

INSPECTION REPORT

PENKETH COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Penketh, Warrington

LEA area: Warrington

Unique reference number: 111239

Headteacher: Mr Mark Hilton

Reporting inspector: Jacqueline Ikin
3349

Dates of inspection: 7-10 May 2002

Inspection number: 230724

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4-11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Coniston Avenue Penketh Warrington
Postcode:	WA5 2QY
Telephone number:	01925 723719
Fax number:	01925 721579
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr P Langford
Date of previous inspection:	June 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
3349	J Ikin	Registered inspector	Foundation Stage English Music Religious Education	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
9770	J Baker	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
7994	P Weston	Team inspector	Mathematics Art and design Design technology Special educational needs Equal opportunities	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
23958	C Balson	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology Geography History Physical education	How good are curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

The inspection contractor was:

Serco QAA Ltd
Herringston Barn
Herringston
Dorchester
Dorset.
DT2 9PU

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Penketh Community School is about the same size as other primary schools. There are 217 pupils, 110 boys and 107 girls, on roll. It is a popular school and many parents choose to send their children there because of the good standards that it achieves. Ninety seven per cent of pupils are of white United Kingdom heritage. Five pupils come from other heritages: black, Indian and Pakistani. The number of pupils entitled to free school meals is below the national average. This is not a totally accurate reflection of pupils' backgrounds and the socio economic circumstances of the area are mainly average. There is a wide range of attainment on entry but overall it is average and most children have attended some form of pre school provision. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs, including those with a Statement of Special Educational Needs, is below average. The school has recently been hampered in its work by difficulties in recruitment.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an improving school, which has very high aspirations for standards and achievement as a result of the very good leadership of the new headteacher, the strong support given by the governing body and the commitment and hard work of the staff team. A calm and welcoming atmosphere pervades the school and an effective climate for learning has been created. As a result pupils enjoy coming to school and are keen to learn. The school gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- The school achieves above average standards in English, mathematics and art as a result of some good teaching in the subjects and very good use of assessment and target setting procedures in mathematics and English.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because of the good support that they receive and the opportunities that they have to take part in all aspects of the curriculum.
- The leadership of the school by the headteacher is very good. There is a clear educational direction based on raising standards, and strong commitment from the governing body and the staff team.
- The provision that the school makes for pupils in the reception year is very good and ensures that pupils receive a very good start to their schooling.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to the school, they are eager to learn and their behaviour is good. This is as a result of the values of mutual respect that the school promotes, the very good range of extra curricular activities and the very good relationships that pupils have with their teachers.
- The partnership that the school has with parents and the wider community is very good and makes a significant contribution to the curriculum that the pupils receive and the progress that they make.

What could be improved

- The role of the subject manager so they have the information, the skills and the time that they need to move their subjects forward.
- Guidance to inform planning in subjects other than English, mathematics and science.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in 1997. Since then satisfactory improvements have been made. The curriculum information that the school provides for parents is now good. Most teachers are more confident in teaching the practical skills of design technology and science, although more needs to be done to help them develop investigative work in science at the higher levels. The role of the subject manager has been developed recently but limited progress has been made in this and in developing assessment in subjects other than English, mathematics and science.

STANDARDS

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

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

Key

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

Care needs to be taken when interpreting these figures because the school is placed in the category of similar schools that have below average numbers of free school meals. This does not give a totally accurate picture of the context in which Penketh Community School works.

The school's results for English are well above the national average and above the average for similar schools. The results for science are above the national average and about average when compared with similar schools. Results for mathematics are less favourable than in English and science. Although similar to the national average, they are below average when compared to similar schools because fewer pupils attain at the higher levels. The school has taken very effective action on this and is on course to meet the challenging targets it has set this year.

The results of tests taken at the end of Year 2 in 2001 were well above the national average and above the average for similar schools in reading, writing and mathematics. The school's performance in science teacher assessments at the end of Year 2 was very high in comparison to the national average. Over the last four years the school's average points score has improved at a similar rate to the national trend.

The findings of the inspection are that children make very good progress in the reception class and attain standards that are a little above average. Pupils achieve well in reading, writing, mathematics and art by the end of Year 2 and attain standards that are above average. They continue to achieve well overall in these subjects in Years 3-6 and attain standards that are above average by the end of Year 6. Pupils' achievement in science, design technology, geography, history and information and communication technology is satisfactory and attainment is average. There was insufficient evidence to make a firm judgement about standards and achievement in music and physical education.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils have a genuine enthusiasm for the school and enjoy their work as a result of the positive climate for learning that has been created.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is good in classrooms and around the school as a result of the high expectations that the school sets and the very good procedures for promoting good behaviour that are in place.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships within the school are very good. Pupils work as part of a harmonious community where all are included and valued.
Attendance	Very good. The attendance rate is above the national average. Pupils arrive punctually and lessons start on time.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The very good and often outstanding teaching in the reception class enables pupils to make a very good start at the school. They are very well prepared for the National Curriculum by the end of the reception year. In Years 1-6 the quality of the teaching in English and mathematics is good and the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been implemented well. Recent improvements in the teaching of higher attainers for mathematics, the use of ongoing assessment to inform the teaching of writing, and raised expectations of what pupils are capable of achieving, are making a significant contribution to the raising of standards at the school. Where weaknesses occur it is because work is not planned with sufficient precision to meet the differing needs of pupils in the class. This occurs mainly in subjects other than mathematics and English and results in pupils not always achieving as much as they could.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum that is offered to pupils is very good in the reception class and good in Years 1-6. Planning ensures that the National Curriculum is covered. However, there are inconsistencies in planning for the progression of skills in subjects other than English and mathematics.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and as a result they achieve well.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	There is good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development that makes a significant contribution to pupils' very good understanding of the difference between right and wrong, their role in the community and attitudes of thoughtfulness and mutual respect throughout the school.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares for its pupils very well and as a result they feel safe and secure from an early stage.

The school's partnership with parents is very good. They are encouraged to come into school and to be fully involved in their children's learning at an early stage. As result they give good support to the school's work. This has a significant impact on the progress that their children make, the standards that they achieve and their positive attitudes towards the school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides very good leadership and is supported well by the deputy headteacher. In a relatively short space of time he has given the school greater clarity of purpose, raised expectations and implemented effective systems to raise standards in writing and mathematics. There are weaknesses in the leadership role of the subject managers.

How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors fulfil their role very well and their combined strengths make a very effective contribution to the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has an accurate view of its own performance as a result of very good analysis of assessment data and the observations of teaching and learning by the headteacher and deputy headteacher.
The strategic use of resources	The school's educational priorities are supported well through careful financial planning and best value principles are applied well.

The accommodation is adequate for the needs of the curriculum and is enriched by attractive displays of pupils' work. There are extensive school grounds that are used well to enrich pupils' learning. There are sufficient appropriately qualified teaching staff and resources are adequate.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school helps the children to become mature and responsible. • The partnership that it has with parents and the way it works with them. • The way the school is led and managed. • The way in which the school expects the children to work hard. • The approachability of the school and the quality of teaching. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of homework that the children get. • The range of activities outside lessons.

The inspectors agree with parents' positive views of the school. Regarding their concerns, the inspection team judge the amount of homework that is set to be about right and the range of activities outside lessons to be very good.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. There is a wide spread of attainment on entry to the school but overall it is broadly in line with that expected for four-year-old children. Pupils achieve very well in relation to their starting points, and by the end of the reception year the majority attain standards that are a little above those expected for their age in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development and in their personal and social development. Pupils achieve well in English, mathematics, and art as they progress through the school to attain standards that are above average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. In other subjects of the curriculum pupils' achievement is broadly satisfactory and standards are average.
2. Standards in English are above average by the end of Years 2 and 6 and have been maintained since the last inspection. Pupils' skills as listeners develop well throughout the school, and they listen attentively and respond with understanding. Their speaking skills are satisfactory overall. Although they have a good command of the technical vocabulary required for subjects and a satisfactory general vocabulary, they do not readily make use of more sophisticated words and phrases and they use a limited amount of expression when reading aloud and during discussion and presentations. Pupils make good progress in reading and by the time they reach Year 2 read simple stories with accuracy and fluency and have a good understanding of what they read. By the time they reach Year 6 pupils have developed their personal preferences in their reading and can talk with some authority about their favourite books and authors. As a result of the school's focus on writing as an area for improvement, and greater accuracy in the analysis and use of assessment, and monitoring of lessons, standards have improved and more pupils now reach above average levels by the end of Years 2 and 6. They take care with their handwriting, and spelling and punctuation are increasingly accurate. They make good use of their knowledge of more complex adjectives to make their writing more interesting and they extend their sentences to develop ideas. They make satisfactory use of figurative language in their more formal work but there is scope to develop it further in their imaginative and creative work.
3. Standards in mathematics are above average for pupils in Years 2 and 6. These standards have been maintained since the last inspection for pupils in Years 1 and 2 and have been improved for pupils in Years 3-6. A significant factor in this improvement has been the introduction of setting, which has ensured that pupils attaining at the higher levels receive suitably challenging work. The improvement in target setting and the use of assessment has also had a significant impact. By the end of Year 2 most pupils have a good understanding of place value up to 100 and can use operations such as addition and subtraction accurately in the course of their calculations. These skills are developed to a greater extent as pupils move through Years 3-6, so that by the time they reach Year 6 pupils can calculate the equivalence of fractions and work accurately when using decimals and percentages. Pupils' knowledge of shape, space and measure is developed well throughout the school and pupils have a good understanding of data handling.
4. Standards achieved by the majority of pupils in science are average by the end of Years 2 and 6. This is similar to the last inspection. Pupils' results in national tests have improved since the last inspection because their knowledge and understanding of scientific facts, which are now good, have improved. Their skills in scientific enquiry are not developed to the same level. Although they have more opportunities to develop these skills since the last inspection, insufficient opportunities are given for pupils to ask their own scientific questions, and to decide for themselves how to find the answers.
5. Standards in information and communication technology are average by the end of Years 2 and 6. This is a similar judgement to the last inspection but it should be noted that national expectations of what pupils should achieve in ICT have been raised since then. As they

progress through the school pupils demonstrate increasing confidence with the functions of the computer. They review, modify and evaluate their work as it progresses when using the word processor and make good use of the Internet for finding things out.

6. Pupils' attainment in art is above average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. These standards have been maintained since the last inspection. There was insufficient evidence to form a judgement about standards of music. However, the quality of singing across the school was good and pupils displayed an enthusiasm and appreciation of music in the lessons seen. Standards in other subjects of the curriculum have been maintained since the last inspection and are in line with those expected at the end of Years 2 and 6 in design and technology, history, geography, religious education and physical education. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory rather than good in these subjects because work in lessons is too often pitched at the same level for all pupils and there are weaknesses in the planning and assessment of skills. As a result there is insufficient challenge for higher attaining pupils.
7. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress, in particular in their personal and social skills. They make good progress towards the targets set for them in their individual education plans, especially in English and mathematics, with the introduction of the literacy and numeracy strategies and other initiatives having a positive effect on their attainment. Pupils benefit from the strong commitment that the school has to inclusion and as a result have a positive attitude to their work and make good gains in self-confidence.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

8. Pupils' attitudes to work and to the school are very good. They are happy and have a positive attitude to school life. Their attitudes, coupled with their good behaviour, provide strong support for their learning. This is similar to the last inspection. Virtually all the parents who responded to the questionnaire state that their children like school. The pupils are keen to come to school and demonstrate a very positive attitude to learning. Some travel from outside the immediate area because of the high reputation of the school. Pupils know they go to school to learn and settle down quickly. They are attentive, follow instructions and are keen to participate in lessons. Most pupils work hard, although some higher attaining pupils could be given more challenging work in subjects other than English and mathematics. They are proud to show their work, but their general presentation is sometimes not as neat as it could be. Pupils respond particularly well when lessons have a good pace and the work is engaging and challenging. In these lessons learning is fun. For instance in a maths lesson as lower attaining pupils became confident in multiplying and dividing, for example £4.60 by 100, they were loath to move onto the next part of the lesson because they were enjoying what they were doing. They enjoyed the success of achievement and at the end of the lesson they had the confidence to talk and explain what they had learnt.
9. There is very good behaviour in most classrooms and around the school because of the high expectations for good behaviour that the school sets and very good procedures for promoting good behaviour that have been implemented. In a small minority of lessons the school's policy is not yet fully embedded and pupils become restless, particularly when work is not well matched to their needs. Pupils are happy to discuss their work with visitors and are consistently polite and courteous. They are quick to hold doors open, to step aside in corridors to let others pass, and to thank others for their consideration. Dining is a civilised social occasion and table manners are generally good. Playgrounds have a friendly atmosphere. Pupils report no concerns over bullying and have confidence in the teachers' ability to sort out any problems if they occur.
10. Relationships in the school are good and reflect the school's aim to create a caring community. Pupils get on well with each other and have an easy although respectful relationship with staff. When working in pairs or larger groups, pupils work very sensibly and productively. When given the opportunity, they enthusiastically help one another. During class discussions, pupils listen attentively to each other's opinions. This is characteristic of the school generally, where all are valued and there is full inclusion.

11. Pupils make the most of the many opportunities to show initiative in the running of the school. Extra responsibilities are accepted with enthusiasm and carried out conscientiously. These range from being class monitor in the reception class to more school-wide duties in Year 6, for example magazine editors and environmental monitors. The school has well developed plans to create a school council to give pupils of every year group a voice in school affairs. School clubs are very popular and well attended. Throughout the school, homework is taken seriously. By the time they reach Year 6, most pupils show a good level of maturity; they are interesting to talk to and capable of expressing their own opinions.
12. The attendance rate is above the national average for primary schools. Punctuality is good. Registration is prompt and efficient and sets a positive tone at the beginning of the day and lessons start on time. There have been no exclusions.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

13. The overall quality of teaching is good. It is very good in the reception class. In Years 1 and 2 it is good overall and in Year 3 to Year 6 it is satisfactory overall. Forty-nine lessons, or parts of lessons, were seen and in 33 of these teaching was good or better. Teaching in 13 lessons was satisfactory and in three lessons it was unsatisfactory. This is similar to the findings of the last inspection. The teaching of English and mathematics is good overall and some excellent teaching was seen in the higher attaining mathematics set.
14. Teaching in the reception class is very good and often outstanding. The teacher and nursery nurse have an excellent understanding of the curriculum for four and five year old children and of the ways in which young children learn best. As a result children are presented with a wide range of interesting and exciting activities that are relevant to their needs and which motivate them to learn. The teacher has high expectations of the children, knows their varying needs well and makes extremely skilled use of questions and discussions as she works with them. As a result children work at the edge of their capabilities and make very good progress. Children are very well managed, very good use is made of resources, and the maximum use is made of all the time that is available for learning. The teacher and nursery nurse work very well together to promote a positive atmosphere for learning and the relationships between the staff and children are of a very high quality.
15. Most teachers have a good understanding of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and use these well to give clear explanations, demonstrations and instructions. A feature of the best lessons is the way that teachers use this knowledge to demonstrate and inform the high expectations that they have of their pupils. A feature of the best mathematics lessons, for example, is the teacher's own mental dexterity which enabled him to challenge pupils' thinking and to help pupils develop their own ideas through skilfully sequenced follow up questions pitched precisely to match the individual needs of pupils. High expectations of what pupils are capable of achieving are evident in the uncompromising use of subject specific technical vocabulary, and good encouragement for pupils to think for themselves. In other subjects of the curriculum teachers' knowledge and understanding is broadly satisfactory. The school recognises that there is a need to update the skills of teachers in the teaching of gymnastics when the outside instructor leaves at the end of term. There is also a need to develop teachers' confidence in the teaching of music in Years 3-6 to lessen their dependence on the subject manager.
16. The quality of planning varies between subjects. Where teaching in English and mathematics is good, it is supported by planning which takes account of the different needs of pupils and provides an appropriate level of challenge for those who attain at higher levels. Learning objectives are clear and consistently shared with pupils so that they understand the purpose of the lesson. Planning is inconsistent in the other subjects of the curriculum and in the weakest lessons it is unsatisfactory because there is insufficient planning for pupils' different needs and abilities. This results in a lack of challenge for higher attaining pupils, and they then make satisfactory rather than good progress.

17. In the main, teaching methods are effectively used to promote learning in the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. There was good use of individual whiteboards in a Year 4 literacy lesson, for example, which enabled all of the pupils to be fully involved in the whole class teaching session and the teacher was able to check pupils' understanding of how to extend sentences by using connecting words. In a Year 2 session, pupils collaborated using their skills of information finding to search through literature to find interesting facts about Shirley Hughes. The best teaching of literacy was seen in the reception class, and here children formulated their own questions to find out about Goldilocks' motives for going into the woods, and to find out how 'Baby Bear' felt about having his food eaten and chair broken. In the best mathematics lessons mathematics teachers give very clear explanations and demonstrations, which result in pupils having a firm understanding of what they have to do. Opportunities for pupils to explain their mental strategies consolidate their mathematical understanding and help them to realise that there are a range of ways for arriving at a correct answer. In other subjects of the curriculum, for example, in science, teaching methods often required pupils to sit and listen and answer questions for overlong periods of time. Pupils then became restless because of a lack of opportunity to be involved in practical ways. Where teaching was unsatisfactory presentations and explanations were dull and uninspiring, and failed to meet the different needs and learning styles of pupils. The extra support in 'Springboard' sessions and booster classes for individual pupils who need extra help to enable them to succeed is proving effective.
18. In the majority of lessons pupils are very well managed and behaviour is very good. Most teachers make consistent use of strategies to promote good behaviour and the very good relationships that they have with their pupils contribute to a climate of mutual trust and respect which pervades most classrooms and sets a secure climate for learning. In the small minority of unsatisfactory lessons behaviour was unsatisfactory largely because of inconsistent application of the school's behaviour code, uninteresting presentations and a lack of match between the tasks that were set and the needs of pupils.
19. In the main, teachers make good use of the time that is available for learning and there is appropriate preparation of books and materials. Little use was made of computers in classrooms during the week of the inspection, mainly because of the loss of computers during a recent break in and also because some of the remaining computers were faulty. However, the evidence from pupils' work suggests that satisfactory use is usually made of them. The library is generally under-used by pupils in the course of their work because it is frequently used for small group work. The school is aware of this and there are plans to re-site the library to make it more accessible during lesson time. When pupils are given the opportunity to use their initiative and take responsibility they do this well. However, there are generally insufficient opportunities for them to ask their own questions, follow their own lines of enquiry and make choices and decisions about methods and resources in the course of lessons.
20. The quality of ongoing assessment is very good in English and mathematics and it is used well by most teachers to plan work to meet the differing needs of pupils. In some lessons pupils are given assessment criteria with which to evaluate their own work and this helps them to gain a deeper insight into how well they are doing. In some lessons the end of the session is used well by teachers to evaluate what pupils know, understand and can do as a result of the lesson. However, this good practice is not consistent between classes. The quality of ongoing assessment in other subjects is less secure where it is insufficiently used to plan for the different needs and abilities of pupils. Marking is satisfactory overall but insufficient use is made of written comments to help pupils know what they have to do to improve. Good use is made of homework to support learning, particularly in English and mathematics.
21. Teachers, overall, provide good support for pupils with special educational needs. Work is planned to match each pupil's individual targets and good use is made of support staff, when available. Support staff are timetabled carefully and well monitored and supported by the special educational needs co-ordinator. Sometimes this support is individual but on other occasions pupils are taught as part of a small group and this is good practice and aids inclusion. The school operates a streaming system across Years 3, 4, 5, and 6 for numeracy, and this provides good support for pupils with special educational needs. Staff know their pupils well and

all the work set is adapted to take account of the various attainment levels of the pupils, and to provide the right blend of challenge in English and mathematics. Every effort is made to ensure that pupils realise their full potential, recognising strengths as well as weaknesses.

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

22. The curriculum provided by the school is good. National Curriculum requirements are fully met, including those for religious education and collective worship. The coverage of the curriculum is planned consistently so that all pupils receive their entitlement and have access to a satisfactory range of learning opportunities. However, there are inconsistencies in the planning for the progression of skills in subjects other than English and mathematics. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
23. The curriculum map ensures that there are clear guidelines for teachers to identify the elements of the National Curriculum that will be taught over the school year in each class. The use of elements of nationally developed schemes of work for each subject has improved the quality of the curriculum since the last inspection. However, in subjects other than mathematics and English there is a lack of clear guidance on the progression of skills to support teachers in the planning of work for different needs and attainment levels of pupils in their class. There has been an appropriate emphasis on the time allocated to English, mathematics and science, and a positive response to the increasing demands of information and communication technology. Setting has been introduced for mathematics and this has had a positive effect on raising standards. The curriculum is enhanced by the teaching of French, although no lessons were seen during the inspection.
24. The curriculum provision is fully inclusive and in the main promotes equal opportunities well so that all pupils have access to the full range of the curriculum. The recommendations of the Code of Practice for pupils with special educational needs are effectively carried out. Teachers' planning takes good account of pupils with special educational needs whose individual education plans clearly provide for gains in skills, understanding and knowledge in subjects such as literacy and mathematics. Physical education lessons are adapted particularly well to ensure that the pupil with a physical disability can be fully included. In the best lessons observed the work provided for pupils with special educational needs was well structured and teaching assistants supported pupils effectively. In subjects other than English and mathematics, however, there is insufficient planning for pupils different needs and abilities and then there is insufficient challenge for higher attaining pupils.
25. The school provides religious education for all pupils in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus. The school complies with statutory requirements by providing a daily act of collective worship. Policies and schemes of work exist for all subjects and the personal, social and health education curriculum includes sex and drugs education. Arrangements for personal social and health education are satisfactory.
26. The national strategies for the teaching of literacy and numeracy have been given due emphasis and have contributed well to the quality of teaching and learning since the last inspection. Pupils are given good opportunities to write using a wide range of styles in other subjects of the curriculum. The good levels of behaviour and the very good relationships between teachers and pupils have contributed effectively to the quality of pupils' listening skills. There are limited opportunities for pupils to develop higher order skills of learning through independent study.
27. The schools' provision for extra-curricular activities is very good. Sporting clubs that are seasonal, such as netball, football and rugby, add to the range of other opportunities that include art, French, science and choir clubs. Pupils are given opportunities to learn to play musical instruments and outside musicians are brought into the school to enhance the provision of music. The school aims to give high priority to providing equal opportunities for all, and pupils from all levels of attainment and backgrounds are valued.

28. There are strong links with the community, and opportunities are welcomed to extend and enrich the quality of the curriculum. Parents, grandparents, a local potter and local industries work in the school regularly. Pupils are taken out of school to investigate the locality, and in addition to a good range of visits for classes, a residential experience is available for the older pupils every other year. Pupils benefit from a good range of visitors including authors, musicians and a potter.
29. The school has developed very strong links with other schools in the area including a partner secondary school. Planned visits by pupils, sharing of resources, and an exchange of teacher expertise have culminated in a successful science and information and communication technology programme. During the period of the inspection the head of science from a local secondary school visited to take an active part in an effective science lesson for Year 6 pupils.
30. Overall, the school makes good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. Through the religious education syllabus and linked assembly themes, pupils gain knowledge and insight into issues affecting values and beliefs that enable them to reflect on their own experiences and feelings. Opportunities to support pupils' spiritual development occur frequently. For example, there were occasions during the inspection, in collective worship, when the singing and the reading of a prayer written by the pupils brought a sense of spirituality that enabled the pupils to be reflective. Other examples of spirituality were experienced when 'Kum By Yah' was sung in French to an African rhythm, and in the reception class a sense of awe and wonder prevailed when the newly hatched chicks were brought into the middle of the circle of pupils and subsequently weighed.
31. Provision for pupils' moral development is good. The principles distinguishing right from wrong are promoted well and consistently by all school staff, who are themselves good role models. Behaviour expectations are firmly established in most classes, where the few incidents of inappropriate behaviour are responded to positively and consistently well. Pupils are reminded regularly of the need to show respect, be well mannered, helpful, caring and polite by all members of the school community. All pupils are well aware of the high expectations of the school's aims and behaviour code.
32. Provision for pupils' social development is also good. Pupils often work collaboratively in pairs or larger groups in lessons. They are encouraged to take responsibility for helping others. In consequence, pupils work very well together. Pupils are regularly given monitor roles for day-to-day classroom routines. This helps them see how each can play a valued and useful part in the running of the school. Pupils in Year 6 gain a good understanding of the idea of responsibility, for example, by preparing the hall for assembly, and taking an active part in supporting younger and disabled pupils at lunchtimes. Adults and children relate very well to each other. Residential visits give pupils opportunities to relate to each other and to adults in a less formal context. Regular fundraising for charity at home and abroad helps pupils to see that they have responsibilities towards a wider society. Pupils are challenged to work independently as individuals or groups, and respond positively to opportunities to accept responsibility; for example, when they choose for themselves topics that they wish to research.
33. Provision for pupils' cultural development is good. Pupils have appropriate opportunities to learn about Western European traditions and they develop an understanding of the diversity of other cultures. A good range of visits and visitors has provided pupils of all ages with a good awareness of their own culture. They visit museums and places of interest. Multi-cultural development is promoted through literacy lessons, studies of contrasting communities in geography and the study of other world faiths in religious education.
34. Good curriculum provision is made for pupils with special educational needs. All these pupils are totally included in all aspects of school life. They are given as many opportunities as other pupils to be involved in all areas of the curriculum and particularly in developing their skills in English and mathematics. Teachers plan well for these subjects and tasks are matched to targets in individual education plans.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

35. This is a very caring school which provides good support for pupils' personal development as well as very good provision overall to ensure pupils' welfare, health and safety.
36. The good personal support and guidance pupils receive makes a significant contribution to their personal development. Looking after pupils' personal and emotional needs is the responsibility of class teachers who, together with support staff, know their pupils very well, are sensitive to their needs and are thus able to provide good personal support and guidance. The very good relationships between pupils and staff encourage pupils to raise any concerns they may have, knowing that they will be dealt with sympathetically.
37. Child protection procedures are good. The designated person is appropriately trained and all staff have a copy of the child protection policy, together with other guidelines. This ensures that they are fully aware of the child protection procedures and their importance. Also, there is very good liaison with other agencies.
38. Procedures for promoting good behaviour and eliminating bullying are very good and are consistently applied by all staff, including classroom assistants and lunchtime supervisors. Each class discusses and agrees class rules that are displayed in the classroom together with the school's 'Golden Rules'. Year 6 go one stage further and have drawn up a formal 'Y6 Contract' between the teacher and the pupils which is signed by both parties. Throughout the school the emphasis is on making pupils aware of the standards expected and reinforcing this by praising good behaviour. In addition, good behaviour is promoted well by a wide range of rewards. These include stickers, certificates and rewards in kind such as sweets and pens. A system of class reward points has been introduced recently to encourage collective responsibilities for behaviour. A range of sanctions of increasing severity is available to deal with instances of misbehaviour.
39. Procedures for promoting and monitoring attendance are good and parents are very diligent about reporting absences, which results in no unauthorised absence. Timely reminders are sent to parents about the importance of regular attendance; for example, during national test week. Also, awards are made for 100 per cent termly and annual attendance.
40. Health and Safety procedures are good and ensure a safe working environment. All issues are recorded on risk assessment forms and action is taken with appropriate urgency. Annual checks of the premises are carried out by the headteacher and all issues are recorded and reported to the governing body. The next annual inspection is due this term, when the headteacher will be supported by the health and safety governor, who has considerable expertise in this area. The school is very proactive in its approach to health and safety; good safety notes have been prepared for specialist areas such as sport and physical education and pupils are supervised at all times on the new playground climbing equipment. The caretaker is very diligent in his duties and checks the grounds and premises every morning to ensure the safety of the pupils.
41. Pupils' personal safety, personal hygiene and general well being are covered very well through the personal, social and health curriculum, which is well supported by outside speakers such as the police, representatives from the fire service, the school nurse and theatre groups. A 'healthy living' week is held during the summer term and parents are sent the lunch menu weekly to enable them to select a healthy and balanced diet for their children.
42. Assessment is satisfactory overall. There is a good assessment policy that identifies procedures, assessment techniques, recording, reporting, planning, monitoring, review and evaluation. Comprehensive procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress in English, mathematics and science are in place throughout the school. Assessments are carried out regularly and the data is analysed and used well to track pupils' performance, monitor progress and to set realistic targets for future attainment. Assessment in other subjects lacks clarity and

consistency and little use is made of it to inform planning for pupils' different needs and abilities. Although all pupils' work is regularly marked there is no consistency of approach, and most marking does not identify what pupils must do to improve.

43. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported by their teachers and staff. Teachers plan work well to meet pupils' needs in English and mathematics, although this is not always so apparent in other subjects of the curriculum. All support is well planned to take account of the provision outlined in pupils' statements and individual programmes of work. There are good systems set up for early identification of barriers to learning that prevent any pupil from participating fully in the school activities. For example, extensive changes were made to the building to ensure access and egress for the physically disabled pupil. The school makes good use of a range of visiting specialists. There is an effective and consistent procedure for placing pupils on the register for special educational needs, which is known to staff and ably implemented by the special needs co-ordinator in collaboration with class teachers. Pupils' targets are reviewed regularly and when necessary further advice is sought via relevant agencies. All experience equal opportunities in a very caring environment.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

44. The partnership with parents is a strength of the school and makes a very significant contribution to pupils' attainment and progress.
45. Parents have extremely positive views about the school. All would feel comfortable approaching the school with problems, feel that the school expects their children to work hard, works closely with parents, is well led and managed and is helping their children to become mature and responsible. Virtually all parents are satisfied with all other aspects of the school with the exception of the amount of homework. The inspection team fully supports the parents' positive views but considers the use of homework to be good and appropriate to pupils' ages.
46. Parents are very well informed about the school through the prospectus, the governors' annual report, excellent, well presented, weekly newsletters and other correspondence. Information to parents about the curriculum is very good with very good information for each subject given in the prospectus and details of work to be covered each term given in curriculum charts sent to parents. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection. Also parents receive a range of brochures and guidelines on how to help their children. In addition, they are offered training in school time on writing and reading.
47. Information to parents about their children's progress is very good overall. Parents have the opportunity to discuss their children's progress at termly consultation evenings and staff are available for informal discussions at other times. Consultation evenings include discussions about attainment levels, targets and issues relevant to that particular term - for example, in the autumn term, how a child has settled in - and homework arrangements are discussed. Annual reports are good overall, and are very good in Year 6.
48. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are kept fully informed and involved in monitoring and supporting the progress of their children. Parents of pupils with a statement are always invited to attend review meetings. Termly meetings with parents enable staff to share current individual educational plans and reports with parents.
49. Parents make a very good contribution to their children's learning at school and this has a very significant effect on attainment and progress. All classes receive regular help from parents and in some classes from grandparents. Parents also provide very good help on trips and visits and help with swimming and football. In addition, parents raise substantial funds for the school through the Parent Teachers' Association as well as organising social events such as pupils' discos.
50. All parents have signed the home/school agreement and the vast majority support their children with their homework. Parents' excellent attendance at parents' evenings and other events

demonstrates to their children the importance they place on education. This helps to instil good attitudes to the school.

51. The school has very good induction procedures, which ensure that children make a happy and successful start to school. Home visits are a very important part of this and an excellent start to building the very good relationship that exists between parents and the school. Children make a preliminary visit in the summer term and there is a staggered intake in the autumn to ensure that they settle in well. Workshops in which the reception teacher and nursery nurse demonstrate the work that children will be doing in school are highly effective in involving parents in their children's learning at an early stage.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

52. The leadership and management of the school are good overall. The headteacher provides very good leadership. He has been in post for sixteen months and in a relatively short period of time has given the school a clear educational direction, in which he takes a proactive part. He has won the respect of governors, staff and parents and secured a shared commitment to improvement. As a result, the school's capacity to succeed is very good and its values and aspirations for high achievement are increasingly being reflected in its work. The deputy headteacher gives very good support and together they form an effective team, using their combined strengths and expertise for the benefit of the school. There is good encouragement for members of staff at all levels to take responsibility and when they do they know that their contribution to the school is appreciated. However, the leadership role of subject managers is not yet sufficiently developed.
53. Governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities very well and make a substantial contribution to the effectiveness of the school. They share a wide range of experience and expertise and use these combined strengths well for the benefit of the school. Committees and meetings are well organised and attended and issues are rigorously debated prior to decisions being made. Governors are appropriately involved in monitoring and in school development planning. They have a clear view of the school's strengths and weaknesses and of the challenges that it faces and use this knowledge well to inform their work. For example, they recognised the need to raise standards at the school and used this knowledge well when they appointed a new headteacher. They now rightly recognise that, having given him an appropriate length of time to settle into his post, they need to work together to formalise a long-term vision and strategic intent for the school.
54. The management of the school is satisfactory overall as a result of a number of new initiatives aimed at improving standards. The headteacher and deputy have carried out checks on teaching and learning through a programme of lesson observations. These have involved thorough feedback, both oral and written, to individual teachers and included useful pointers on how they can improve. A particular focus on writing has been effective in improving the quality of teaching in the subject. Both the headteacher and the deputy recognise that more work needs to be done to ensure that teaching is consistently satisfactory or better in all subjects. Assessment data, which gives a comprehensive picture of the progress and achievement of every child in the school over the longer term, has been collated. The results are carefully analysed and used well to set targets for individual pupils and to inform future developments. Individual test papers have also been analysed to identify those elements of the subjects in which pupils make the most mistakes. As a result of this work the school has pinpointed what it needs to do to improve standards further in English and mathematics. Governors ensure that they are well informed about the school, not only through the headteacher's reports but also by visiting the school regularly, talking with staff and observing lessons.
55. Procedures for development planning are good and ensure that everyone understands the main priorities for improvement, the time schedule and their part within school development. Clear foci for improvement are identified as a result of consultation with staff, governors, and parents and actions are carefully planned so that they are manageable and properly funded. There are very

good links with the budget and success criteria and arrangements for checking progress are clearly identified.

56. Although there have been some improvements in the role of the subject manager since the last inspection, important weaknesses remain. The headteacher has initiated a number of improvements and all subject managers have developed action plans for their subject and most have a clearer understanding of their role. However, he has inherited an inefficient management structure which leads to a duplication of time, effort and resources and which limits opportunities for him to gain a clear overview of the whole curriculum. Subject responsibilities are sometimes shared between two people, for example, and although each person has a view about the subject in relation to the age group that they teach, neither has a sufficiently complete overview of standards, teaching and learning throughout the school to accurately inform planning for future development. Some subject managers still feel uncertain about their role and lack the confidence and the time that they need to carry it out effectively. The headteacher carries a heavy burden of subject responsibility, including mathematics throughout the school and English in Years 3-6. Although he has managed his time extremely well and used these arrangements effectively to drive up standards and to set a good role model for subject management, he has inevitably had less time to spend on developing a whole school overview. These arrangements, therefore, require review.
57. The management of the provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Good use is made of assessment data and test information to identify pupils with special educational needs and to set targets for individual needs. These plans are of good quality and contain targets that are frequently practised and reinforced. Provision for pupils with special educational needs permeates the school's organisation and is a good example of staff's commitment to inclusion.
58. There is a sufficient number of appropriately qualified teachers who collectively have the expertise to meet the demands of the curriculum. However, these strengths are not fully utilised because there are currently insufficient opportunities for them to share their individual strengths so that they learn from each other. This has resulted in teachers in Years 3-6 being over reliant on the music co-ordinator for teaching music and the physical education instructor for teaching gymnastics. The excellent teaching skills of the reception teacher are also under-utilised for the benefit of other teachers in the school. The school's procedures for performance management are very good and are used well to promote the professional and personal development of staff. Most staff feel that they are given good encouragement and support in the development of their roles but recognise that they need to develop greater expertise and confidence to promote improvements in their subject areas. The school has four qualified teaching assistants who work in close partnership with teachers and make a significant contribution to pupils' learning and progress. The school has recognised the need to develop more rigorous induction procedures for new members of staff.
59. The budget is very well managed and the principles of best value are applied well so that all the monies that are available to the school are directed towards obtaining the best provision for the education of the pupils. The school makes good use of all its allocated funds for their designated purposes and links them closely to its priorities for improvement. The school augments its income effectively by using funding from the Parent and Teacher Association, which raises significant amounts of money to support the school. The school's accommodation is good and recent improvements have resulted in good access for pupils with a physical disability. Improvements to information and communication technology provision, including the computer suite, are having a significant impact on the standards that are being achieved in the subject, although the loss of a number of computers in a recent break-in was still having an impact on computer use in classrooms at the time of the inspection. Resource provision is satisfactory overall and resources for design technology and science have been improved in line with the recommendations of the last inspection. The school has extensive grounds, which it uses well to support the curriculum, particularly in physical education and science. The provision of a mathematics garden promotes a wealth of opportunities for teaching the subject in

a practical way and the recent provision of large outdoor climbing and play equipment is already enhancing opportunities for pupils to develop their physical skills.

60. Given the lower than average unit cost for each pupil and the good progress that they make in the basic skills of literacy and numeracy, the school gives good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

61. In order to build on the work that has already been done and to improve standards further the headteacher and governors should:

1. Improve the efficiency and effectiveness of subject management by:
 - ensuring that individual subjects are managed by one person;
 - ensuring that subject leaders have the skills and the time that they need to monitor, evaluate and develop their subjects;
 - developing secure systems to give the headteacher and governors an overview of standards and the quality of teaching and learning in all subjects of the curriculum.

(See paragraphs 52, 54, 56, 57, 82, 105, 110, 114, 124 and 129)

2. Improve the progression of skills in non core subjects by:
 - clarifying the specific skills that need to be learned;
 - improving the assessment and planning of work to match the different needs of pupils;
 - systematically promoting opportunities for pupils to acquire cross curricular skills and the skills of independent learning.

(See paragraphs 4, 6, 16, 17, 19, 20, 23, 32, 97, 110, 113, 117, 120, 128 and 135)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	49
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	20

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	6	7	20	13	3	0	0
Percentage	12	14	41	27	6	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	217
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	9

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR– Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	14

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	4
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	3

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.5

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1

National comparative data	5.6
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National comparative data	0.5
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Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	17	13	30

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	16	17	15
	Girls	13	13	13
	Total	29	30	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	97 (94)	100(90)	93 (97)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91(90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	16	15	17
	Girls	13	13	13
	Total	29	28	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	97 (97)	93 (94)	100 (100)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	12	17	29

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	11	12
	Girls	16	12	16
	Total	28	23	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	97 (91)	79 (85)	97 (100)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	10	11
	Girls	13	11	13
	Total	23	21	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	79 (91)	72 (85)	83(97)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	2
Indian	2
Pakistani	1
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	182
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes**Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y7**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.7:1
Average class size	31

Education support staff: YR– Y7

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	92

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2002
	£
Total income	448,376
Total expenditure	448,387
Expenditure per pupil	2,066
Balance brought forward from previous year	10,969
Balance carried forward to next year	10,958

Recruitment of teachers

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out

217

Number of questionnaires returned

48

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	54	38	8	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	52	46	2	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	53	45	0	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	33	50	12	4	0
The teaching is good.	67	31	2	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	60	33	6	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	75	25	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	77	23	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	50	50	0	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	56	44	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	62	38	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	64	26	6	0	4

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

62. Children are admitted to the reception class in the September of the school year in which they become five. Induction arrangements are excellent and include home visits by the reception teacher and the nursery nurse, and opportunities for the children to visit the school before they start. There is a range of very well organised opportunities for parents to find out about the school and the curriculum through workshops and meetings. Most children have attended some form of pre-school provision prior to starting school, including local pre-school playgroups. The school has satisfactory links with these groups.
63. There is a wide spread of attainment on entry to the reception class, but overall it is broadly in line with that expected for children of a similar age. Children make very good progress in relation to their starting points whilst they are in the reception classes, to reach standards that are a little above those expected for their age by the end of the reception year. The majority of children are well prepared for the curriculum for Year 1 and 2 pupils. This is because of the very good and often outstanding teaching they receive. The school provides a very well planned curriculum, which is soundly based on the national guidance for young children and ensures a good balance between teacher directed and child initiated activities. There is an appropriate emphasis on the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. They are taught in exciting, interesting and practical ways which motivate children to learn.
64. Very good use is made of the classroom, corridor and an adjacent kitchen area to create the rich environment for learning that young children need. A secure outdoor area augments the indoor accommodation. The reception teacher and nursery nurse work very closely together and are highly skilled in working with young children. Young children thrive on the care and education that they provide.

Personal, social and emotional development

65. Children have a wide range of personal, social and emotional skills on entry. As a result of the very good teaching they receive the majority of children develop a sense of belonging and gain in confidence when speaking in their class group. They develop a good awareness of themselves in relation to others, learn to respect the views and feelings of others and learn to form good relationships with their classmates. Children are fascinated by the range of interesting activities that are provided, and this helps them to feel secure and happy in their surroundings and develop positive attitudes to learning from an early stage. They begin to learn the language of feelings and emotions when discussing the motives of characters in the stories they read. For example, the children asked another child, who acted the part of the baby bear in the Goldilocks story, about how he felt when he found that his chair had been broken and his porridge eaten. They learn to show sensitivity and care through working with animals; for example, in handling day old chicks and watching them grow. The development of children's social skills is good. Children are encouraged to use the conventions of courtesy and politeness from an early stage and activities that help them to get to know each other, both formally and informally, are encouraged. The teacher models the language of social conventions and consistently encourages co-operation and politeness through a range of activities that promote collaboration through play and talk. There are very good opportunities for children to make informed decisions and choices about the activities in which they will take part. Pupils' ideas and suggestions are taken seriously and acted upon. For example, one child wanted to make a mask, and he was encouraged to do so. Pupils behave very well because of the atmosphere of mutual trust and respect that has been created in the reception class, the high expectations that the teacher and nursery nurse have of them and the clear and consistent routines and procedures that have been established. Children develop a very good understanding of the differences between right and wrong, and develop a good understanding of the consequences of their actions on others, because of the very good opportunities to discuss moral issues as they occur naturally in the curriculum. For example, they consider whether Goldilocks was right to go into the woods on

her own and to go into the three bears' house, as well as considering the effects of her long absence on her mother.

Communication, language and literacy

66. Assessments of children's early literacy skills, made during their first term in the reception classes, show that their performance is generally at about the level expected for children of this age. As a result of good teaching, children make very good progress in relation to their starting points, learn well and attain standards that are a little above those expected for their age by the end of the reception year. Most children develop their vocabulary so that they can name and classify objects, make increasingly elaborate statements and retell their experiences. They listen carefully during whole-class discussions and respond appropriately to instructions. Higher attaining and more confident children are keen to answer questions and also ask questions of their own, or pass comments. For example, in a whole class drama session based on the story of Goldilocks and the Three Bears they asked sensible questions of Goldilocks, her mother and the baby bear and received well-articulated answers from the children playing the parts. They expressed their ideas clearly and well when the teacher asked them questions. Teachers are extremely skilful in drawing the more reticent children into discussions.
67. All children enjoy sharing stories and poems with their teacher. They show a good understanding of the elements of a story, follow the events as the plot unfolds when they listen to stories being read aloud and remember the sequence of actions. They look closely at the illustrations and can use them to find out more about the characters and their feelings. As a result of these experiences children learn that pictures and words are symbolic ways of preserving meaning. The higher attaining children are already very aware of how books work and turn readily to them, and a minority read simple stories independently. Evidence from pupils' records show that the majority of children develop a satisfactory awareness of phonics, which enables them to accurately read words in simple texts by the end of the reception year.
68. By the end of the reception year most can form their letters accurately and write their own name neatly. Many are able, with help, to compose, and write down short simple statements and sequences of ideas. Higher attaining children can use their knowledge of letter sounds to build simple three-letter words, and make very plausible attempts at spelling the words they need to convey their own ideas and confidently write their own simple stories, often of considerable length, using their emerging writing skills.
69. The teacher has very high expectations of the children and she capitalises on young children's natural aptitude for language acquisition by talking to them in both French and German at appropriate times. The children respond well to this and can answer the register in French and German, respond to simple questions in French and also sing a small number of French songs.

Mathematical Development

70. When children enter the school at the age of four, their mathematical development is at about the level expected for their age. As a result of very good teaching they achieve well so that by the end of the reception year the majority attain levels that are a little above those expected for their age. They confidently count to at least ten: some can count beyond that and are quite secure in combining numbers of objects and counting accurately how many are in the full set, recognising that the last one in the count is the same as the number in the set. Most children can recognise numerals from one to nine and write them accurately. By the time they reach the end of the reception year they can talk about how they arrive at the answer to number problems such as 'one more' or 'one less' than a given number up to twenty. They begin to relate addition to combining two groups and subtraction to 'taking away' and use their understanding to work out how many are present and how many absent during registration. They use everyday words to describe position and direction, for example when following and controlling the movements of programmable toys. Most children can identify simple two-dimensional shapes such as a square, circle and triangle.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

71. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is a little above the levels expected for their age by the end of the reception year. Children achieve well as a result of very good teaching that ensures a wide range of opportunities for learning, including formal input, practical play experiences and visits to places within the locality and further afield.
72. Children know about and can identify some of the features of living things and know something about how they develop and change as they grow. They have observed chicks hatching, handled them, felt the texture of the down and watched them move. They have looked closely at frogs in a pond, observed the development of frogspawn and tadpoles and can describe the gradual change into frogs. They have visited a farm and seen newborn lambs, and watched them being fed. There is excellent encouragement for pupils to observe the differences and similarities between the changes that they observe in living things and the way in which they live. The children have investigated materials and found out something about their different properties when building houses made of different materials for the three pigs, and finding out which was the strongest.
73. They demonstrate good standards for their age when making models from construction equipment and naming the objects that they make, evaluating them as they go and making appropriate changes to improve their original designs. They have also made toy play equipment, such as swings and slides, using a range of appropriate materials suitable for the purpose. They follow instructions carefully and demonstrate good hand and eye control when controlling images on screen using a mouse. They are also able to control a programmable toy by giving it the correct instructions for the direction and distance they want it to travel.
74. The children learn something about change over time by listening to stories such as 'The House Near the Sea', when, for example, they are able to deduce that the house is old because it is in a dilapidated state and has been neglected. They then anticipate how it will change over the course of time when the new owner moves in. When following the story they also identify features of the landscape such as 'hill' and 'wood'. They learn something about the features of different places by visits in the locality and further afield. In the visit to Walton Hall, for example, they followed routes and marked them on simple maps of the grounds.

Physical development

75. The physical development of children is broadly average. They achieve very well and attain standards that are a little above those expected by the time they reach the end of the reception year as a result of the very good teaching they receive and the regular opportunities that they have to develop their co-ordination and physical skills. They benefit from suitable opportunities to develop their manipulative skills when using construction toys, and when painting, drawing, sewing and cutting. Appropriate use is made of the hall for physical education, which involves the children in more formal activities in preparation for the curriculum in Year 1. There are regular opportunities to work and play in the outdoor area where children develop the co-ordination of their larger movements by playing on tricycles and other large toys. This also contributes to their understanding of time, distance and speed. They show a growing awareness of their own space in relation to others, and are beginning to control the speed and direction of their movements.

Creative development

76. Teaching for children's creative development is good and as a result children learn well and make good progress to achieve standards a little above those expected by the end of the reception year. They respond well to opportunities to express their ideas when singing, painting, role-playing and moving and dancing to music. They learn a good range of songs by heart, and sing them enthusiastically at an early stage, both in English and French. Children have the ability to make up their own imaginative stories when using the role-play areas and small world equipment. They also use their imaginations well in the course of whole class drama and dance

sessions, when they move sensitively in time to the music and events of the story they are enacting. They use pencils, crayons and paint to create imaginative representations of what they see, hear and feel. There are ample opportunities for children to explore a range of different media and to use them for mark making and to compose their own pictures and patterns. They explore the feel and texture of clay and follow the teacher's instructions carefully to make it into an eggcup prior to decorating it with their own designs. They then create their own design for the decoration of felt egg cosies.

ENGLISH

77. Most pupils enter Year 1 with standards in English that are slightly above average. Pupils achieve well and reach standards that are above average by the end of Years 2 and 6. This is an improvement since the last inspection and is a direct result of the systems that the new headteacher has introduced to improve the monitoring of teaching, learning and standards, with a particular focus on writing. The results of national tests in 2001 were well above average, mainly because of pupils' skills in reading and the nature of the year groups. Pupils with special educational needs also achieve well and many attain average standards, as a result of well-targeted support. A specially trained teaching assistant gives well focused support to specific groups of pupils and this is having a significant impact on improving standards.
78. Pupils' skills as listeners develop well throughout the school. Most pupils, in all year groups, sustain concentration and interest well throughout lengthy discussions, for example in literacy hour. As listeners, they follow quite complex instructions and explanations and can select relevant information, where necessary, when asked to reply to specific questions. Most pupils acquire, and subsequently use, an appropriate repertoire of technical terms related to literacy and to other curriculum areas. Opportunities for drama and debates and for pupils to talk about their achievements in assembly contribute to pupils' skills in questioning, expressing opinions and exchanging ideas responsibly with appropriate sensitivity to those around them. The development of pupils' general vocabulary is satisfactory overall, and is extended well in lessons where there is a particular emphasis on using complex words to make writing more interesting. Pupils' skills in varying the expression of their voices for emphasis or effect, both when talking in front of others and when reading aloud, and their use of more sophisticated words in general discussions, are less well developed for pupils in Years 3-6.
79. Pupils throughout the school read well. In Year 1, pupils respond well to stories and, with support, begin to use expression and observe the cues presented by punctuation. By the end of Year 2, they retell stories that they have heard, talk about the various characters, and identify with different viewpoints and feelings. Most pupils use a suitable range of strategies to decode unfamiliar words and to make meaning. Higher-attaining pupils use inference well to work out hidden meanings in the text, although average and lower-attaining pupils still rely mainly on their developing knowledge of phonics and sight words. By the end of Year 6, most pupils have developed preferences in their personal reading and talk with some authority about their favourite books and authors. Pupils use reference and study skills appropriately to find things out, both when using the information books and information and communication technology. The library is mainly used for group teaching and this limits opportunities for pupils to develop their library skills. Plans are in place to remedy this situation by the development of a new library area.
80. Pupils' knowledge about language and their competence as readers are in advance of their skills as writers. The school has recognised this and has acted effectively to improve the situation. By the time they reach the end of Year 2, most pupils have developed a sound grasp of basic sentence structure and can produce interesting pieces of writing such as stories and reports, and retell familiar stories in their own words. For the most part, they use punctuation well for their age and their spelling of familiar words is accurate or at least phonetically plausible. By Year 6, most pupils have a satisfactory understanding of the characteristics, features and styles of different kinds of fiction and information texts. They know something of how writers use language for effect and how to make writing more interesting to their readers; for example, by using interesting words and phrases to extend their sentences. Although some work was seen where pupils had learned about figurative language, they did not use it readily in the course of

their own writing. They have a good understanding of how to structure persuasive writing for best effect and have used this information to design advertising leaflets and in writing letters. Handwriting and spelling are satisfactory overall. Standards of presentation have improved to a generally satisfactory standard although they sometimes slip when writing in the context of other subjects. Where pupils attain at the lower levels it is because of limitations in their vocabulary. They also find it difficult to develop their imaginative ideas whilst focusing on the whole range of skills required to produce writing of a high standard. Good teaching strategies were observed in a Year 6 lesson to help address this problem through the use of a prompt card to remind pupils of the skills that needed their attention. The school's supply of class computers had been reduced as a result of a break-in prior to the inspection and therefore little use was made of them in the course of lessons. However, the evidence suggests that pupils make satisfactory use of them for their work in English.

81. The quality of teaching is good overall. Most teachers have established very good relationships with their pupils, creating an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect. There is satisfactory planning with clear learning objectives that are in line with the literacy strategy guidance and are understood by the pupils. Teachers have good questioning skills and are able to turn pupils' responses, as they arise, into additional opportunities for learning, particularly during shared text and guided reading sessions. The best lessons flow smoothly because tasks are skilfully structured and linked to develop the learning objectives in depth. This results in pupils developing a secure understanding of the subject matter, which they can then draw upon and apply in later lessons. Teachers insist that the proper terms for language are used and they encourage pupils to find and select new and adventurous words to make their writing more relevant. However, there is scope for them to develop this further by making greater use of a rich and wide vocabulary to promote interest in new words in the course of their interactions with pupils. A good range of teaching methods was observed and included good use of collaborative and practical tasks such as debates and drama. Good use of whiteboards ensured the involvement of all pupils during whole class sessions. Although there are examples of detailed marking which gives helpful information to pupils on what they are doing well and what they need to do to improve further, this is not always the case, and greater consistency is needed.
82. The leadership and management of the subject are good overall. However, the responsibility is shared between the reception teacher and the headteacher. This has been effective in bringing about improvements in writing and improving teaching through monitoring and evaluation. However, this joint arrangement places a heavy workload on the headteacher and limits opportunities for the reception teacher to develop an overview and influence teaching and learning in the upper part of the school. The curriculum for English is soundly based on the National Literacy Strategy. There are thorough assessment procedures and these are used well to inform planning for the different needs of pupils. There is also good use of assessment criteria by the pupils themselves to evaluate their achievement.

MATHEMATICS

83. By the end of Years 2 and 6, most pupils are on course to attain the level expected for their age in this year's national tests, with a significant number, in Year 6 in particular, set to attain the higher levels. Overall standards in mathematics are above average and this represents good achievement.

84. There are six factors readily identifiable as reasons for the improving standards:
- The implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy gives teachers clear guidance.
 - In Years 3,4 and 5 pupils are divided into ability sets and evidence from the inspection suggests that this allows teachers to focus more precisely on pupils' needs.
 - Appropriate arrangements are made for pupils with a particular aptitude for mathematics to progress more quickly than others. They either move to a year group ahead of their own for mathematics or if they are in Year 6 they work directly with the headteacher for some of their lessons.
 - Pupils who find mathematics more difficult are given additional small group support and in the junior school they also have the opportunity to work at a more appropriate level because of the movement between classes.
 - The quality of teaching and learning is usually good and sometimes excellent.
 - Pupils enjoy mathematics.
85. By the end of Year 2 most pupils have a good grasp of basic number processes and can carry out appropriate calculation both mentally and on paper. They can add, subtract, divide and multiply using reasonably large positive numbers. Pupils' understanding of place value of number to 100 is good. Most pupils recognise the different characteristics of basic two and three-dimensional shapes with higher attaining pupils able to identify and name the properties of cylinders and cuboids. In their work on directions they recognise quarter, half and full turns. Younger pupils measure in non-standard units. By the end of Year 2 most pupils are ruling and measuring lines to the nearest centimetre and tell the time confidently on the hour, and at quarter and half past the hour. There were good examples of pupils using measurement when they followed written directions to make a puppet.
86. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 continue to develop their mental arithmetic skills, secure in their recall of number bonds to 20 and multiples of 2, 4, 5, and 10. They develop a good understanding of how mathematics works; for example, the commutative law and the importance of the decimal point and place value to avoid confusion when writing 6p as £0.06 rather than £0.6; they tally information and record this as a simple graph. Using coordinates they are able to describe and find the point on a grid, and use the eight points of the compass. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are confident in using the four rules of number. For example, they apply the test of divisibility to numbers to see which will divide exactly by 2, 4, 5, 10 or 100. The oldest pupils can add, subtract, divide and multiply large numbers accurately. Higher attaining pupils use decimals, fractions and percentages to calculate answers. Year 6 pupils are confident in their understanding of shape, space and measurement, using formulae to find the area of shapes and the length of missing sides. They know the differences between acute, obtuse and reflex angles and draw them accurately. They interpret data and are confident in finding the mean, median, average and range of a series of values. In their work on probability pupils use vocabulary such as likely, certain and impossible. Pupils make satisfactory use of their mathematical skills in other subject of the curriculum.
87. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because the work is accurately matched to their attainment levels and because they have good attitudes to learning and are well taught.
88. Discussions with pupils reveal that mathematics is a popular subject and they say that they enjoy it. Pupils have very good attitudes towards their lessons; they behave very well and co-operate with their teachers. They collaborate very well with one another when in pairs or small groups and can work independently, concentrating for long periods of time.
89. The quality of teaching throughout the school is usually good, in Years 3-6 there is often excellent teaching taking place for higher attaining pupils. Teaching is never less than satisfactory. In the most successful lessons there is a good level of interaction between pupils and teachers. Lessons are planned with a strong, imaginative, practical and often competitive element, allowing pupils to learn first hand. Questioning is skilful and probes key areas, making pupils think. Most teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and, as a consequence,

they respond very well. However, in a very small minority of lessons pupils become restless when work is insufficiently challenging or not matched to their specific needs. This is associated with a small amount of less successful teaching when teachers' planning which does not cater sufficiently for the different needs of pupils in the class. The use of the time at the end of sessions is variable. In the best lessons sufficient time is left for appropriate evaluation and reinforcement of learning and to prepare pupils for future work. The school's supply of class computers had been reduced as a result of a break-in prior to the inspection and therefore little use was made of them in the course of lessons. However, evidence suggests that pupils do use computers in the course of mathematics; for example, in Year 5 and 6 they have used spreadsheets. There are also limited opportunities for them to ask their own mathematical questions and devise their own investigations. The school provides extra support in 'Springboard' sessions and booster classes for individual pupils who need extra help, and this is effective in enabling them to succeed at higher levels.

90. Mathematics is now exceptionally well managed by the headteacher, who has a very clear view of the development of the subject and the full support of the governing body. He provides a good role model for subject management. Assessment is used well to track pupils' progress and set targets for individuals. It is also carefully analysed and the results are used well to focus the school's improvement efforts.

SCIENCE

91. Pupils attain average standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and their achievement is satisfactory overall. This is similar to the last inspection although there has been an overall improvement in the results of national tests. Pupils acquire a good understanding of scientific facts and knowledge, which enables many of them to do well in these tests, but their skills of scientific enquiry are not developed to the same high level. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well and receive good support from the class teachers and the learning support assistants.
92. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of life processes and living things is soundly developed as they move through the school. In Year 1 they can use their knowledge about living things to provide the right growing conditions for plants, and in Year 2 they have a good awareness that flowering plants grow from seeds and that they also produce them. Pupils in Year 3 have observed how a stem takes up water. In Year 5 they go on to improve their knowledge of parts of flowers and their function in the life cycle of plants.
93. Pupils in Year 1 and 2 know from their studies of minibeasts how some living creatures feed, grow and live in different habitats. By the time they reach Year 6 pupils have acquired a good understanding of how a wide range of animals live and can describe some of the features that are used as a basis for grouping. They use scientific names for some of the major organs of the human body and know about their main function. Science is used well to promote pupils' knowledge about healthy living.
94. Pupils throughout the school demonstrate an increasing knowledge and understanding of materials and their properties. Pupils in Year 1 have carried out tests on materials and as a result can say which are waterproof and which are not. Year 3 pupils know what kinds of objects are attracted to magnets. By the time they reach Year 6 they describe differences between the properties of different materials and explain how these differences are used to classify substances. In some Year 6 lessons they demonstrate an increasing understanding of aspects of materials and their properties that are drawn from the programmes of study for older pupils. They use scientific terminology to describe changes such as evaporation and condensation, and have had experience of testing different solutions, both alkali and acid. For example, they have carried out guided experiments on materials found in the kitchen under the titles of 'Cabbage Chemistry' and 'Exploding Custard'.
95. Pupils' knowledge of physical processes develops well. Year 2 pupils know how electrical circuits consisting of wires, batteries, bulbs and buzzers work, and that electricity can make

things move. Pupils in Year 4 and 5 have a good awareness of how friction and air resistance are forces that slow objects down.

96. Progress is sound for most pupils in the development of many of the skills of scientific enquiry, such as predicting, presenting and considering their evidence. However, insufficient opportunities are given for pupils to ask their own questions that can be investigated scientifically and to decide for themselves how to find the answers, and consider what sources of information they will use to answer questions.
97. Teaching and learning observed were nearly always good and sometimes very good when visiting specialist teachers planned and taught the science lessons. In the best teaching there are good relationships with pupils, judicious use of encouragement and praise, and clear learning objectives in planning. Visiting teachers used particularly skilful questioning which helped pupils to think for themselves. This was effective in moving learning on in lessons. A minority of lessons were unsatisfactory. In these lessons, planning was weak and tasks were not sufficiently matched to the attainment levels of the pupils, and the management of pupils was not fully secure. More general weaknesses in the teaching of science occur when there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to be involved in the lessons in a practical way and for them to engage in enquiry and investigation. Although work is regularly marked, there is insufficient use of constructive written feedback to help pupils improve their work. The presentation of some of the pupils' work varies in standard and is not always as neat and well written as it should be.
98. The subject is soundly led by the deputy headteacher, although she has a very limited amount of non-contact time for her work. She has collated a portfolio of work that has been monitored against national standards. Assessment results are carefully tracked to give an overview of standards and lessons have been observed to identify strengths and weaknesses in teaching. As a result of this she has rightly identified the need to plan and match tasks to pupils' attainment levels, and to increase the number and range of investigations offered to pupils in lessons.
99. There are good links with English through recording written outcomes of investigations in a logical sequence. This is helping to improve pupils' chronological writing. Links with information and communication technology and mathematics are evident, and are continuing to develop. For example, in Year 4, pupils working on friction have made force meters and have accurately calibrated them in Newtons. Visitors, such as specialist science teachers from the partner secondary school and from the nearby nuclear fuel plant, help to bring the subject to life; for example, in work about the importance and dangers of electricity in everyday life and also in the enthusiastic delivery of the scientific facts about the solar system.

ART AND DESIGN

100. Standards throughout the school are above average. This is a similar picture to the previous inspection and represents good overall achievement. Evidence from the large variety of high quality work on display and in pupils' sketchbooks indicates that pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well throughout the school. The recently implemented scheme of work, based partly on national guidelines, promotes the development of practical skills and techniques as well as the appreciation of the work of a wide range of artists. All pupils have access to the full curriculum, develop their skills and gain a good understanding and enjoyment of art and design.
101. The pupils enjoy the subject and take pride in their work. They explore colour through, for example, mixing paint, and experiment with a range of techniques, such as wax resist and washes. They use a variety of media such as chalk, pastels and watercolours. They have worked with clay, experimenting with texture, and have explored the use of a range of materials in presenting their work. Year 1 pupils practise weaving using a variety of materials. They concentrate hard and search carefully for materials to make interesting patterns. Higher attaining pupils use wool to weave with, managing to thread their needles for themselves. In Year 2, pupils extend their appreciation of the various styles and techniques of a range of artists

and this enables them to produce different patterns in their own work. For example, they make repeated pattern designs, using press printing inspired by the work of William Morris. Pupils are encouraged to describe and comment on their work and that of others.

102. By the time the pupils reach Year 6, they have gained a variety of skills with which to work imaginatively, as well as a good appreciation of particular styles of artists such as Andy Goldsworthy. As a result of this, when considering 'Art in nature' pupils in Year 4 experiment with thick and thin charcoal and dried grass and produce peaceful pictures of, for example, a 'becalmed boat'. The subject makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual development. A good example of this is Year 6's presentation of 'People in Action'. In their pictures they capture and communicate movement in a visual form. Using a print and drag technique they very effectively show people skipping in the night sky whilst being pulled along by a night shadow. There is a very strong sense of movement in these pictures.
103. There is an after school art club which is very well attended. The teacher's skill and enthusiasm inspires pupils to enjoy the subject and to take pride in their work. Pupils attend on a six weekly basis and are encouraged to work independently. The work that they produce is of a high quality and greatly enhances the entrance area to the school. This club makes a very good contribution to the standards of work in Years 3 to 6. Pupils work very well together and with the teacher. There is very much a team spirit between teacher and pupils and a very good working atmosphere.
104. Teachers' planning and discussions with staff, coupled with work on display, indicate that the quality of teaching is good overall. All staff are supportive and encourage pupils to develop their ideas. Through careful presentation of work they raise confidence and self esteem so that pupils take pride in their achievements. There are good links with other subjects and other cultures. For instance, Year 3 pupils designed their own Egyptian collars whilst Year 6 pupils produced multi media Tudor Portraits. Using pastels and newsprint they worked with a partner and found that it was 'extremely easy and even easier when you have a partner, and lots of fun'.
105. The subject manager is knowledgeable and enthusiastic and this makes a significant contribution to the standards that the school achieves in art. She looks at teachers' planning and work on display. However, she has not yet carried out lesson observations and this limits her ability to have an overview of teaching and learning and opportunities to use her skills to influence and improve the subject even further.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

106. By the end of Years 2 and 6, pupils attain the nationally expected standards and this represents satisfactory achievement. The main improvement since the last inspection has been the development of a new scheme of work. The national guidance has been integrated into the existing arrangements, so ensuring that pupils' knowledge and understanding are built up as they move through the school.
107. Work on display from pupils in Years 1 and 2 shows that they have designed and constructed with textiles using tools carefully, investigating ways of cutting and joining and gaining an understanding of how simple mechanisms work through, for example, the construction of vehicles and puppets. Year 1 pupils use art straws, pipe cleaners, balsa wood and constructional materials to make slides and very successfully construct parts of a hoist. Year 2 pupils, with a little help, measure, cut, assemble and join card and batons. Tools such as vices, saws and scissors are used safely and skilfully. All pupils show pride in finishing off their products. Pupils produce detailed labelled plans of their designs and are skilful in testing their ideas and evaluating their work both verbally and on paper. A higher attaining pupil evaluating her design and construction of a vehicle observed that next time 'she would put the wheels on more straight'.
108. In Years 3 and 4 pupils design and make photograph frames, bags, moving toys and alarms which light up. The planning process develops in Years 3 to 6 and becomes more formalised

and some pupils produce detailed designs on paper, but this is an area for development. For example, drawings could give more detail of measurements, colours and materials to be used. Older pupils in Years 5 and 6 make use of the Internet to research information when making their moving toys. There are good examples of the use of a digital camera to record the stages of production and modifications made. Pupils in Year 5 enjoy making biscuits with very clear step-by-step instructions written by the pupils. Opportunities have been taken to make links with other subject areas as, for example, when pupils discuss in detail the wide variety of biscuits, their individual preferences, the effect of the visual impact of the packaging and the ingredients used when making the biscuits. Opportunities are taken to link to the school's Healthy Eating Policy. Year 6 pupils investigate different types of shelters. They consider the relative strengths of different structures and test their ideas. They are becoming aware of several methods of reinforcing and strengthening their shelter framework.

109. With only two lessons seen, it is not possible to give a firm judgement on the quality of teaching and learning, but it was good overall in the lessons seen. Where weaknesses occur they are in planning for the different needs and attainment levels of pupils in the class and in the precision of learning objectives. This results in pupils' progress being satisfactory rather than good. From talking to pupils, it is clear that they enjoy designing and making and displays around school show a good coverage of the necessary skills to develop the subject. A useful contribution is made to social and cultural development as pupils develop their ability to work in groups, making decisions and sharing tasks. There is very good inclusion with all pupils fully included in all activities and, when necessary, very good support is available to aid pupils with special educational needs. The subject manager is getting to grips with the subject and is keen to improve standards further through, for example, developing progression and assessment and the increased use of information and communication technology.
110. The management of the subject is in the early stages of development. The subject manager is only just beginning to get a grip on the subject and to develop an understanding of her role. Although very little monitoring and evaluation of teaching, learning and standards has taken place she rightly recognises the need to ensure greater clarity in the progression of skills to inform assessment and planning for the different needs of pupils.

GEOGRAPHY

111. Pupils' achievement in geography is satisfactory and they attain the standards expected by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. The standards reported at the time of the last inspection have been maintained. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in their knowledge and understanding as they move through the school. They gain the geographical skills they need to use maps and plans of varying scales and to ask and answer questions about places in their locality. Where weaknesses occur they are in the development of fieldwork techniques and pupils' decision-making skills. This results in pupils' progress being satisfactory rather than good. Only three lessons were observed during the inspection, therefore judgements are based on a scrutiny of teachers' planning, an analysis of previous work, and discussion with the subject co-ordinator.
112. Pupils have sufficient opportunity to find information for themselves through the use of the Internet and reference books. Pupils in Year 1 have satisfactorily developed their knowledge of places beyond their own locality as a result of following the journeys of 'Barnaby Bear' as he travels to different locations on holiday. They receive postcards from him and locate these places on maps. Pupils in Year 2 develop their map reading skills using globes and atlases. They focus on local maps of Penketh and the roads around the school in the course of their studies on the locality, to identify the position of specific features and buildings. They can say something about the similarities and differences between places as a result of comparing Penketh with the fictitious Isle of Struay, and the real Isle of Coll in Scotland. In Year 4 pupils are using good links with information and communication technology to describe and explain how and why the village of Chembakolli in India is different from Penketh. This also contributes to their understanding of cultural diversity. Pupils in Year 6 use the Internet for cross-curricular research into a geography topic on coastlines. This has led to a greater understanding about

how water affects landscapes. There is planned development of this research that includes multi-media presentations for information and communication technology work.

113. In the lessons seen the quality of teaching was satisfactory. In a successful Year 6 lesson planning, organisation and class management were very good. Here the teacher's good subject knowledge enabled her to provide clear and accurate teaching of skills. This resulted in good quality work being produced, which further motivated the pupils. Weaknesses occurred in other lessons, however, because there was inadequate planning for the different needs and attainment levels of pupils in the class and a lack of precision in learning objectives. This limited the progress made by some pupils, particularly the higher attainers. In general, however, there is insufficient development of pupils' fieldwork skills and limited opportunities for pupils to develop their decision-making skills, for example, in their environmental studies.
114. Co-ordination of geography is satisfactory overall. The co-ordinator monitors teachers' planning and gives feedback to colleagues. She has identified the need to develop more opportunities for fieldwork and especially to increase the use of information and communication technology in geography studies. However, she has not yet monitored the quality of teaching and learning through lesson observations and has a limited overview of standards throughout the school. The school grounds are very good, and enrich the geography curriculum. The co-ordinator has plans to implement a Global Week in July to celebrate citizenship and the Commonwealth Games.

HISTORY

115. During the inspection it was not possible to observe any history lessons. Judgements are based on analysis of work, discussions with staff, displays and photographs of past work.
116. Inspection evidence indicates that by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, pupils' achievement is satisfactory and they attain standards that are in line with national expectations. Pupils in Years 1 have had opportunities to find out about history by studying authentic artefacts and hearing first hand accounts. They have looked at old deckchairs and spades and regularly hear of past times from grandparents who come into the class to help. Pupils have composed a class book of memories retold to them by their parents and grandparents that tells about days out and seaside holidays that were enjoyed years ago. This has given pupils an understanding of what an eyewitness is and how history can be recorded in many ways. Year 2 have developed their understanding of chronology through, for example, making time lines in their studies of the life of Florence Nightingale and the Great Fire of London. Pupils' understanding of chronology is further developed in Year 4 in their studies of Ancient Greece. Through their research into Greek artefacts that have developed a satisfactory knowledge of the characteristics and features of other societies in comparison to their own. Pupils in Year 5 know about life in Tudor times by looking at original artefacts in the course of a visit to Speke Hall. In a study of the Victorians they are able to understand that the past can be represented and interpreted in different ways through, for example, the different points of view they have studied about conditions in the mill. Themes such as evacuation, rationing, bombing and air raid shelters are studied in depth, giving good support to pupils' learning and helping them to empathise with life at the time of the second world war. Pupils have the ability to describe the characteristics of a period of time. They make satisfactory use of information and communication technology for guided research and for publishing and presenting work. Their skills in asking their own historical questions and developing their own line of enquiry are underdeveloped.
117. The long term planning of history ensures that the content of statutory curriculum is covered. However, there is insufficient guidance on the progression of skills to inform the precision of learning and assessment and this limits teachers' ability to plan for the different needs of pupils in their class. The school's association with Liverpool University's Archaeological Service usefully enriches the curriculum that is offered by introducing pupils to outside speakers, such as those from 'Daydream Dolls' who make and mend toys from the past. The management of the subject is unsatisfactory because of insufficient monitoring and evaluation and the lack of a clear overview to inform its future development.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

118. Standards in information and communication technology are at the levels expected nationally by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Although this is similar to the findings of the last inspection it should be noted that national expectations for ICT have risen since then. Pupils have good attitudes to the subject and behave well in lessons. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress.
119. The school uses the national guidance for information and communication technology, and this is ensuring that there is an appropriate balance between the different elements of the subject and that skills are developed systematically. As they progress through the school pupils demonstrate increasing confidence with the functions of the computer. They learn to select appropriately from menus and to use the computer to support their learning in other subjects. For example, in Year 1, using the Dazzle program pupils could select colour and text, draw a large circle and create a danger sign. In Year 2 pupils collected data about flowers in their mathematics lesson, and used this information to create a pictogram when working at the computer. Pupils can save and retrieve their work and have a growing confidence and familiarity with information technology. As they progress through the school pupils master increasingly complex tasks. They learn to improve the appearance of their work by selecting appropriate fonts, and can use their draft work to compose and edit on the computer using the spell check facility. In Years 6 pupils work in pairs to produce a PowerPoint multimedia presentation on the subjects of themselves. They are able to attach graphics, motion and animation to further enhance these slides. They use a projector and screen to rehearse their presentations prior to the delivery to a live audience. Pupils working with them are encouraged to evaluate this work and suggest areas that can be improved, and to note the features they think are helpful. The school provides pupils with a broad and balanced curriculum that systematically develops their knowledge and understanding effectively. Pupils of all attainment levels, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. By the time they leave school pupils are developing an understanding of the importance of technology in the modern world and how it affects their lives.
120. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. The advice, guidance and teaching provided by the technician from the local high school is very good and a good support when teachers lack confidence. When teaching is best, the teacher's own confidence and enthusiasm for subject is communicated to the pupils and as a result they are eager to learn. Planning is satisfactory, and teachers are clear about what they want pupils to learn from each activity and strike a good balance between the direct teaching of skills and allowing pupils to try out their new knowledge. However, planning does not always meet the differing needs of pupils. This results in pupils making satisfactory rather than good progress in the subject.
121. The subject is well led. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and knowledgeable. She has produced a very good action plan for the future development of the subject, based on a thorough appraisal of the school's current strengths and weaknesses. Because of this plan the school is well placed to improve standards in information and communication technology. However, she has had insufficient opportunities to monitor and develop the subject through lesson observations. The provision of the computer suite is having a significant impact on standards in information and communication technology. However, the recent theft of computers has limited opportunities for pupils to use them in the course of their work in the classroom.

MUSIC

122. Insufficient evidence was available during the course of the inspection to make a judgement about the overall achievement of pupils and their standards. However, it is clear that they make good progress in developing their singing skills and the quality of their singing is above average by the time that they reach the end of Year 1 and Year 6. Pupils have clear diction and, even when songs are quite challenging and sung in French, have good control of pitch and know when to sing loudly and more quietly. Across the school pupils enjoy singing, and they perform with strong commitment and energy.
123. When given the opportunity to listen to music they do so attentively, and demonstrate satisfactory appraising skills when expressing their responses to performances.
124. The subject is managed by two co-ordinators. This arrangement dates back to when the junior and infant schools were amalgamated and requires review. Although the co-ordinators work together, neither has a complete overview of the subject and there is some duplication of effort. The Year 3-6 co-ordinator is knowledgeable and enthusiastic about the subject and has a clear view of how she wants it to develop. She teaches all the music in Years 3-6, and whilst this enables her to know exactly how the subject is being taught, it limits opportunities for other teachers to develop their knowledge and skills in the subject.
125. Insufficient lessons were seen in the subject to make an overall judgement about teaching and learning. However, in the lessons seen in Year 1 the quality of teaching by a visiting student was excellent and pupils responded with enthusiasm and interest to his guitar playing. The excellent rapport with pupils encouraged them to look closely at the instruments he was playing so that they developed their understanding of how musical instruments worked and thought carefully about how music made them feel. In a singing assembly, the teacher gave a good lead, which encouraged pupils to sing with enthusiasm and expression.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

126. During the inspection three games lessons were seen. No lessons were seen in gymnastics, dance and swimming. However, the evidence from teachers' planning and lessons seen shows that pupils receive their entitlement to the statutory curriculum. It is not possible to make a secure judgement about overall standards and achievement in physical education because insufficient lessons were seen. Overall pupils' progress in these lessons was satisfactory and standards were typical of those expected nationally. Discussions with pupils and observations of after school clubs also indicate that pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of the skills and tactics required for striking, field and invasion games. Nearly all pupils learn to swim before they leave the school.
127. When working on games skills Year 1 pupils learn how to control the ball with a bat and work hard to improve their co-ordination when bouncing the ball with a bat. Year 2 pupils throw and catch with increasing accuracy, extending their skills by clapping prior to catching. Year 3 develop the skills that they need for throwing a larger ball to a partner as they move around the playground. They apply these skills well in informal games involving small teams. Pupils have a good awareness of how to exercise safely and this results in an enhanced awareness of their responsibilities towards themselves and the effects that their own actions might have on others. For example, they move around the hall sensibly and ensure that they do not get in the way of others.
128. Insufficient lessons were seen to make a judgement about the overall quality of teaching and learning. Teaching was good in two of the lessons seen and satisfactory in the other. In the best lessons there was good class control with firm and pleasant authority. Teachers interacted well with the pupils, encouraging them to improve their skills and demonstrating areas for improvement. Where weaknesses occurred in the less successful lesson it was because behavioural expectations had not been firmly established, and the lesson had to be frequently interrupted to remind pupils of what was expected. The predominant weakness in the teaching

of physical education is in lesson planning. Learning objectives are often either too broad or focussed on activities rather than what is to be learnt through them. There are very good strategies to enable the pupil with a physical disability to be fully included in lessons. Resources are adapted appropriately to enable her to take part; for example, a set of percussion instruments is provided for a dance lesson, and she uses a lightweight ball for throwing and catching. She receives very good support from the teaching assistant, who works alongside her during lessons.

129. The management of the subject is unsatisfactory. The lack of rigour in monitoring and evaluation means that there is limited knowledge about the school's strengths and weaknesses in teaching, learning and standards with which to inform the development of the subject and to give a clear direction for improvement. The over reliance on an outside instructor to teach gymnastics in Years 3-6 has resulted in the limited development of teachers' skills in the subject. The lack of liaison between the instructor and the co-ordinator has also resulted in lessons that are not always well linked to the National Curriculum programmes of study.
130. The school hall is an adequate size for gymnastics. However, the school playing field is a very generous size and in addition there is a hard play area. Both are used well for physical education. The recent addition of outdoor climbing and play equipment is already making a substantial contribution to pupils' physical skills. There are very good opportunities for pupils to take part in extra curricular activities. These include opportunities for football, netball, badminton and rugby. They are well attended by pupils and this makes a positive contribution to the standards that they achieve in the subject. In addition there is a good range of opportunities to take part in competitive sporting activities involving other schools.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

131. Only two lessons were seen in religious education, but evidence from these and from pupils' work shows that pupils' achievement in the subject is satisfactory and that standards are in line with those expected for their age by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. The progress that pupils make is the result of a curriculum which is appropriately planned and which is embedded in the school's values of respect and thoughtfulness for others that are strongly promoted through work on religious education.
132. Work on Christianity, Islam, Hinduism and Judaism results in pupils acquiring a sound understanding that religious traditions in the United Kingdom are mainly Christian and that other principal religions are also represented in their community. They celebrate the major festivals of the Christian year, such as Christmas and Easter, and know something of the stories behind them. As a result of their work on special books and special places, pupils begin to develop an understanding of the richness and diversity of religion and how believers express their faith in the way that they live their everyday lives. For example, in their work on Islam pupils learn about why Moslems deny themselves food during Ramadan. In their work on rules they learn about the importance of the Ten Commandments to Christians and the Five Pillars of Islam to Muslims, and how they affect the ways in which they live their lives.
133. Pupils benefit from visits to the local church, which have helped them to understand ideas of religious ceremonies such as baptisms and weddings. Opportunities to handle and look at a range of religious resources result in pupils acquiring a satisfactory understanding of religious terminology, such as the names of holy books, particular traditions, and areas and artefacts within a church.
134. Insufficient lessons were seen in religious education to form a secure judgement about teaching and learning. However, in the lessons seen teaching was satisfactory with some good features. Lessons are well planned and carefully structured with good preparation of materials and resources to illustrate ideas. Teachers make good use of open questions to check pupils' understanding, to help pupils reflect on what they have heard and to encourage them to contribute their own ideas. Teachers show that they value these ideas and suggestions by listening carefully. They then carefully build on them to extend pupils' understanding further.

They stress the importance of respecting the traditions of religions; for example, by washing their hands prior to picking up the Quran, and insisting that pupils do the same. Teachers involve visitors who can give authentic accounts of traditions wherever possible; for example, a member of the Jewish community has visited the school to talk about Hanukah and a parent who is member of the Islamic community has talked to the pupils about her traditions.

135. The subject leader is new to the post and as yet her role, particularly in the monitoring and evaluation of the subject, is not sufficiently developed. She has recognised the need to review the curriculum and to look at how national guidance can be used to support the locally agreed syllabus. Assessment procedures are inconsistent between classes and insufficient use is made of them for planning for different needs.
136. There are sufficient good quality resources for the subject. They are stored and used efficiently, and good use is made of them in lessons to support pupils' understanding. Good links with the local community, for example the local church and an Islamic family, make a significant contribution to the religious education curriculum.