significant improvement, both in confidence and in understanding and following a line of argument of their peers.

5. Pupils' reading is generally in line with the national average at the end of both key stages, although in the year 2000 tests all infant pupils attained at least an average level. Reading skills are being well taught effectively with pupils able to employ a range of strategies to tackle unfamiliar words. Years 5 and 6 pupils generally read with confidence, know well the work of a variety of famous authors and competently recall stories they have read.
6. Weaknesses in writing by the infant pupils arise from an inability to clearly express themselves in well-structured sentences. However, writing skills are improving through regular practice in spelling and in the use of resources for sentence building to aid writing of stories and accounts in history and geography. By the time pupils are in Year 6 their writing is of good quality. Most write clearly and convincingly for a range of audiences. Some good quality narrative writing was observed, particularly with Year 6 pupils. Pupils make better progress as they move through the school due to more effective teaching and better management of pupils.
7. Attainment in mathematics is good in the infant stage and satisfactory in the juniors. The implementation of the numeracy strategy and support from within the Leigh Action Zone is proving beneficial in raising standards in mathematics. Pupils aged seven are gaining a good understanding of addition and subtraction and the practical application of number within the environment. By the time pupils are aged eleven, most show a good range of competences in the use and application of mathematics, for example in geography plotting temperature differences and in science work when they tabulate their findings clearly and use simple formulae when handling data. Work on space, shape and measures is good.
8. In science most pupils make satisfactory progress in the infants and good progress in the juniors. In the infants, progress by some pupils, in both Years 1 and 2, is jeopardised by their lack of ability to concentrate and to listen carefully. Investigations, in which pupils test their own prediction, which are a feature of the work of Years 4, 5 and 6 pupils, considerably aid their scientific enquiry through work which is of interest and more demanding. Throughout the school there are illustrations of pupils' understanding of scientific concepts from infant work on forces showing the change of shape through pushing and pulling, to the detailed observational drawings illustrating reproduction in plants by the juniors and the experimental work they have conducted on habitats.
9. Standards in information and communication technology are in line with the national expectancy for the age of pupils. There is evidence that, with the use of the computer suite, opportunities are being taken to increase pupils' competency in the use of a wide variety of programs and of computer functions, which make for ease of presentation, refinement and extraction of information. Pupils who have computers at home make the best gains in ability to use standard programs. Involvement in the Education Action Zone has considerably aided the development of computer education within the school with the finance for the computer suite and in general advice given in setting this up. Staff training relating to increasing expertise is leading to confident teaching of a good range of skills.
10. As the school is a Church of England Aided School, the standard of work in religious education will be reported later in a separate report. In the other subjects of the curriculum, pupils are making broadly satisfactory progress although, in art at the junior level, there is very little breadth and pupils' skills are under-developed. This results in

unsatisfactory attainment. In music, opportunities are not being taken to extend listening skills or competence in instrumental work but overall standards in this subject are satisfactory.

11. Overall standards in English, mathematics, science and history have improved since the last report. Standards are similar in other subjects but art continues to be below national expectations. More detailed descriptions of pupils' achievements in subjects are included in Part D of this report.
12. Progress of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory in English, mathematics and science in the infants. Pupils make good progress in the juniors where they are well challenged and receive good support in their learning. Support is good for pupils in the infants when they receive special tuition away from the class.

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

13. Children settle well into reception class routines because of previous visits to school, visits by teachers to the homes of new entrants and sensitive guidance. They begin to follow expected codes of behaviour when in large and small groups and are learning to take personal responsibility for tidying away at the end of a session.
14. On balance, pupils have good attitudes to their work, but the situation is more positive in the juniors than the infants. Pupils enjoy their school life and most settle down to work without fuss, and continue to work even when the teacher is involved with other groups of pupils. Most pupils are interested and responsive and enjoy their learning, especially when the lesson is challenging. This is particularly apparent with Years 5 and 6 pupils, especially when practical work is involved. Pupils work well both individually and collaboratively in pairs and when in groups they give willing support to colleagues who find the work more difficult.
15. The behaviour of the pupils overall is judged to be satisfactory, but it varies between very good and unsatisfactory. In lessons, there is a marked difference between the behaviour of younger and older pupils and this is the main factor in the difference in their attitudes to work. Five lessons were seen in the infants in which the behaviour was sufficiently poor for learning to be seriously disrupted. The unsatisfactory behaviour consists mainly of inattention, wilfully ignoring the teacher's instructions and creating a general disturbance in the classroom. The problem is apparently not new, but the school has so far been unsuccessful in finding an effective solution. Out of the classroom, behaviour seen during the inspection was good. Pupils are cheerful and polite, wishing everyone a cheery 'good morning' and holding doors open for adults. On the playgrounds they play happily with their friends and incidents of oppressive behaviour are rare. There have been no exclusions during the past academic year, which is a significant improvement on the situation at the time of the previous inspection, two years ago.
16. Relationships between staff and the pupils are good, with the staff providing a high level of affectionate support. The pupils help each other well and both in class and at play there is little argument over taking turns. In group activities where individual skills are involved, for example hockey in physical education, the more able pupils work happily with the less able. When doing practical work, pupils divide the tasks sensibly with the other members of their group. Pupils are genuinely pleased for the successes of their colleagues and are quick to comfort a friend who is upset.
17. Pupils willingly undertake a range of duties within the classroom that helps in the smooth running of the school. However, the range available is less than is often found in similar schools, particularly in the area of the older pupils helping the younger. This represents a missed opportunity for the development of a greater sense of

responsibility and maturity in the pupils. Pupils show initiative in running stalls at the Christmas Fair and in devising fund-raising ideas for charitable collections.

18. Attendance for the last reporting year was 93.9 per cent, which is broadly in line with the national average and is satisfactory. There was no unauthorised absence. Registration is carried out quickly and without fuss and registers are properly maintained. Punctuality at the beginning of the day is good and lessons start on time.

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

19. Teaching is of good quality throughout the school. It is better in the juniors than the infants and is good with reception pupils. It is consistently good or very good in Years 5 and 6. Of the lessons seen, 52 per cent were good or very good but seven per cent were unsatisfactory. The unsatisfactory lessons were all at Key Stage 1. Overall, the teaching has improved from the time of the last inspection when it was described as satisfactory.
20. The strengths of teaching outlined in the last report have been maintained. The weaknesses at that time were confined to teachers on short-term contracts or temporary staff. The weaknesses at the time of the present inspection are all a result of unsatisfactory behaviour management. In the two classes where this occurs, a number of pupils, mostly boys, who have behavioural difficulties, were intent on causing disruption by talking when the teacher was speaking, failing to listen to instructions and to act upon them and in constantly seeking attention. Behaviour was not managed well in these lessons. In one physical education lesson the teacher sensibly terminated the lesson when a group of pupils failed to respond to clear instructions. Behaviour was better when there was tight control over the whole class and opportunities for groups of pupils working together were limited to two or three groups at the most.
21. In the satisfactory or better lessons, control was always sound with good relationships established between pupils and adults working in the classroom with high expectations of what pupils should achieve. Questioning techniques were used well and a range of teaching methods, whole-class, group and individual, were employed to meet the needs of the pupils. Lesson planning was always sound and aided by the adoption of thorough, detailed schemes of work throughout the school. Resources are used well but at times there is a lack of urgency in some lessons, for example in a Year 1 physical education lesson the pace was slow with the work rate of pupils falling. The large class size, 34 as against the school average of 24, sometimes stretches the ability of the teacher to ensure the pupils are all on task and producing sufficient quantities of work. In these lessons sufficient use is not made of ancillary support.
22. In the best lessons the classes were very well managed in a calm and efficient manner. Expectations in these lessons were high and pupil interest and involvement were maintained throughout. Pupils were given very good quality feedback on their efforts with praise being used effectively and points for further improvement being well made. Almost all lessons observed with the reception class were of good quality with the pupils settling in to school routines well. Praise is used well and the teacher has a clear understanding of how the needs of these pupils are to be met.
23. Teaching has improved, partly by the observations which have been carried out by the headteacher and subject co-ordinators. This has led to a sharing of expertise and staff now work together as a team within a key stage but, as yet, the thread of working together as a corporate team throughout the school is not strong.
24. Teachers have adapted well to the various initiatives, such as the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and to being part of the Leigh Education Action Zone in which their teaching of mathematics has derived considerable benefit through the work of the support advisory teachers. The main features of the literacy and numeracy sessions

are implemented well, particularly with the work on elements of writing in the literacy lessons and in mental arithmetic in numeracy. Subject knowledge is strong in literacy, numeracy and in science. It is satisfactory in information technology and design and technology. It is weakest in music although this is compensated through the use of specialist teaching. Teachers are aware of the revised National Curriculum requirements and are planning towards their full implementation.

25. Teachers plan appropriately for pupils with special educational needs and support staff offer effective support, help and guidance which allows these pupils to maximise their potential. Targets within individual education plans (IEPs) are realistic and are systematically worked towards by pupils and staff. In the junior classes, special needs pupils are challenged well and fully included in all lessons with tasks set for them which are appropriate to their abilities.
26. The quality of marking continues to show some inconsistencies in its usefulness, but most marking is positive and helps pupils to improve. Teachers are applying the school marking policy well but the written comments do not always help pupils sufficiently to improve their knowledge, understanding and overall quality of their work.
27. Pupils' work is displayed well throughout the school and teachers have paid attention to earlier criticism of this aspect. However, insufficient thought is given to the provision of displays, which help pupils to understand the work in which they are involved, and to the reasons for the display of some of the work.
28. Homework is being firmly established in the school routines. It is generally well received by pupils and parents and the school policy is well applied. The 'agreed content for pupils' homework' is clear and includes all pupils, providing an effective framework. There are, however, some parents who believe too much homework is set, others not enough.

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

29. The curriculum is broad and balanced and offers all pupils a range of worthwhile opportunities in the foundation, infant and junior stages although in the foundation stage there is a lack of opportunity for physical development. There is a thorough approach to curriculum planning, particularly in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science and this ensures the effective delivery of the teaching of basic skills. Planning of the delivery of the foundation subjects is based upon guidelines issued by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority and this ensures satisfactory coverage in these subject areas.
30. The school has worked hard to establish a good framework and structure for the teaching of literacy and numeracy and this has resulted in the raising of standards in these areas. In the infants, teachers are focusing on the development of pupils' listening skills within the literacy hour and headphones and tape recorders are used effectively as a resource for activities.
31. The monitoring of planning is effectively undertaken by the subject co-ordinators for the various subject areas. There have also been some opportunities for subject co-ordinators to visit other classes when their subject is being taught which has led to better and more targeted support for their colleagues.
32. The provision of extra-curricular opportunities is satisfactory with physical activity sessions available after school and choir practice taking place at lunchtime. These activities are focused mainly on older pupils, however, and several are taken by one member of staff.

33. The curriculum is further enhanced by visits arranged for pupils to support their learning. These include visits within the local area and a residential visit for older pupils where field studies and outdoor activities are available. Visitors are also involved in certain subjects of the curriculum, for example the nurse playing a central role in the health programme and the police talking with older pupils about drugs. The links with the church are strong and the vicar is a regular visitor to the school. Visiting artists and musicians have also contributed to the schemes of work.
34. The school has a thorough approach to its curriculum planning, which recognises pupils' special educational needs. The identification and planning of programmes for these pupils is effective. Individual education plans are thorough and are regularly reviewed and this process is well supported by the local education authority (LEA) support service. Pupils with statements of special educational need receive the identified provision and additional support to which they are entitled. All pupils are included in all areas of the curriculum successfully.
35. The personal, social and health needs of all pupils are being well provided for by the school. A session has been introduced in which personal, social and health issues are addressed. The contribution made by experts to the health education programme helps ensure accurate teaching on a range of topics including sex education.
36. The links the school has formed with the local community, particularly the church, make a satisfactory contribution to the pupils' learning. Links with other institutions are being increased through the activities of the Education Action Zone.
37. The school makes good provision for the spiritual development of the pupils. There is a clear Christian working relationship within the school. This is reinforced by thoughtful assemblies in which pupils are able to learn and reflect on issues that affect their lives. The assemblies follow a planned programme and meet statutory requirements. Pupils are given opportunities to learn about other religions and, for example, are able to visit a local Jewish museum. The school has a close relationship with the local church and pupils visit weekly for a service. A range of other community and social activities involving the church takes place. Pupils in Year 1 were enthralled by a talk about baptism given by the vicar in her vestments, with simple but clear explanations of the religious significance of the ceremony.
38. Good provision is made for the pupils' moral development. Moral issues are dealt with as an integral part of the subjects and pupils are given opportunities, appropriate to their age, to discuss issues relating to right and wrong - particularly with regard to their own behaviour and their relationships with others. Teachers provide good role models and have high expectations of the pupils' own behaviour including respect for others and their property. Pupils have good opportunities to talk about such issues in personal, health and social lessons. This is all underpinned by a well-structured behaviour policy that is supported by procedures that have been developed with input from local experts. Each class has its own set of class rules that have been negotiated by the pupils themselves, giving them a feeling of ownership and responsibility but are not always adopted successfully.
39. The provision for social development is satisfactory overall. From an early age, pupils are given opportunities to co-operate with each other and to work in groups. They are encouraged to respect each other and to be tolerant and to help those who are less able. The effectiveness of this provision is evident from the good relationships that exist at all levels. Pupils are given some responsibilities within the school and the classroom, but these are limited in scope. Opportunities are missed for older pupils to undertake a much greater range of duties, particularly involving support of younger pupils, that would both raise their self-esteem and increase their maturity.



40. The provision for cultural development is unsatisfactory. Whilst pupils get a satisfactory understanding of other cultures and other faiths through the curriculum, there is insufficient emphasis on giving them first-hand experience to equip them adequately for life in today's multicultural society. There is little evidence in school of literature involving other cultures and visits from representatives from other ethnic groups, artists and other performers have not taken place during recent years. Pupils' experience is largely restricted to their own culture, and even there, the coverage is limited. Whilst the school takes pupils to visit a museum and an art centre, within the school there are few examples of work by famous artists and composers. This represents missed opportunities to develop the pupils' sense of aesthetic appreciation.

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

41. Overall, the school provides a satisfactory level of care for the pupils and there are appropriate procedures in place to ensure their safety and well-being. At a practical level, the school is a warm and friendly place in which pupils are happy and able to learn in a caring environment. The pastoral support provided by all staff is very good and relationships between adults and pupils are supportive. As a result, pupils feel comfortable talking to staff about any worries or problems they may have. Child protection procedures are satisfactory. The school has a good policy and there is a designated teacher who has had relevant training. However, whilst teachers also receive training in child protection, the school has not extended this to support and supervisory staff. Sex and drugs education is provided to pupils in a well-planned programme at a level appropriate for their age. Good support is given to pupils with special educational needs, which enables them to make good progress in the juniors.
42. The school itself is well maintained and the environment is generally safe for the children. However, the management of health and safety is unsatisfactory overall because although there is a detailed policy, this is not adequately put into practice. Verbal reports are given but there is nothing in writing. There is neither a safety committee nor a safety representative and, although regular safety inspections are carried out, action is not recorded. Fire procedures are satisfactory. Termly fire drills take place and are recorded. The fire alarm is usually tested weekly, but the routine has slipped during the current year. Testing of portable electrical appliances is up-to-date. First aid procedures are satisfactory. All accidents are properly logged. When a more serious accident or bump to the head occurs, parents are notified by the headteacher and this is confirmed by a note.
43. There are good procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance. Registers are checked in detail each week and all unexplained absences are followed up using the education welfare service where necessary. The zero level of unauthorised absence is evidence of the effectiveness of this strategy.
44. Behaviour management is satisfactory in reception and junior classes but unsatisfactory in the infants. An effective policy is reinforced by a good system of rewards and sanctions that are well understood by the pupils. Staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and provide good role models for them. Some teachers, however, do not have a full range of strategies to enable good order to be maintained and occasionally behaviour in lessons is unsatisfactory. This disrupts the learning of the class. The school has effective procedures for eliminating aggressive and oppressive behaviour. Mid-day supervisory staff maintain good order and provide good support during lunchtime on the playground. This has a positive effect on behaviour and safety.
45. The school has good procedures for assessing pupils' attainment in English, mathematics and science, history, geography, information and communication technology and physical education. Procedures for design and technology, art and

religious education are currently being developed to match the recommended guidelines for these subjects. Regular tests are undertaken in mathematics and English to assess pupils' progress, as well as statutory and non-statutory tests each year. All staff have received training in the analysis of statistics and entering these on a computer data-base and this is assisting in targeting pupils for future work.

46. The interpretation of data to devise curriculum planning is satisfactory overall, but is inconsistent between subjects. In mathematics, there is much use of the results of tests which influences lesson planning and this has resulted in higher achievement for pupils. Use of assessment in subjects other than English, mathematics and science is at an early stage of development, along with the new requirements of the National Curriculum, but has improved since the last inspection.
47. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic progress are satisfactory. A tracking system is used by teachers and consultants for monitoring progress of three children per class as well as whole-class and individual pupil overviews. This enables teachers to know the standards being attained. Teachers know pupils well and are aware of their strengths and weaknesses, but there are few formal procedures for monitoring personal development. Pupils are supported through the acknowledgement of personal development by receiving awards in assembly.
48. The progress made by pupils with special educational needs is carefully monitored by all teachers led by the special educational needs co-ordinator. Targets within individual education plans are regularly reviewed and well documented. The local support service plays a critical role in the assessment of special educational needs and supports the school well in the design of programmes for these pupils. Systems established by the school to recognise good behaviour and effort are applied to and appreciated by special educational needs pupils.

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

49. The school has a good relationship with the parents and works closely with them on the education of their children. The views of parents, expressed at the pre-inspection meeting, in the questionnaires and during interviews in the inspection week are all strongly supportive of the school - and are significantly more positive than at the time of the previous inspection. Parents see the school as very approachable, having a positive work ethic and being well managed. They see their children liking school, being well looked after and effectively supported as they grow and develop. They find the teaching good and see the children making good progress. The inspection findings largely support these positive views. On a less up-beat note, one in five of the responses to the questionnaire expressed concern at the range of extra-curricular activities provided by the school. The inspection finds the range of extra-curricular activities is satisfactory overall for older pupils but more restricted for younger ones. Extra-curricular provision is similar to that found in many primary schools.
50. The school provides parents with a good level of information about their child's progress and satisfactory information about general school matters. There is an occasional newsletter providing diary dates and the headteacher sends letters home on matters of specific interest. The prospectus and governors' annual report provide good information but both omit a small number of minor items statutorily required and the headteacher has been made aware of these. Pupils' annual reports give satisfactory information about their attainment and progress. There are two consultation evenings during the year and parents are able to discuss their child's progress with staff. Parents wanting more regular information on this can meet the teacher informally at the end of the school day. The homework policy is satisfactory, matching those of other schools, and is contributing to the rise in standards.

51. Parents make a satisfactory contribution to the learning of their children and to the life of the school. Several parents help in the school and on outside visits and provide valuable and effective help that the school itself could not afford. Parents provide help to pupils at home with their reading and the newly formalised homework regime is starting to take effect. The homework policy provides a structured programme to extend the pupils' abilities and help them develop good learning habits. The school provides good information to new parents and holds workshops to explain changes to the curriculum. The Friends' Association is very active and well supported and raises significant funds for a small school. These have been put to good use on improvements to the building and in purchasing resources.
52. Home/school liaison is strong at the Foundation Stage with visits being made to homes of new entrants and this is valued by parents. The Parent and Toddler group, meeting one afternoon per week, has increasingly strong links with the school. There is a well-attended parent help group designed to assist parents help their children with literacy and numeracy.

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

53. A key issue at the time of the last inspection was to further develop the roles of governors, headteacher and subject co-ordinators through the development of monitoring and evaluation of the teaching and learning to raise standards of attainment and to formulate job descriptions. Standards of attainment have risen, monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning is in place and all members of staff have up-to-date job descriptions. These improvements have been achieved through the establishment of sound management structures and procedures and by promoting good working relationships. The school has reacted well to this key issue.
54. The day-to-day management of the school is satisfactory with the senior management team giving good support to the headteacher but, at present, the vision for longer-term strategic developments is unsatisfactory. To some extent the school development plan charts the initiatives to be taken during the coming year. It is comprehensive and covers all areas of work in the school but does not contain any details of financial implications. In view of the situation regarding the school's finances, this is a major omission and is unsatisfactory. For example, the school has identified the need to develop library provision and to bar code existing stock but no cost is attributed to this. In design and technology it is planned to update resources 'as far as the budget allows'. This fails to suggest an ideal target for the school to achieve. Likewise there are no costings for the planned provision for pupils in the Foundation Stage outdoor play.
55. The school also produces an outline long-term plan covering a period of three years. This takes account of the likely changes in pupil numbers but not of the financial implications of these. There is no indication as to how governors intend to retain six classes. The headteacher, senior management and governors of the school are not sufficiently proactive in establishing a clear vision for the future improvement of the school and in the promotion of higher standards throughout the whole curriculum.
56. The success in raising standards in English, mathematics and science has been a direct result of rigorous monitoring and evaluation of the teaching and careful analysis of National Curriculum test scores. This has further led to agreed procedures, for example in marking, being followed by all staff. These shared procedures are leading to a whole-school staff commitment to improvement which has been further aided through the deployment of staffing in which subject expertise of staff is better used. However, staff tend to work as a team within the infants or juniors rather than together as a whole staff.
57. Since the last inspection considerable changes have taken place in the composition of

the governing body. Most are parents of current or former pupils. They take a keen interest in the work of the school, being frequent visitors to view developments. The chair of governors meets at least weekly with the headteacher and staff to oversee the school organisation. Governors fulfil their statutory duties with one or two minor exceptions. They recognise their accountability for educational standards and understand which areas require improvement but have not been instrumental in charting how longer-term improvements will be made through detailed planning with the senior management team. The three governor sub-committees covering finance, curriculum and premises meet at various times during the school year and report to the full governing body. The premises committee provides a verbal report. Written reports from all committees are not made available to the school. The finance committee meets three times a year and provides written recommendations, while the curriculum committee meets more regularly, also providing a written report.

58. The deployment and allocation of staff responsibilities has ensured that staff make an effective contribution to the work of the school. They carry out their management responsibilities effectively within the juniors or infants although the impact throughout the school is limited.
59. The special educational needs co-ordinator manages provision for pupils with special educational needs well. Working in close liaison with the local support services, she monitors provision for these pupils effectively and meets with all involved on a regular basis. She supports teachers well and ensures that relevant training is made available to them in the area of special educational needs. Special educational needs pupils are fully integrated into the life of the school as a result of this careful work.
60. The school is a member of the Leigh Education Action Zone and has derived considerable benefit from the initiative, particularly in the provision of a computer suite, in raising standards in mathematics through training, in links with industry and the introduction and implementation of a mathematics recovery programme. Opportunities for developing a strong partnership with other schools generally have not been as strong and the school needs to be more active in future programmes, particularly that for improving school management.
61. Overall, the school's finances are satisfactorily managed and short-term educational developments are supported through careful planning, although there are strengths and weaknesses. The amount received per pupil in the financial year 1999/2000 was high compared with the national average but included a significant amount of grant income. However, even without such grants, the income per pupil is still well above average. The school achieved a surplus of around three per cent during 1999/2000, but is forecasting a deficit for the current year through increased teacher training costs and buildings and grounds maintenance.
62. Management of the school's finances is the responsibility of the finance sub-committee of the governing body. The headteacher plays the major role in the management of the school's finances, but governors are provided with relevant cost figures to help them take decisions. Progress towards the targets in the school development plan and budget are reported by the headteacher at meetings of the governing body.
63. Day-to-day administration and financial management are good. The administrative officer maintains the accounts effectively and these are regularly reconciled with figures provided by the LEA. Purchase procedures ensure that value for money is achieved and there is a proper hierarchy of signatories for order, receipt and invoice. The school was audited in 1996. A number of recommendations were made and these have been put into operation. However, the school does not maintain an inventory of equipment and governors have not ensured that this has been done. The school receives grants under the standards fund and from the local Education Action Zone. Such grants are

administered and monitored by the headteacher and are properly used for the purposes intended.

64. The use of new technology by the school is developing rapidly and is proving beneficial in the day-to-day school administration. Tape recorders and headphones are being used well to enhance listening skills.
65. There are sufficient qualified and experienced teachers in the school. Most have additional responsibilities over and above their classroom duties. Teachers have job descriptions matching responsibilities. Staff new to the school are properly inducted and supported. Classroom assistants are well informed by the teachers and make a very positive contribution to pupils' learning, although in the largest classes, ancillary support is not always used efficiently. The administrative and premises staff provide good support and ensure the smooth running of daily routines and procedures. There are development interviews for teaching staff and appraisal also takes place. There is a good staff development policy and training priorities are systematically identified. Teachers review and give feedback to colleagues on courses they have attended and this ensures that maximum benefit is gained from such training.
66. The accommodation provided by the school is satisfactory. The classrooms are of a sufficient size and are well appointed. There is good additional accommodation in the well-equipped computer suite. The hall is large and multi-functional, being used as a dining room and for physical education. The external condition of the main part of the school building is good, a significant part having been recently re-roofed. Internally, there is some need for decoration. The condition of the kitchen wing of the building, which is the responsibility of the local education authority, is poor with peeling paintwork. This spoils the overall impression of the school. Outside there are two good playgrounds, both with sound grit-free surfaces. The playgrounds are marked out for number and letter games. There is no seating for pupils who want to chat rather than play. The infant playground is particularly bleak being an open area surrounded by high security fencing. There is a football pitch behind the school that is used for football and athletics. However the area is not securely fenced and is used by local people for dog exercising and other less attractive activities. The area is badly drained and very littered with rubbish and dog faeces. As such, its use is limited since a clean-up has to be undertaken each time it is used.
67. Learning resources are generally satisfactory overall in range, quality and quantity and are effectively used to support the pupils' learning. This is an improvement on the position at the time of the previous inspection. The provision of computers both in the ICT suite and in the classrooms has significantly improved and is now good. The only significant shortages identified are in the libraries, where updating and replacement of books is needed and, for the under-fives where there is no suitable outdoor play area and equipment.
68. The school is applying best value principles in its management and use of resources. It is at present giving satisfactory value for money as, although standards in English, mathematics and science have risen, the overall expenditure per pupil is high.
69. The leadership of the school does not react quickly enough to current issues and does not plan efficiently for the future development of the school. It does not encourage pupils to be participants in developing the school.

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

- (1) Review and develop the longer-term strategic development of the school by:
  - clearly outlining how attainment is to be raised further, especially for more able pupils;

- being proactive in longer-term initiatives and developments;
- planning for the future of the school to enable the present number of classes to continue;
- linking all developments clearly to financial implications;
- enabling all governors to participate in school improvement planning and especially in performance management issues.

(Paragraphs: 2, 42, 54, 55, 57, 63, 69)

- (2) Improve school behaviour management strategies, especially in the infants by:
- monitoring and evaluating closely the effect of the new behaviour policy;
  - seeking outside assistance to help in modifying the behaviour of persistent offenders;
  - involving parents more closely in improving the behaviour of younger pupils who find it difficult to conform;
  - responding consistently to the school system of rewards and sanctions;
  - reconsidering the Assertive Discipline Programme and looking afresh at alternative strategies;
  - participating in additional professional development in this area.

(Paragraphs: 15, 19, 20, 44, 86, 104, 110, 129)

- (3) Improve the cultural development of pupils by:
- planning a coherent programme for the development of multi-cultural understanding;
  - placing greater emphasis on the importance of the arts and music in the curriculum;
  - making greater use of local facilities and expertise to enhance the cultural development of pupils.

(Paragraphs: 40, 114, 117, 140, 144)

- (4) Offer more opportunities for pupils to take on responsibilities and develop independence by:
- giving more responsibilities to older pupils in caring for the youngest children;
  - involving pupils more in decision-making regarding short and medium-term developments within the school and in their own learning;
  - assisting pupils to develop independent learning strategies.

(Paragraphs: 17, 69, 106)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	44
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	23

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	7	45	41	7	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

<b>Pupils on the school's roll</b>	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	141
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	24

FTE means full-time equivalent.

<b>Special educational needs</b>	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	38

<b>English as an additional language</b>	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

<b>Pupil mobility in the last school year</b>	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	9
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	6

### Attendance

<b>Authorised absence</b>	%
School data	6.1
National comparative data	5.4

<b>Unauthorised absence</b>	%
School data	0
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
		1999	16	10

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	12	11	15
	Girls	8	8	10
	Total	20	19	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	77 (45)	73 (51)	96 (59)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	15	14
	Girls	8	10	8
	Total	19	25	22
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	73 (56)	96 (67)	85 (74)
	National	82 (80)	86 (85)	87 (86)

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
		1999	7	8

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	5	4	5
	Girls	6	4	7
	Total	11	8	12
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	73 (38)	53 (48)	80 (52)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	4	4	5
	Girls	6	4	7
	Total	10	8	12
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	67 (48)	53 (48)	73 (48)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (71)

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



### **Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	
Indian	
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	1
White	140
Any other minority ethnic group	

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

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

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

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

*There were no exclusions*

### **Teachers and classes**

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20
Average class size	24

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

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	50.25

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Financial information**

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	305,163
Total expenditure	298,724
Expenditure per pupil	2,118
Balance brought forward from previous year	9,362
Balance carried forward to next year	15,801

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	141
Number of questionnaires returned	33

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	67	27	6	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	61	27	6	0	6
Behaviour in the school is good.	45	45	6	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	42	42	9	3	3
The teaching is good.	55	36	6	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	52	36	6	3	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	79	21	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	72	21	0	0	6
The school works closely with parents.	45	45	9	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	67	27	3	0	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	61	33	0	3	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	33	33	18	3	12

### Other issues raised by parents

Parents who gave written information were very supportive of the school. One parent felt more able pupils could be given greater challenge.

## **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 reception class presents an environment where children are well prepared and make good progress towards meeting the Early Learning Goals for most children to reach by the end of the Foundation Stage. This is due to the good teaching evident in five out of six lessons. The majority of children enter the reception class with under-developed skills in communication, language and learning, mathematics, personal and social development, knowledge of the world and creative development. Many have a weak knowledge of the world around them. Although initial assessments are not yet completed, this is being confirmed by recorded observations. Children enter the reception class part-time mornings at the beginning of the year in which they are five. They are currently in the fourth week of term. At the beginning of October they become full-time, although some children would be ready before this and are already preparing for this by having a school dinner. There are fourteen children in the reception class, most of whom have attended the on-site pre-school Parent and Toddler Group one afternoon per week. This has enabled them to become familiar with the school and staff.

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

71. The majority of children enter the reception class with underdeveloped skills in personal and social development. They are showing good gains in this area and are moving quickly towards achieving the Early Learning Goals, because of the good teaching received.
72. Many are still at an early stage of personal development but the oldest children are now showing confidence and independence in their surroundings. Good teaching guidance has ensured they hang up coats, visit the toilet and walk into their classroom by themselves. Well planned short sessions for promoting opportunities for taking turns and speaking in a group, show that children are beginning to understand the code of behaviour. However, their short concentration span makes them lose interest without skilful teacher intervention. Many children play with each other in role play or in planned activities and good adult intervention enables children to join together in more shared play, such as when the teacher visits the home corner. This also helps them practice social conventions, such as setting the table and saying 'please' and 'thank you'. In smaller and larger groups, children are beginning to take turns and show consideration for each other, such as when looking for matching objects in the sand or making a contribution to an interesting colour collage. Adults treat children with respect and make good use of praise for achievements. They ensure good role models are provided, such as when everyone helps to tidy up the classroom and area. Staff already know the children well and this is aided by home visits by the class teacher and nursery nurse before they enter school. They sensitively encourage those less confident in a group setting to participate by giving opportunities to share their enjoyment of a particular activity, such as water play or be part of a group listening to a tape with headphones. Already, the children are learning a sense of right and wrong in a social setting through good quality guidance. By the end of the year, their personal development has been satisfactory.

#### ***Communication, language and literature***

73. Most children are at an early stage of fluency in language and vocabulary and some find difficulty in communication. While the majority speak in sentences, they may not know the names for everything they wish to talk about. However, children make good progress towards the Early Learning Goals through good teaching and, by the end of

the year, have made satisfactory progress and skills are appropriate to their age.

74. The oldest, or most able children are able to give brief accounts to the class about an activity they enjoy doing because staff use every opportunity to extend language through rhymes, songs, activities and stories. Good routines are established when the teacher explains how to use headphones and tape recorders and children respond positively by being able to sit and listen quietly with limited prompting. Effective promotion of listening skills extends children's concentration, for example as they listen to a sound from a 'magic box' and try to identify it. Using a puppet they learn to identify the sound of loud noises or voices and compare with whispers or quiet voices. They begin to understand a range of sounds that may be used at different times and quiet voices are used to communicate to a class group. Children enjoy stories read by the teacher from large books where they follow text and talk about pictures, or smaller books like 'Maisie', which reinforce counting skills. They hold books in the correct way and within a limited range of vocabulary they talk about the pictures and begin to recognise that labels 'tell you what the picture is'. A range of opportunities and resources is well planned for writing, but many children have difficulty in holding writing implements correctly although they enjoy the opportunity to try to write letters in dry sand or numbers with felt pen on a board. They are making good gains as they try to copy or write their name, have opportunity to 'make a book', or make lists in the home corner. Good management of the day and observation of the children ensures they are carefully guided to these opportunities.

### ***Mathematical development***

75. Good teaching through number activities and reinforcement in play situations contribute to children's good gains in mathematical development. On entry, many find difficulty in counting beyond ten.
76. Two-thirds of the group confidently count to ten, using a movement pattern to help in the activity. Good use of resources, which are appealing to the children, help them make pairs of objects and recognise that 'two' is the same amount whether large or small or different colours. Follow-up play activities, such as finding pairs of objects in the sand, ensure consolidation of learning. Creative activities promote skills of sorting and give opportunities for conversation as they find red circles and blue squares and become aware of shapes around them. Adult intervention in play, such as paying and receiving change to go swimming, or encouraging recording of the number of days holiday booked at the travel agents, encouraged children's understanding of the use of number in the real world. Children are beginning to recognise the passage of time with routine intervals for milk time. They are beginning to use language for size when building with blocks and experience full and empty when pouring liquid from one bottle to another, the narrow necks of some bottles enhancing their control between hand and eye. Children make good progress but, at the end of the Foundation Stage, attainment is below that normally expected.

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

77. Children enter the school with limited experiences of the world about them and many find difficulty discussing these. Good planning to extend knowledge of the environment, handling and constructing with new materials and incidental conversation during the activities contribute to the good progress being made by all children.
78. All know about their families and home environment, past and present, expressed by one child as 'me mum, me dad and the kids'. A few know about flying to holidays where hotels have swimming pools and most know about visits to Asda and Tesco, or that the circus has arrived nearby. Children respond with enthusiasm and behave well in opportunities to investigate colour. Good teaching and questioning means that children

develop language when experiencing the changes taking place, for example when mixing paint or observing the changing pattern of the seasons. Provision of working displays helps them continue their learning. Effective planning for activities which involve most of the senses, ensures a range of experiences is acquired through sensitive adult encouragement when playing in the water, wet and dry sand and creative or building activities. Children playing in the travel agents were prompted to think about questions to ask customers by the effective involvement of the classroom assistant during the play. This resulted in questions such as 'how many days do you want to stay away?' They then pretend to use the keyboard and make lists for the aircraft. After listening to a creation story from another culture in assembly, the whole class made a good attempt at reciting a prayer they were learning from their own faith. Children are making good gains in their knowledge and understanding of the world and at the end of this stage they are at a level normally expected.

### ***Physical development***

79. Children enter school at an expected level of physical development. In the playground they run and jump with reasonable awareness of safety but are not always aware of personal space. Satisfactory teaching and learning takes place within a timetabled lesson to develop safe climbing and balancing on a frame and limited use is made of ride on and push and pull wheeled toys. However, the lack of a dedicated outdoor play space inhibits enough development in these skills as well as limiting imaginative play. This is acknowledged by staff who have designs for a specific area but funding has not been made available. The limitations of the outdoor play areas have not improved since the last inspection, except for painted games on the well-surfaced playground.
80. Children are beginning to use tools carefully, with much adult encouragement. They cut paper for collage and stick with glue or paint a picture at an easel and begin to mix paint after lifting carefully with a brush. They practise finer movements with writing and mark-making materials and slot-in puzzles, and have opportunities to throw and catch balls. Planning for the development of physical activities is satisfactorily organised within the limitations of the environment. Children are managed satisfactorily to move about their environment safely with attention given to personal responsibility and care for others. By the end of the Foundation Stage, they have made satisfactory progress and their physical development is in line with that normally expected.

### ***Creative development***

81. Children have limited skill when they enter school, but show eagerness and enthusiasm to participate in the activities provided, which in turn, along with good teaching, help them make good progress towards the Early Learning Goals.
82. Good teaching is shown through the high level of adult involvement in exploration of colour, shape and texture and children talk readily about their activities. Questions to a child in the water play who was examining a water-filled bag containing different patterned sequins prompted a good extension of language. As a result children are beginning to explore language such as shiny, soft, furry, sparkly and at the same time build relationships with others in the group. They show great interest in the outcome of mixing two powder paints which make another colour.

83. They are beginning to sing songs and rhymes such as 'five little ducks' and the 'hokey-cokey' and with support explore movement songs such as 'There was a princess long ago'. Promotion of listening skills has enabled children to be able to identify loud sounds and quiet sounds in the use of voices and they make attempts to describe the sound made by two metal dishes inside the 'magic box'. When using dressing-up clothes, they begin to take on other characters when they visit the travel agent or shop. They are able to see possibilities in their role play for the creative development of thought, for example in changing the shop to become the swimming pool. At present, creative development is limited, although the children are making satisfactory progress.

## ENGLISH

84. At the end of both the infants and juniors, standards of attainment are in line with the national average which is a significant improvement since the last inspection. The results of national tests for both seven and eleven-year-olds show a rise in standards since 1999 when the school was gaining below average results in both key stages.
85. Pupils enter the school with levels of attainment which are below those expected for their age. By the time pupils enter the infants, much work has been done to raise standards and pupils have made satisfactory progress and developed skills which are appropriate to their age.
86. By the time pupils are seven, they are attaining at average levels due to the satisfactory progress they have made. This progress is due, in the main, to the well planned teaching which is taking place in literacy lessons but is adversely affected on occasions by the unsatisfactory behaviour of some pupils which is not positively managed.
87. Progress throughout the juniors is good and by the end of the key stage, attainment is in line with national averages. Again this is due to good and sometimes very good teaching within the structure of the literacy hour and to the timetabled opportunity for pupils to extend their writing skills.
88. Throughout the school, pupils' speaking and listening skills are average overall but some Year 2 pupils still have weak listening skills. The school is working hard in this area and effective use is being made of listening centres. Year 6 pupils listen well in lessons and make positive verbal contributions where they express their ideas coherently and confidently. They are able to discuss with a partner and in small groups and do listen to each other's views. The use of role-play which is being developed by the school is contributing to progress in this area, especially in Year 6.
89. Pupils' reading skills are in line with the national average. The Year 1 pupils all hold books correctly and are able to answer questions about the pictures. Most are aware that the text is related to the picture. By the time pupils are seven, most are reading words accurately and with some fluency. They are developing a range of strategies to tackle unknown words and are gaining in confidence to do this. They are beginning to appreciate the difference between fiction and non-fiction and the various styles of texts which they are reading. Throughout the juniors, pupils work with a good range of texts and expand their understanding of various genres. They are able to carry out research from a range of sources and talk happily about their enjoyment of reading and their preferences.
90. Pupils' writing skills have improved since the last inspection due, in the main, to the focus which the school has given to this area. Regular practice of the formation of letters, spelling and simple sentences with the Year 2 pupils and the opportunity to complete pieces of writing for the Years 5 and 6 pupils has resulted in standards now

being in line with national averages. Pupils in the juniors plan their work carefully and, as a result of good teaching, their styles of writing for different purposes and audiences are developing well.

91. The quality of teaching is generally satisfactory in the infants. Lessons are well planned and teachers are knowledgeable and understand the needs of pupils of this age and in the structure and organisation of the literacy hour. However, in some lessons in the infants, pupils' behaviour is not well managed and teachers do not consistently re-enforce the rules of good classroom behaviour. This results in lessons being constantly interrupted in order to restore calm and ensure that pupils are listening. In the juniors, teaching is usually good or on occasions very good. Teachers plan their lessons and choose interesting texts for pupils to work on. They provide good examples as to how to read and write well and challenge pupils with the tasks they set. Pupils work is carefully marked and much constructive feedback is given. Good levels of support are given to pupils with special educational needs and the delivery of the withdrawal additional literacy strategy sessions is of a high quality.
92. The curriculum for English is linked well to the National Literacy Strategy framework. Planning is regularly monitored by the co-ordinator who also has the opportunity to visit lessons. The co-ordinator has supported colleagues well in establishing structure and resources for teaching literacy. On-going assessment is used to plan lessons and there has been some analysis of test data to help target-setting. This aspect is still being developed and the collected data is not used effectively enough in this respect. Areas of weakness previously identified have been developed to good effect, especially in the area of writing. English is being used well in other subjects, especially in science in the juniors.
93. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory and good action is being taken to meet targets and to foster a shared commitment to succeed. The quantity and quality of resources is satisfactory overall and is being increased. The range and quality of books is improving and reference books and dictionaries are available to pupils. The quality and range of books in the libraries are in need of review, refinement and enhancement. There has been considerable improvement since the last inspection when standards were described as being below those expected for pupils aged eleven years.

## **MATHEMATICS**

94. 1999 National Curriculum tests in mathematics indicated that pupils aged eleven achieved well below the national average for those achieving the expected Level 4 and above and the same for those achieving the higher Level 5. In comparison with similar schools, they were also well below national averages. The results have improved over 1999 and unconfirmed test results of the year 2000 show a marked improvement. In the 1999 National Curriculum tests, pupils aged seven attained standards well above the national average for those achieving the expected Level 2 and above, and also for those achieving the higher Level 3. In comparison with similar schools the results were very high, in the top five per cent. Unconfirmed results for Year 2000 indicate that they have improved over the 1999 results. The trend is now upwards after falling. Inspection judgements based on lessons observed in the fourth week of term and examination of past work, indicates that by age seven pupils' attainment is above average and by the age of eleven it is at the expected level. This is an improvement on that reported in the last inspection. Better teaching and learning overall show that, by the end of the year when pupils leave school, attainment will be above the expected level.
95. By the end of the infants, pupils solve problems involving money and both higher and average attainers add and subtract to three digits and multiply and divide by five. They place numbers in the correct place between four hundred and five hundred and

accurately find fractions of whole numbers and shapes. Properties of simple shapes are recognised, but some struggle to draw right angles. However, they demonstrate knowledge of the degrees in a circle in relation to points on a compass. They read clocks in five-minute intervals and measure liquid volume. The lowest attainers all demonstrate similar work, but add and subtract with numbers to one hundred. All demonstrate an understanding of graphs using collected information. No work was made available from the previous Year 6, but previous work from the current Year 6, and examination of work indicates that overall attainment is at the national norm. Pupils working in problem-solving use words and numbers and add and subtract numbers to four and five digits. Higher attainers achieve above this. They add and subtract numbers to two decimal places and measure and record area and volume. They accurately read and measure dials and vertical and horizontal presentations. Angles are measured to at least 180 degrees and lines of symmetry are precisely drawn. Co-ordinates in one quadrant are interpreted and higher attainers solve problems relating to all four quadrants. They plot and record information on a variety of graphs, including pie charts, some of which are recorded on computer data-bases.

96. Pupils with special educational needs receive support and attain well towards the targets set for them. Pupils identified by the school as needing extra help have received support from the Education Action Zone last term. This has improved competency for some pupils and given confidence to others.
97. Implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy and familiarity through training with its content has helped teachers raise standards. However, resources for mental mathematics sessions are lacking and inhibit the pace of learning. There are strong cross-curricular links with information technology and design and technology, science and a limited amount in history. In each of these subjects, number is used well. In information technology, various graphs are presented, with pupils interpreting these accurately.
98. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall from evidence of the examination of work and pupils make good progress throughout the school. However, teaching observed in four out of five lessons was satisfactory and one was very good. In the very good lesson, the pace was high and pupils responded well to questions posed. They demonstrated their knowledge of working on the board. There was a very good working atmosphere where pupils listened well and showed enthusiasm for the tasks. The teacher demonstrated very good subject knowledge and knew the pupils well, so that work was well matched to their abilities, including the less and more able. Pupils made good progress in the mixed Year 5/6 class.
99. In the satisfactory lessons, teachers plan work well which is matched to pupils' abilities, but the work in the infants includes activities for some groups which do not match the targets for learning. With a more focused task, learning would have been at a faster pace. The need for clearer understanding and communication between the teacher and other adults slowed the pace for one group. Pupils are grouped by ability to promote new learning and respond with concentration and application to their work.
100. In Years 3 and 4, pace of lessons, particularly mental mathematics, were slowed when one or two boys disrupted the early part of lessons. However, pupils were managed well in activity parts of lessons and they made satisfactory progress. They applied themselves to tasks set and shared books and equipment for right angles. Good use is made of support staff for pupils with special educational needs, who make good progress in the juniors and satisfactory progress in the infants towards their targets. All teachers assess pupils' work and support them to make progress. Marking is satisfactory but words of explanation or guidance are inconsistent within the school and this adversely affects the learning.



101. All teachers promote use of mathematical language, which is displayed prominently on walls with number lines on worktables. Pupils generally respond well to invitations to participate in lessons by demonstrating their work or writing answers on the board. A particular strength throughout the school is the neat presentation of work recorded in books.
102. The co-ordinator has attended training during the last year and has provided six sessions of training for the staff in the National Numeracy Strategy. These have been well received. She sees the teaching, monitors planning half-termly and meets with staff to review any changes. She is involved with staff in analysis of results from half-termly tests and formal yearly tests from statutory and non-statutory sources. She identifies pupils needing help and supports work for individual plans linking with support from the Education Action Zone. Analysis of tests results have identified areas which needed addressing and this is still developing, especially in mental recall. Resources for mathematics are adequate, but individual number packs for pupils to use in mental mathematics are in short supply, particularly in the infants. The increased knowledge and confidence of staff in numeracy has led to higher achievement.

## SCIENCE

103. In the 1999 tests for eleven-year-olds, pupils attained standards in science that were broadly in line with the national average. When compared with similar schools, results were above average. In the teacher assessments for seven-year-olds, pupil attainments were below average. In the National Curriculum tests in 2000, all eleven-year-olds attained at least the expected Level 4, with 45 per cent achieving Level 5. All seven-year-olds attained the expected Level 2 with one-fifth of pupils attaining above that level. National Curriculum test scores from 1998 onwards show a significant rise in levels of attainment of eleven-year-olds.
104. On the basis of inspection findings, pupils' attainment meets the expectations of the National Curriculum for seven-year-olds and, at eleven, pupils are attaining higher than that expected nationally. At the time of the last inspection, attainment by eleven-year-olds was below the national standard and progress was unsatisfactory. Pupils are now making good progress and, as a consequence, are achieving higher levels. Progress is slower with the seven-year-olds but it is nevertheless satisfactory. The slower progress is a result of the behaviour of a minority of pupils, mostly boys, who disrupt the lesson. Lessons lose pace when the pupils do not listen and fail to respond to questioning. However, the majority of pupils make satisfactory progress with some, mostly girls, making good progress. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in the infants and good progress in the juniors.
105. The infants are making satisfactory progress in their understanding of life processes and living things and in investigations relating to materials and their properties. Progress is slower in understanding various physical processes. From the scrutiny of work, there is some lack of opportunity for pupils to plan their own investigations and to draw conclusions from evidence gained. The adoption of a new scheme of work is designed to increase the opportunities for this aspect.
106. In the juniors, pupils have many and varied opportunities to participate in investigations and to set up experiments to test hypotheses. They know how to conduct a fair test by controlling variables and pupils record their results with clarity. Conclusions are drawn from the test results and the hypotheses are confirmed or rejected. They have conducted some very interesting experiments, for example to find out if wood lice prefer damp or dry conditions or the effect of 'sticky bobs' sticking to dog fur illustrating independence and adaptation. A feature of the junior work is the high standard of presentation and the constructive teacher comments when the work is marked, these being designed to further progress understanding. However, pupils are not given

sufficient opportunity to develop more independence in delivering their own experiments in science.

107. Teaching of junior age pupils is good. It is hampered in the infants by a failure to manage behaviour effectively, especially when pupils are conducting investigations. This is the root cause of unsatisfactory teaching at this stage. In contrast, older pupils behave well and show good control. They are very aware of health and safety issues and look upon the opportunity to conduct their own experiments with eager anticipation. Throughout the school, planning is generally good and assessments generally well carried out. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of science have been enhanced through training courses, clearly targeted monitoring and the adoption of the Qualifications and Curriculum Agency (QCA) scheme, which helps to provide systematic development of knowledge and skills. One result of the in-service work has been the use of effective questioning to extend learning. Pace of lessons is generally satisfactory although it is unsatisfactory in the infants.
108. The science co-ordinator has been instrumental in improving the attainment and progress of pupils and in the quality of teaching, especially in the juniors. She has analysed test results and teacher assessments very carefully and this has led to increased emphasis on pupils conducting their own investigations, the long-term plan showing the expectation that all pupils will carry out an investigation very early in the term to emphasise the importance of this aspect and to provide a benchmark to assess future progress. Detailed assessments are made at the end of each unit of work with QCA tests regularly used as a means of referencing to the norm. The co-ordinator monitors regularly the teaching through lesson observation and gives feedback after each classroom visit. She has used local expertise well, for example the local authority advisory service and the local secondary school. A science curriculum evening was well attended and received by parents.
109. Resources are satisfactory and are used well by pupils. At present there is a need to review storage and methods of retrieval of the equipment.
110. The recent rise in standards is directly attributable to the adoption of a clear, well-defined scheme of work, increased teacher knowledge and understanding, the quality of monitoring, evaluating and analysing by the co-ordinator and an overall insistence on high standards. To raise standards further by the age of seven there is an urgent need to modify and manage the behaviour of a minority of pupils and then to add depth to the curriculum by providing opportunities for pupils to develop their own lines of enquiry through scientific investigation.

## **ART and DESIGN**

111. Standards achieved by pupils in the infants are in line with those expected for pupils aged seven and progress in learning is satisfactory. Attainment by pupils at the age of eleven is below that expected for their age and learning is overall unsatisfactory. This is a similar result to that of the last inspection. However, a new scheme of work has been introduced but is not yet fully operational.
112. Only one art lesson was observed during the inspection but evidence was collected photographs, teachers' planning and talking with pupils. Pupils aged seven have an understanding of mixing paints to change colour and painting a range of pictures which are sometimes connected to a theme such as Harvest. They have worked with textiles to produce a textured collage and are currently producing weaving on a plate design. They freely discuss their work and show enthusiasm for the range of materials they use to gain different effects. Current work on photography and looking through a viewfinder at changing distances has been enhanced by the use of the digital camera.

113. By the end of Year 6, pupils have experienced a wide range of collage making, with a variety of materials from paper, textiles and metal; some of this through a local gallery. They have made papier-mâché masks and decorated them and compared the use of natural and man-made materials, as well as sketching objects for still life pictures and looking at shading. However, they have limited knowledge of the work of artists to compare their styles or have opportunity to paint in that style. They have looked at pattern, for example in the carved wood of the church, sculpture in the open air using outdoor materials and based their own paintings on facial expression from considering those in a gallery. They have little knowledge of art or pattern from different cultures. The current Year 6 class has not experienced art this term up to the time of inspection. They have limited opportunities to initiate or discuss work. They do not keep a regular collection of drawings in a sketchbook.
114. On the basis of evidence available, the quality of teaching in the infants is satisfactory and pupils make satisfactory progress in their learning. The overall teaching in the juniors is unsatisfactory because the curriculum has not always been consistently taught through the classes at a level to match pupils' ages and abilities. This has led to unsatisfactory progress over time. There is very little evidence of art used to enhance the visual impact of the school except in the hall. However, a Year 5 lesson had good directed, well-paced teaching for object drawing and pupils were well supported with focused questions, which resulted in all pupils concentrating very well and developing new skills. Opportunity to discuss each other's work was missed although they viewed other's efforts.
115. Teachers in the infants plan for a range of experiences to which pupils respond with eagerness to improve their skills in mixing paint, using a range of drawing materials such as charcoal and pastel in making a miniature portrait and improving a drawing in a sketchbook. Good use is made of assistants and voluntary helpers, so that pupils can work outside the classroom and become more confident and independent. Teachers of the juniors plan to a format to develop appropriate knowledge and skills, but the guidance in the scheme of work is not fully developed to help teachers have confidence, knowledge and skills to plan to ensure art is taught at an appropriate level throughout the year. Year 3 pupils, however, showed an enthusiastic response to their work with photographs and works of art by famous named artists, such as Gainsborough and Hockney, as they considered relationships portrayed in pictures. Last year's Year 4 pupils demonstrated by their descriptions and enthusiasm that sound teaching had been given on perspective drawings of a street.
116. Pupils with special educational needs are fully integrated into all art lessons and make satisfactory progress in both the infants and the juniors.
117. The co-ordinator is not a specialist, but has drawn up a scheme of work in consultation with staff, which is not adapted to match the precise needs of the school and does not incorporate examples from non-western influences. Good use has been made of local art centres and visits to enhance the school's provision, which has been particularly valuable to extend experience of older pupils. There is no formal monitoring of teaching and learning or form of assessment. These were identified in the 1999/2000 school development plan as a future development. A proforma and agreed system has been identified but details have not yet been decided. Resources, which are at present just satisfactory, are to be extended to meet the requirements of the new scheme of work and a local loans service supplies some works of art, although these are not being used effectively. There has been no improvement since the last inspection.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

118. Attainment throughout the school is in line with that expected by ages seven and eleven and pupils make satisfactory progress overall with good progress in specific aspects.

Three lessons were observed and evidence collected from photographs, teachers' records, planning and talking to pupils. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. Improvement from the last inspection has been satisfactory.

119. Year 2 pupils demonstrate an ability to plan a task, make a drawing with simple labels and adapt it as they try out its practicality. Higher attaining pupils list the resources they need and label all the parts. With support they build vehicles with great precision using axles and wheels, taking care that each part fits and that pegs to hold the axles are secure. They understand that each part is important in the successful movement of the vehicle. Other pupils join construction parts and check for movement in a vehicle which may also pull trailers. Another group skilfully uses thread in weaving and explores a joining technique of sewing on buttons for decoration of their finished work. All have skills of joining different kinds of materials with the most suitable adhesive.
120. Photographic evidence and discussion with pupils from the mixed age group Year 5/6 pupils demonstrates an ability of Year 6 pupils to plan and build a model kitchen for which they had a nominal budget. This involves skills of designing for a purpose by using knowledge of how water outlets would be needed in a kitchen and the importance of safe positioning units. By using previously learned skills of manufacturing they constructed the kitchen. Pupils have an understanding of how the choice of materials used can affect the use or end product of an article by studying the materials and components used to make musical instruments. Through visits to a gallery they have had the opportunity to join metals under supervision for a topic on space. While pupils achieve good standards in some work they show limited knowledge in other areas such as food technology or work with design through information and communication technology. The work sometimes shows a lack of systematic build-up, failing to improve on previous experiences.
121. The quality of teaching is judged from examination of past work, planning, discussion and observation. This indicates that teaching is satisfactory overall with instances of good teaching within specific projects such as the designing and making of the kitchen in Year 6 and the work with axles and wheels in Year 2, and the designing and making of a new yoghurt in Year 4. A common planned format helps the teaching of knowledge and skills at an appropriate age and ability level using recent curriculum guidance but this has not fully been extended from the medium-term plan to meet the specific needs of the school.
122. In the good lesson observed there is clear sequenced planning of activities which was communicated to the class before the task and the teacher checked all pupils knew how to proceed. Prior planning for the task had involved pupils designing a yoghurt pot, thinking of the appeal to the purchaser and the contents it would hold. This had engendered great enthusiasm from the pupils who brought to school a wide range of ingredients which they readily shared. Pupils put great effort into their work and kept up a good pace. Time was given for evaluations which involve pupils in rehearsing their speaking and listening skills.
123. Teachers of the Year 2 pupils plan for a broad range of sticking, cutting and joining of materials including fabric. Teaching in Year 1 enables pupils to progress by joining card with paper fasteners and good use is made of this skill in Year 2 with links to literacy when pupils followed instructions in how to make a running man. All teachers plan well and pupils use a well thought out planning sheet for their designs. This has contributed to the achievements made by pupils. Aspects of this work have been promoted as good practice by the local authority.
124. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support to achieve at the same rate as other pupils. Those with difficulties with tools have adapted or physical support to aid success.

125. Satisfactory attention is given to instructing pupils in safety aspects of using tools and Year 4 are aware of health issues when making yoghurt. Pupils are generally managed well and most pupils behave well within lessons. Assessment is in its early stages of development. Teachers are beginning to keep records of attainment graded at three different levels in line with recent guidance but this is not yet advanced enough to inform planning. There are no portfolios of work of the expected standard.
126. There are two co-ordinators who monitor planning and evaluations of work as well as observing some lessons and giving advice. Since the last report the school has won a competition and received the prize of construction materials with motorised connections. Photographs of working models made with the help of staff from industry show a good link has been established. Resources are adequate but the trolley containing tools is inappropriately placed in the physical education store and there are no goggles for safety aspects.

## **GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY**

127. It was only possible to observe one lesson of history during the inspection. From this one observation and from the samples of pupils' work provided, standards are in line with national expectations and teaching and learning are satisfactory at both infant and junior stages.
128. Standards in geography are the same as at the previous inspection. They have improved in history in the infants. Standards are also in line with national expectations in geography generally throughout the school, although the behaviour of pupils in the one lesson observed in the infants indicated some standards below national expectations. Lessons observed in the juniors show that pupils are able to identify the various uses of water both in the home and across the world. They are able to use a range of resources to complete their research and the computer is used effectively as one means of research. Year 2 pupils show that they are able to conduct a traffic survey and use this information to support an argument on the effects of traffic on the environment.
129. Teaching observed in history is satisfactory overall, and in geography in the juniors it is good and in the infants it is satisfactory, with some good and very good teaching of older pupils. Lessons are well planned and challenge pupils well. Various tasks provided help pupils to develop their geographical and analytical skills and then present their findings to the rest of the class. Teachers' knowledge and understanding in these subjects are good and tasks set are well matched to pupils' abilities. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in lessons and very much a part of the overall lesson. Teachers' expectations of their pupils are high in terms of behaviour and work habits and generally, lessons are very well managed. Where teaching is less successful, this is with younger pupils where good behaviour and due attention have not yet been sufficiently established.
130. The scrutiny of pupils' work shows satisfactory coverage of the National Curriculum Programmes of Study in both subjects. Planning is based on the QCA guidelines and teachers' plans are monitored by the co-ordinator for both subjects. She has also had the opportunity to visit lessons. This, in turn, helps to ensure progress being made in these subjects throughout the school. She has led training for the staff and advises on suitable resources.
131. The curriculum in these areas is further enhanced by both visitors to the school such as an outreach department from Liverpool University and visits to local centres of interest including a residential visit for older pupils where field study experiences are organised.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY (ICT)**

132. The school's previous report found that standards in information and communication technology (ICT) were in line with national standards by the end of both key stages and progress was satisfactory. Since then the school has suffered serious vandalism and, on a number of occasions, computers have been stolen. Very recently a new computer suite has been opened and the room made secure. Standards continue to be in line with those expected nationally but progress is quickening as pupils become familiar with the networked systems now in place. At present it is satisfactory.
133. Pupils in Year 6 are confident in their use of information technology ICT. They log on to programs, know the functions of the various keys and correctly use menus. They write and amend text as required and have acquired a good repertoire of ICT terminology. Pupils are able to refine their work through change of font and size and interrogate programs. Many have used the digital camera to good effect. A few pupils have access to ICT outside the school and these pupils are making most progress.
134. Year 2 pupils use a pre-loaded word processing package to type short passages. They use design graphics, for example in designing garments and some very interesting work was observed on forces in science, which was linked to a program relating to pushing and pulling shapes. Computers are used well for graphical representation and pupils program bar charts in ascending and descending order. All pupils have their own floppy disk on which to save information and this is being used effectively to track progress when work is not printed out.
135. When the classes are large, as in Years 4, 5 and 6, there are too many pupils in a whole class for all to make good progress as the ratio of computers to pupils is 1 to 3. When the classes are smaller, as with the infants, pupils are making greater progress.
136. Teachers and classroom assistants are becoming increasingly competent in their knowledge and use of computers. They have been active participants in training courses, both in school and those run by outside providers and this training has led to a good fund of knowledge and skill. Work is well planned within the QCA framework and this is ensuring progress is being made. In classes with older pupils good use is being made of computers to record and interrogate data in other subjects, such as in Year 5/6 in geographical work relating to climate. Pupils with special educational needs are being well taught on how to use word lists and spell checkers and problem-solving programs are used to develop logical thinking and decision-making. Their progress is satisfactory.
137. The subject is being very competently led by the co-ordinator who has put much effort into building up a suitable range of hardware and software, in training staff in the teaching of ICT, observing teaching and in implementing the scheme of work. Assessment pro-formas have been introduced and lessons monitored with helpful feedback given to members of staff. He has a clear vision for future developments within the subject.
138. At present, it is natural that work is focused on the use of the computer suite. However, each classroom has a computer and printer but these are at present under-used. In addition, there is no evidence of any work in control technology and in writing programs. Little use is made of other technology, such as listening centres or recorded music.
139. The development of ICT has been considerably aided by funding received from the Leigh Education Action Zone initiative with the financial provision for hardware and software. Without this, the school would have found it very difficult to develop work to this extent in the subject. The school is now in a very good position to further develop

the work.

## **MUSIC**

140. Few lessons were observed during the inspection but, from the limited evidence available, standards throughout the school are just in line with national expectations with progress being satisfactory. In the infants the older pupils know a good range of songs which they sing with enthusiasm and tunefully. They are gaining a good sense of rhythm through the use of percussion instruments, which also provide a source of accompaniment to the singing. These instruments are played competently.
141. Years 5 and 6 pupils continue to develop their repertoire and their singing is of good order. They sing tunefully and with expression. The range of instrumental work, however, is limited to the range of percussion instruments available to the infants. There are no recorder lessons and at present only one pupil is learning a brass instrument. In this way their experiences are limited. Those with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in their acquisition of musical skills.
142. Pupils are given the opportunity to compose simple accompaniments and they are beginning to know, and use correctly, musical terminology, such as 'ostinato'. Little opportunity is provided for pupils to listen to recorded music, although there are plans to make this a regular feature of lessons and of school assembly.
143. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. A scheme of work was introduced in the summer term in which the QCA scheme has been adapted to the needs of the school. This is providing a framework for the progressive teaching of skills and knowledge. A number of staff are able to accompany work in the classroom and most have a sound understanding of notation. Teaching is enthusiastic and a good pace is set in lessons. However, insufficient demand is placed on pupils to aim for higher standards.
144. The co-ordinator, who took up the post during the last year, recognises the need for further development in this subject. He is now observing individual lessons and planning and is developing arrangements for assessing progress. He recognises the need for pupils to have greater access to recorded music of all types and to increase the range of musical instruments, especially those from non-European cultures. A governor continues to give generously of her time to play the piano in assembly and for hymn practices.
145. The school recognises the need to further improve standards and resources in music, which at present are at the same level as at the last inspection.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

146. At seven and eleven, standards and achievements are in line with national expectations and pupils make satisfactory progress. Pupils with special educational needs also make satisfactory progress. This is consistent with standards reported at the last inspection. Since the last inspection satisfactory improvement has taken place, particularly in the teaching.
147. By the age of seven pupils are showing well-controlled movement and are able to respond quickly and appropriately to rhythm. Their ball skills are improving, most being able to catch and throw with a satisfactory degree of accuracy. The pupils have the ability to work as a team and share aspects of the teamwork necessary to bring the activity to a successful conclusion. Their awareness of the use of space is good.
148. By the age of eleven pupils have developed very good control with ball skills in hockey

type activities. They perform basic gymnastic activities when they successfully link together floor and apparatus work. Many swim with confidence although a number have some way to go to develop effective techniques. All pupils at junior stage develop their skills in outdoor and adventurous activities through residential experiences in the Lake District in orienteering, mountain walking and canoeing, while around the school an orienteering course has been devised. Outdoor games activities are limited due to the unsuitability of the playing field, although volleyball, kwik cricket, rounders and tennis are played, some matches being against other schools.

149. Teaching is always at least satisfactory and occasionally good, especially in the juniors. All teachers have developed their knowledge and understanding of the subject especially in games skills through in-service training. They have a sound awareness of health and safety issues. Lessons are well planned and pupils' performance is being assessed in order to track progress. The QCA scheme of work has been adopted, is used throughout the school and is providing a sound framework for the subject. Appropriate methods are used to achieve learning objectives with attention being paid to enhancing the quality of the activity. Time and resources are used well, although older infant pupils are taking an overly long time to dress and undress, thus taking some of the time which could be spent on the actual lesson.
150. The co-ordinator has been in place for a number of years. She has been instrumental in providing a curriculum framework and is very involved in the provision of extra-curricular sporting activities. She monitors lessons and gives feedback to staff from observation in order to improve their performance. In addition, she regularly reviews assessment files and teachers' planning for physical education. She is aware of the need to link more clearly floor movement with gymnastics and to review the swimming plan in the light of the limited curriculum time for physical education.
151. The school hall is spacious and there is a very good range of both large and small apparatus and equipment. In some respects there is too much equipment taking up valuable storage space. Hard play areas provide a good surface for small games activities but the playing field is unsuitable, being ill-drained and used as a dog walk.