

INSPECTION REPORT

LEIGH C of E JUNIOR SCHOOL

Leigh

LEA area: Wigan

Unique reference number: 106445

Headteacher: Mr B J Fawcett

Reporting inspector: Mr D Clegg
4341

Dates of inspection: 1st – 4th July 2002

Inspection number: 244170

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Junior
School category: Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils: 7 to 11 years
Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Henrietta Street
Leigh
Greater Manchester

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr E Cadman

Date of previous inspection: 17th September 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
4341	Mr D Clegg	Registered inspector	Mathematics	How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? What the school should do to improve further?
13450	Ms J Madden	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values, behaviour and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
16971	Mr R Hardaker	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology Design and technology	How well is the school led and managed?
4343	Ms S Billington	Team inspector	English Art and design Physical education Special educational needs English as an additional language	
26603	Ms M Griffiths	Team inspector	Geography History Music Religious Education Equality of opportunity	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is a voluntary controlled, larger than average junior school, with 357 pupils on roll. There are slightly more boys than girls and this is particularly evident in Year 4. Pupils are organised into 12 classes, each with a single age group.

Almost all pupils (98 per cent) are white. Other ethnic backgrounds are Pakistani, Chinese, Indian and Black-African. Six pupils have English as an additional language but none of these pupils are at an early stage of acquiring English. Other main languages are Panjabi, Cantonese and Tamil.

About 23 per cent of pupils have special educational needs. This is about average, but there is a slightly above average proportion of pupils with statements of special educational needs. The main problems are general learning difficulties, specific difficulties and behavioural and emotional problems. About 14 per cent of pupils are eligible to receive a free school meal, which is about average.

When pupils enter the school they are attaining broadly average standards; standards in reading and mathematics are higher than in writing.

The school is part of the Leigh Education Action Zone (EAZ) and this has been instrumental in promoting initiatives, such as, arts and writing projects, numeracy support, literacy support and improved facilities for Information and communication technology (ICT). The school is also receiving intensive numeracy support from the LEA.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school. It benefits from good leadership; there is a clear sense of direction and purpose and it is well managed by key members of staff. The teaching is good and the school offers a good range of learning opportunities. Eleven-year-olds attain standards that are in line with, or above, the national average and they are well prepared for the next stage of their education. The school benefits from membership of the EAZ. Overall, the school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Enables pupils to achieve good standards in mathematics, science and design and technology (DT) and very high standards in art and design
- Provides good quality teaching
- Is well led and managed
- Ensures that pupils have very good attitudes to work and are generally well behaved
- Makes good provision for pupils' personal development
- Provides a good curriculum that is enriched with extra-curricular activities

What could be improved

- The consistency of achievement across the school in English
- The procedures for monitoring and improving pupils' attendance

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 September 1997 and has made satisfactory progress since then. Following the inspection, between 1998 and 2000 overall standards of attainment declined sharply. This decline has been arrested in the last two years and the standards are now improving at a good rate. The good quality of teaching has been maintained and the school continues to be well led and managed.

The school has successfully addressed the areas needing improvement that were identified in the last report. Annual reports now contain the required information and give parents a clear view of how well their children are achieving in all subjects.

The majority of pupils now have opportunities to use research skills, finding information for example from reference books and increasingly the Internet.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	D	D	C	D
mathematics	C	D	B	B
science	D	E	B	A

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

The overall results for eleven-year-olds in 2001 were above the national average and in mathematics and science they are above or well above the results of similar schools. In English the results were below those of similar schools.

The standards attained by the current eleven-year-olds in English are broadly similar to most schools and higher than the results in 2001 would suggest. Standards in speaking and listening and reading are above average whilst in writing they are in line with the average. In mathematics and science the standards currently attained by eleven-year-olds are above average. There is no significant difference between the standards attained by girls and boys over the last three years.

Since the last inspection, the rate of improvement in standards has been slower than that of most schools. However, there has been a marked improvement in the standards attained in the last two years. This improving trend has been maintained in the 2002 tests for eleven-year-olds where the school has met or exceeded its own targets. The targets set for 2003 indicate expectations of an upward trend.

The majority of pupils achieve as much as could be expected, but the rate of achievement varies slightly across the school. Some ten-year-olds could achieve more in their English lessons and nine-year-olds could make faster progress in mathematics. Throughout the school pupils achieve well in science and make good progress. Pupils with special educational needs generally make good progress towards their learning targets. Pupils with English as an additional language reach standards similar to those of other pupils.

In each year group standards in art and design are very high and standards in DT are also above those usually found. In all other subjects pupils attain standards that are in line with expectations for their age group. A strength throughout the school is the neatness with which pupils present their work and this is evident in all subjects.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	This is a strong feature of the school. Pupils have very positive attitudes

	to work and in lesson they work very hard, maintaining high levels of concentration.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils are well-behaved in lessons but there is too much boisterous play in the playground.
Personal development and relationships	Older pupils are sensible, mature and well prepared for the next stage of learning. Pupils work well together and in all year groups have good learning habits.
Attendance	Satisfactory, attendance is similar to the national average but too many pupils arrive late at the start of the day.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Good

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

The overall quality of teaching is good, although it varies. Mathematics and science are well taught with some specialist science teaching often very good or excellent. Good mathematics lessons are evident throughout the school, but occasionally lessons with Year 4 pupils could be livelier and pupils could achieve more. There is too much variation in the quality of English teaching. Overall it is satisfactory, some is very good, particularly with Year 6, but occasionally the teaching is not helping pupils to achieve enough. Occasionally, in English lessons, teachers' own subject knowledge is not as secure as it needs to be. Overall, numeracy is well taught and literacy is satisfactorily taught.

Teachers manage pupils very well and establish a good learning ethos in lessons. Good resources contribute to the success of many lessons. Teachers' good subject knowledge ensures that lessons move on at a good pace and pupils respond very well to teachers' high expectations. Homework is very well used to supplement the work in lessons.

The school is generally meeting the needs of its pupils, including those with special educational needs. These pupils particularly benefit from the help they get in small groups when they are withdrawn from their classes. This teaching is well planned and is helping pupils to achieve their targets.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is broad and balanced and generally meets the needs of pupils. There is particularly good provision for the creative arts.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The work provided for pupils when they are withdrawn from lessons is good and meets their learning targets.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The pupils who have English as an additional language are well provided for and make progress similar to their peers
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Overall the school provides well for pupils' personal development. The opportunities for social development are particularly strong, the provision for moral and spiritual development are good. There is good provision also for pupils to develop cultural awareness through subjects such as art and

	design and religious education (RE).
How well the school cares for its pupils	Teachers know pupils well and generally provide a good level of support and care. The school has good systems for checking on how well pupils are learning.

There is a good range of extra-curricular activities and the school provides a good range of visits and visitors to supplement work in lessons. There has not been enough up to date training in child protection procedures for all staff. The procedures used for ensuring pupils behave in lessons are good but more could be done to train assistants in managing boisterous behaviour in the playground. The procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance need further strengthening.

The school works well with parents and strives hard to involve them in their children's learning.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The school is effectively led. The headteacher provides a clear sense of direction and purpose and key members of staff make a good contribution to how the school is managed.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body is very supportive and knowledgeable. Governors take their responsibilities very seriously and generally fulfil them well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. There are very effective systems in place to help the senior managers to check up on how well the school is doing. Information on pupil performance is guiding the work of the school and leading to the current improvements.
The strategic use of resources	This is generally good but there are some aspects that could be improved further.

The school is well staffed and the level of resourcing is good and helps to ensure successful lessons. The school very successfully makes the learning environment attractive and stimulating, even though some aspects of the accommodation are not satisfactory. Some classrooms are rather cramped and the facilities for physical education are unsatisfactory.

There is not enough monitoring of the different kinds of support given to pupils with special needs because the co-ordinator does not have enough time. The co-ordinators for numeracy and literacy could make even more impact across the whole school.

The school successfully seeks best value when allocating resources.

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 teaching is good Children work hard and make good progress The school is well led and managed Children are helped to mature The school is approachable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There were no specific concerns expressed by parents.

The inspection confirms the parents' positive attitudes.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The standards attained by pupils are improving and over the past two years the school has met or slightly exceeded its targets. The majority of eleven-year-olds attain standards that are in line with, or above the national average in English, mathematics and science. A good proportion of pupils is attaining higher than average standards and most pupils achieve well. They get off to a good start in Year 3 and do particularly well in Year 6, where they consistently make good progress. Year 5 pupils could achieve more in English and in Year 4, progress in mathematics could be greater. In science, the progress is more consistent and pupils in all year groups achieve well. The small number of pupils for whom English is an additional language achieve as well as their peers. Pupils with special educational needs are given good support when they are taken out of lessons to work in small groups and the close attention they receive helps them to achieve the targets they are set.
2. A particular good feature of all pupils' work is the very high standard of presentation.
3. **Pupils of all ages express themselves well**; they make sensible contributions to lessons and are confident and open when talking about their work. **They listen carefully** to their teachers and take notice of what they say. They follow instructions and make sure they understand the key teaching points. **Eleven-year-olds read well**. They enjoy a good range of books and sensibly discuss their favourite authors and characters. **Standards in writing are broadly average**; they are not as high as in reading, although they are improving. Written work is always well presented and most pupils write straightforward accounts using accurate grammar and spellings.
4. **Standards in mathematics are improving** and are above the national average with a good proportion of pupils attaining above average standards. The majority of pupils know their tables and calculate accurately, but only higher attaining pupils use fast methods for working things out in their head. **Standards in science are above average**. Pupils have a good understanding of basic science and have a good level of knowledge about how to do their own experiments and investigations.
5. In all year groups, **standards of work in art and design are very high** with examples of some outstandingly good work. **Standards attained in design and technology (DT) are also above** those usually found in junior schools. **Pupils reach the expected levels in history, geography, music, physical education (PE) and information communication technology (ICT)**. In **religious education (RE)**, pupils reach the standards that are outlined in the locally agreed syllabus.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

6. Pupils' attitudes to the school continue to be very good. The majority of pupils arrive at school on time. However, a minority of pupils arrive late for registration and therefore miss the important time pupils spend catching up with each other during the first short period of the day.
7. The pupils give every indication of enjoying themselves, joining in all the activities provided by the school inside and out of lessons. Pupils from ethnic minorities are

successfully integrated and all pupils work happily side by side. They settle quickly into the daily routine moving confidently and purposefully around the classrooms. The overwhelming majority of pupils work hard and maintain high levels of concentration. They are keen to learn and taking great pride in the presentation of their work.

8. Pupils' behaviour around the school and in classrooms is good and parents are pleased with this. However, whilst most pupils' behaviour in the playground is good, there are noticeable exceptions, especially during lunchtimes, when too often pupils are over-boisterous with others and some are rude, particularly to the supervisory welfare assistants. Both parents and pupils say there is no serious bullying in the school and any incidents that arise are dealt with immediately and effectively. There has been a small number of fixed term exclusions and one permanent exclusion this year, on each occasion the result of following the school's policy about behaviour.
9. Relationships in the school continue to be very good. Pupils work well together in pairs and groups and co-operate particularly well in science, PE and ICT. They are especially good at listening to each other and to their teachers. This was particularly noticeable in a Year 6 special needs group for literacy when pupils were discussing a newspaper report. Good relationships with teachers give pupils the confidence to attempt work without fearing failure and to persevere when they find work difficult.
10. Pupils' personal development is also very good, as it was at the last inspection. Year 6 pupils take turns to act as monitors and this gives all of them an opportunity to take responsibility for aspects of whole school life including answering the telephone at lunchtime. There are fewer responsibilities for younger pupils, but in each class a group of pupils arrives early to prepare the classroom for the days work. 'Circle time', when pupils have an opportunity to explore issues such as relationships, deepens their understanding of themselves and how they relate to others.
11. Attendance is satisfactory and in line with the national average. Unauthorised absence was broadly in line with the national average.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

12. A key reason for the school's success is the good quality teaching. During the inspection about 70 per cent of the lessons seen were good and 15 per cent were very good or excellent. In about 6 per cent of lessons the teaching was unsatisfactory. It is the variation in teaching between year groups and between subjects that goes some way to explain the uneven progress that pupils make. For instance, the consistently high quality of teaching in Year 6 ensures that pupils make good progress and some very good and excellent teaching of science, results in pupils attaining high standards. Good mathematics lessons also account for the higher than average standards, while English teaching is more variable and is a factor in the uneven progress.
13. Lessons are helped by the use of good resources that are well used. The resources for ICT, for instance, make lessons more practical and ensure that all pupils have a chance to 'have a go'. In a very good science lesson, about the parts of a plant, the fact that the teacher had brought in a large lily flower helped the pupils get a clear grasp of the key features.
14. In most lessons teachers have a very clear idea of what pupils need to be taught and their expectations are high. This ensures that lessons move on at a good speed and pupils cover a lot of ground. Occasionally, teachers underestimate how much some pupils might cover in the space of one lesson and progress is too limited. Some

lessons are particularly successful because the teachers make sure that they have planned a range of work that meets the needs of pupils who learn at different speeds. This helps all pupils to build on what they already know and understand. In some lessons where the same thing is taught to the whole class, some pupils end up doing work that is either too easy or too difficult for them and this slows the progress they make.

15. In the great majority of lessons teachers are very confident about what they are teaching, this is the case in science lessons, in mathematics lessons and in ICT lessons. Because the teachers are confident about what they are teaching, they ask sharp questions that make pupils think. They encourage pupils to think about their answers and are skilful in getting pupils to explain, for instance, why they gave a particular answer. Very occasionally, teachers' give inaccurate information in English lessons and this hampers pupils' learning.
16. Pupils are very well managed; the interesting work and the very good relationships between teachers and pupils make sure that there is a very pleasant working atmosphere in lessons. Pupils feel secure and confident enough to ask for help when they find difficulty understanding something.
17. Pupils with special educational needs are taught well when they are withdrawn from lessons and taught in small groups. The work they are given helps them to achieve their learning targets. Occasionally however, in some mainstream lessons they are not given enough support and they find the work very difficult, this hampers the progress they could make.
18. Homework is very well used to back up the work in lessons. It is set on a regular basis and teachers and pupils take it very seriously. Often lessons will start with a review of homework or end with an explanation of what pupils are expected to do at home. The quality of teachers' marking varies, but some is very effective. Teachers pay very close attention to what pupils have done and their comments give pupils very clear guidance about what they need to do to get better.

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

19. The overall curriculum is broad and balanced and the good quality of learning opportunities has been maintained since the last inspection. The curriculum includes all subjects of the National Curriculum together with religious education, which meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus.
20. The school is making good use of national guidance as the basis for its curriculum planning in subjects such as science, art and design and DT. The school has sensibly adapted the national guidance on the teaching of literacy to meet the needs of pupils and to address priorities for development. However, the use of Additional Literacy Support (ALS)¹ is not effectively organised to meet the needs of lower attaining pupils. The school is benefiting from using the national numeracy strategy to plan mathematics lessons.
21. Literacy and numeracy are used well across the curriculum. There are good

1. Additional literacy support is a specific programme to help improve literacy skills for pupils in Year 3 who need some extra help.

opportunities for literacy work in a number of subjects such as history when pupils write about 'the day my house was bombed' or in RE when they write about a special book. Numeracy is used in geography, for instance, when pupils draw graphs to show rainfall in St. Lucia.

22. The curriculum for pupils with special educational needs is good, particularly when pupils are taught in withdrawal groups or in one to one teaching. Occasionally in lessons, the work is not sufficiently adapted to meet their needs and they end up struggling with work that is too hard.
23. The school has a good planned programme for pupils' personal, social and health education (PSHE) which includes teaching about the misuse of drugs and alcohol and a specific programme of sex education. Circle time also makes a contribution to this aspect of the curriculum.
24. The school has good links with the local secondary school and the pupils are well prepared for their transition to their next schools. Some subjects enjoy specific benefits from the secondary school. For example, a history teacher from the secondary school has worked with Year 6 during their World War 2 topic, bringing artefacts and specialist knowledge to make the topic more meaningful.
25. Provision for extra-curricular activities is good. Activities include various sports, choir and recorder clubs, all of which are well supported by pupils. The curriculum is enriched by a number of visitors to the school and there are good links with the community. The local vicar regularly comes into school to take assemblies and the police and the school nurse are also regular visitors. During the inspection, local police were in school working with Year 6 pupils on 'Drugs Awareness' as part of the school's PSHE programme.
26. The school makes good use of the local environment by, for example, visiting museums, churches and studying the local vicinity. Pupils visit the local park to consider how the facilities could be improved and Year 6 pupils surveyed pedestrians about how they feel about the pedestrian zone in the town. A visit to 'Hall i' th' Wood' gave pupils the opportunity to dress as Tudor servants and to discover firsthand what Tudor life might have been like. A visit to 'Hope Carr Barn', as part of work on the water cycle, taught pupils about water filtration and water treatment. Just before the inspection, Year 3 pupils had enjoyed a visit to the Diva Centre to gain firsthand knowledge of life in Roman Britain. A residential visit for older pupils, accompanied by teachers and governors, provides a good range of outdoor experiences that contribute to pupils' learning.
27. There are good links with local sports clubs, such as Wigan Warriors, and pupils have recently successfully taken part in an Athletics Competition for schools in connection with the Manchester Commonwealth Games.
28. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. Assemblies help to teach pupils the values and beliefs of the Christian faith. In some lessons pupils are asked to think carefully about what kind of person they are and how they feel about moving on to another school.
29. The provision for moral development is also good. The school places a high priority on equipping pupils with a clear set of moral values. Pupils are taught to distinguish between right and wrong through informal discussions, assemblies and story times. The school's rules, together with each classes' rules, help pupils to develop some moral understanding. All the adults in school are good role models and encourage the

pupils to behave well at all times. Greater emphasis is placed on rewards for good behaviour, such as individual and group awards, rather than on sanctions. This ensures that the overall ethos in lessons and throughout the school is positive.

30. The provision for social development is very good. The promotion of values, such as friendship and caring, forms an important part of school life. During lessons teachers give pupils opportunities to work together in small groups or in pairs. Teachers insist that pupils listen carefully to each other during discussions. This was evident when Year 6 were thinking about what Hindus might place on their shrines when worshipping in the home. Class rules, decided by the pupils, place correct emphasis upon the need to get on well with each other. Opportunities are given for pupils to develop understanding of their own roles as part of the school community and they happily take on responsibility, such as taking the class registers to the office. Older pupils listen to younger readers, give out dinner registers, show visitors around the school and help in the library. At Christmas, Year 6 pupils run a café in the school hall to raise funds for the local church.
31. Provision for pupils' cultural development is good. Curriculum planning shows that in geography, music, RE and art there are a good range of multicultural experiences. There is a good emphasis on caring for the environment and the school is seeking to have 'eco school status'. The school ensures that pupils appreciate the diverse nature of society in both this and other countries by learning about major world faiths in RE. Pupils have opportunities to visit the local church and benefit from learning about traditions of the different Christian festivals.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

32. Overall, the school takes good care of its pupils. All staff, teaching and non-teaching, have a good knowledge of pupils' needs. Pupils with special needs are well cared for and careful records are maintained on their progress. The school has not yet introduced the new Code of Practice for pupils with special needs as it is following guidance from the LEA on the timing of the implementation.
33. The school provides a safe environment for its pupils. Health and safety is the responsibility of the headteacher and he is well supported by the governors and the caretaker on a day to day basis. The school has sufficient staff to support pupils during breaks and lunchtimes and the dinner hall is well organised and pleasant. There are good first aid measures to deal with the numerous minor injuries arising through the school day, especially at playtime and lunchtime.
34. Child protection procedures are unsatisfactory, a situation which should be remedied as a matter of urgency. The school policy is out of date and does not take enough account of the more recent guidance from the LEA. Not all staff have been provided with guidelines and they have not been sufficiently trained in the procedures.
35. The school has satisfactory procedures in place to monitor and promote attendance, but nevertheless attendance is falling slightly year by year. Registers are marked in line with LEA guidelines; those pupils who arrive late have to report to the office before going to their classroom. Absence of pupils is monitored daily by teachers, but there is no system in place to contact parents immediately if a child fails to attend without the school knowing the reason.
36. The school has good procedures in place to monitor and promote good behaviour. In classrooms, pupils are well managed and keen to learn, and consequently have neither time nor desire to misbehave. The school's code of conduct, based on courtesy and

consideration, is brief, clear and reflected in the recently revised reward system, which aims immediately to recognise and reward achievements. The sanctions system is similarly clear and aimed at changing behaviour. Pupils who are excluded for a fixed period are carefully reintroduced into the school with the help of the LEA Behavioural Support Unit. Behaviour at lunchtimes does not reflect the very good classroom behaviour. Play can be rough and some pupils have little respect for others. The welfare assistants have not had enough training in how to manage more challenging behaviour. The school makes consistent efforts to eliminate bullying through assemblies, work in the curriculum and in response to incidents. The headteacher is a potent force for reconciliation in the school and spends time in the playgrounds keeping an eye on how pupils are behaving.

37. The procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are good. The school establishes each pupil's attainment when they arrive at school and there are regular assessments of how well pupils are doing. The results of standardised tests have helped the school identify patterns of learning across the school. The information helps teachers to plan work to take account of aspects of subjects that need more emphasis. In addition, pupils' work is analysed on a day to day basis.
38. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic progress are satisfactory. The day to day assessment of pupils' progress is fed back into weekly planning, but does not always result in lesson plans that take account of the rates at which different pupils learn. Targets for special needs pupils are generally clear and useful and their individual education plans (IEP) are reviewed regularly and progress recorded.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

39. This is a strong feature; parents have very positive views about the school. The school is a welcoming place for parents who are very comfortable approaching teachers to discuss any concerns they may have.
40. The effectiveness of the school's links with parents is good. The information booklet for parents is informative, as is the school's website. Parents are kept well informed about school life by letters, including the activities of the Friends of the School. Parents of Year 3 pupils are invited to attend 'Reading Together' within a few weeks of their children starting at the school. Parents are also able to attend literacy and numeracy courses for adults led by the local college. However, although the newsletter is informative, it is only available on the schools' web site and on the school notice board and is not distributed to all parents.
41. The written annual reports to parents have improved since the last inspection. There is now an emphasis on what pupils can do and there are targets for improvement. Parents are invited to comment on the reports either in writing or by arranging a meeting with a teacher. There are two other consultation meetings arranged for parents, the second of which focuses solely on literacy and numeracy. Parents whose children have a statement of special educational need are involved in their annual review.
42. Parents have good opportunities to express their views. For example, they have been consulted about the changes made to the school day and the provision of break time snacks.
43. Parents help pupils with the reading programme and help maintain the school's emphasis on the needs for pupils to read regularly. They are also invited to accompany classes on visits and a number always go on the residential visits. The Friends of the

School arrange a wide variety of social occasions to bring parents together and raise funds for the school, which, for example, helped extend the period spent in school by an artist in residence. Home school contracts are in place and parents have helped devise the ICT security policy.

44. Homework is highly regarded by parents who know exactly what to expect and when, so that they can ensure pupils complete their work. The work is regularly marked and parents receive good feedback from the school

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

45. The headteacher works closely with other senior colleagues and the governors to give the school a strong sense of purpose and direction. Immediately following the last inspection, standards declined but over the past two years the school has successfully arrested the decline and pupils are now beginning to do much better as a result of the improvements. This turn round in the school's performance has been brought about through a number of key developments that have coincided with a number of new appointments.
46. Following the appointment of a new deputy headteacher, the school has put in place a very effective system for tracking how well pupils are doing as they move from year to year. This information has been used to highlight areas that need development and the senior management team has shown plenty of determination in getting to grips with these key areas. For instance, the need to concentrate on improving pupils' writing has resulted in more regular check ups of what is being planned by teachers. To raise standards in science, a teacher with specialist knowledge has worked with pupils from each year group and helped all teachers to improve their planning. These different, but successful approaches, are beginning to bear fruit as standards are steadily rising.
47. Teachers with key responsibilities are playing an increasingly substantial part in helping the school to address weaknesses and raise standards; this is particularly the case in subjects such as mathematics, science, ICT, design and technology and art. Membership of the EAZ has also helped with the improvements both in terms of funding and advice. Both key teachers and membership of the EAZ, have been used well and have significantly contributed to the progress made in implementing the improvement plan. The successful implementation of the improvement plan has resulted, for instance, in better teaching of ICT and good achievement in science.
48. There is a weakness in the overall management of the provision for special educational needs. The co-ordinator for special needs is not given enough time to check up on the various programmes that are used to help pupils. For example, the school's use of ALS is not being monitored and its effectiveness is not being assessed.
49. The governors work very hard and are very supportive and knowledgeable. They have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Several visit the school regularly and see lessons. Most governors are in a good position to make strategic decisions about the school because they know and talk about relevant issues with good understanding. They are well organised, take their responsibilities very seriously and largely fulfil their statutory responsibilities. However, they are not ensuring that adequate child protection procedures are in place.
50. The school's strategy for performance management is good. An effective policy is in place and teachers have the benefit of regular discussions with the headteacher about their professional development and to agree targets. Teaching is regularly observed and

teachers are generally provided with training that helps them to keep up to date with important issues.

51. The school manages its finances well. Good financial procedures are in place. The finance committee sets the budget after consultation with the headteacher. It is then submitted to the governing body for approval. Money is appropriately allocated and kept under constant review by the finance committee. The school has good procedures in place to ensure the cost effectiveness of purchases and the services it provides. The governing body explores the cost effectiveness of some of the services it receives by considering alternative provision where appropriate.
52. The school is adequately staffed to meet the demands of the curriculum. All teachers have clearly designated responsibilities. Teaching resources are satisfactory and in some subjects are good. The quality of some books in the library is poor. In several of the sections there are old books containing outdated information and the condition of some of these is poor. This was also a weakness in the last inspection.
53. The overall impression of the school is one of attractiveness and vibrancy. Classrooms and other areas of the school are maintained as stimulating and interesting environments. The school is full of eye-catching, stimulating displays of pupils' work, much of it of a very high standard. However, there are some weaknesses in the accommodation. Parts of the building are unsuitable for junior aged pupils. Some of the staircases are steep and narrow and not easy for young pupils to negotiate. Some classrooms are cramped and the dimensions of the hall make it unsuitable for some activities in PE. Some library shelving is too high for pupils to access easily.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

54. In order to improve further the headteacher, working closely with the governing body should:

Improve the consistency of achievement across the school in English by:

- ensuring that all teachers have sufficient knowledge of the subject;
- in all lessons, making sure that pupils of different attainment are given work that is suitable for them;
- raising the expectations of what pupils might achieve.
(paragraphs: 1, 12, 55, 57, 61)

Strengthen further the procedures for monitoring and improving pupils' attendance by:

- putting in place a system for following-up unnotified absences on the same day.
(paragraphs: 35)

Minor Improvements

Strengthen the current systems for ensuring that all staff are fully aware of the local authority guidance on procedures for child protection (paragraphs: 34)

Improve way in which the various support strategies used to help pupils with special educational needs are managed (paragraphs: 48)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	54
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	25

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	6	31	12	3	0	0
Percentage	4	11	57	22	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 one percentage point.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	357
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	44

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	6
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	82

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	6

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	19
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	14

Attendance

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
	%		%
School data	5.9	School data	0.2

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 2 (Year 6)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2001	59	37	96

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	44	47	58
	Girls	33	25	35
	Total	77	72	93
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	80 (72)	75 (64)	97 (75)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	31	48	45
	Girls	25	26	28
	Total	56	74	73
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	58 (72)	77 (71)	76 (80)
	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	
Black – African heritage	1
Black – other	
Indian	1
Pakistani	3
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	2
White	350
Any other minority ethnic group	

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage		
Black – African heritage		
Black – other		
Indian		
Pakistani		
Bangladeshi		
Chinese		
White	3	1
Other minority ethnic groups		

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y3 – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	15.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.5
Average class size	28.8

Education support staff: Y3 – Y6

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	39

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2002/2002
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	£
Total income	731,348
Total expenditure	738,609
Expenditure per pupil	2,111
Balance brought forward from previous year	17,486
Balance carried forward to next year	10,225

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1

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	346
Number of questionnaires returned	94

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	55	40	2	0	2
My child is making good progress in school.	64	34	1	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	53	40	4	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	50	41	7	0	1
The teaching is good.	65	35	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	51	38	10	1	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	76	21	2	0	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	78	22	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	45	46	7	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	73	24	1	0	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	60	38	1	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	41	39	10	3	6

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

ENGLISH

55. Standards attained by the majority of pupils at the end of Year 6 are at least in line with national averages; around a third of the year group are working at higher levels. Overall, there has been an improvement in standards, particularly in writing, over the past year. By the time they leave the school, pupils are achieving as well as they should. This is largely the result of good, sometimes excellent, teaching in Year 6 that ensures accelerated progress for pupils in this year group. In other year groups, progress is more erratic as a result of too much variation in the quality of teaching. Pupils do not achieve as well as they should as they move through the school and there are some particular weaknesses in the progress that they make in reading and writing in Year 5.
56. Pupils' skills in speaking and listening are good. Throughout the school, teachers provide good opportunities for discussion in subjects across the curriculum and pupils learn to talk and listen in a variety of situations. Year 4 pupils, for example, were articulate in explaining similarities and differences as they compared the styles of two books. In geography, Year 5 pupils debated the problems created by the pedestrianised area in the town centre, listening carefully to the comments on the merits and drawbacks of the scheme and confidently presenting their own views. The majority of the older pupils use Standard English in formal situations. In practising for an end-of-year performance, Year 6 pupils were clear, articulate and confident as they rehearsed a presentation on the forthcoming Commonwealth Games. In many lessons, teachers ask good questions to encourage pupils to reflect on their ideas or observations and to explain these clearly. In a lesson in religious education, the teacher's insistence on use of full sentences as pupils discussed a recent visit to the church led to very thoughtful responses.
57. As they move through the school, pupils' skills in reading improve, but progress is erratic because not enough attention is paid to checking up on what they read. There are regular opportunities for class and group reading activities in the English lessons; during these activities, teachers draw attention to features of books such as letter sounds or punctuation to help to improve pupils' skills in understanding and expression. Pupils are expected to read as part of their homework and to keep reading diaries; this is successful in ensuring that they read regularly. However, for some pupils this is a token exercise as they read perhaps two or three pages a night from a lengthy book and therefore take an inordinate time to get through it. Some pupils, often average attainers, are trying to read books that are not well-matched to their reading skills; these are sometimes too easy or at other times too hard. Some teachers regularly discuss, for example, pupils' choices from the school library and encourage individuals to widen their range of authors or types of books but this is not established practice through the school. The majority of pupils understand how to find information in books, knowing, for example, the purpose of the glossary and index, and they successfully use dictionaries to help with spellings. Pupils in Year 6 express preferences for particular styles of books or authors, their taste tends to be for modern popular authors such as JK Rowling or Jacqueline Wilson. Higher attaining pupils have good skills in using inference and deduction, for example in discussing significant themes and characters.
58. The range of opportunities for writing has been extended as a result of the work on improving standards in this area. As they move through the school, pupils learn to write, for example, instructions, accounts of their activities, letters and poems in a variety of forms. Much of their written work is factually based and there is limited opportunity for

pupils to develop a sustained idea or theme in imaginative writing or to draft, edit and improve their work. Nevertheless, the work of the majority of pupils in Year 6 is well up to expected standards. Average attaining pupils write from a variety of perspectives; for example as the second pig in 'The Three Little Pigs' story. They successfully extract and re-present information from a variety of texts, including '101 Dalmations' and Samuel Pepys' diary. Higher attaining pupils use good descriptive vocabulary and complex sentences to engage the interest of the reader. Lower attaining pupils express ideas clearly, although their work is not always grammatically correct; many have started to use dialogue and a variety of punctuation to enliven their work. The standards that pupils have reached in this year group is the result of good, purposeful teaching. This has ensured that many pupils have made very good progress from a below average starting point at the start of the year. In other year groups, there is scope to improve the overall quality of teaching so as to raise expectations of what pupils might achieve and ensure that they make a consistent rate of progress as they move through the school.

59. Throughout the school, pupils' written work is very well presented. Handwriting is regularly taught and practised so that the vast majority of pupils learn to write legibly in a fluent and joined style. Spelling of commonly used words is generally correct and pupils begin to accurately use a range of punctuation. Pupils make good use of their literacy skills in other subjects, for example, in writing structured accounts of experiments in science or noting key facts about symbolism in RE. Limited use is made of ICT; occasionally work is word-processed and skills are used well for good presentation in a colourful or illustrated form. There is some use of the Internet and CD-Rom for research.
60. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support when they are taught in sets in Years 5 and 6 or in small withdrawal groups in Years 3 and 4. Activities are carefully focused on pupils' learning targets and, in many of these lessons, pupils work through a good range of activities that maintains their interest and motivation. Many make good progress in key skills in literacy as a result of well-paced teaching, a good level of involvement in the lesson and a high emphasis on praise for their efforts. ALS work with Year 3 pupils is less successful because of the way in which it is organised. The ALS support occurs during normal English lessons, which means that pupils take a full part in the start of the lesson, for instance learning about specific words or sounds, but this is then followed by ALS activities that are unrelated to what they have just been doing. At the end of the lesson, these pupils then take part in the review of what all the other pupils have been doing while they have been having ALS. In whole class literacy lessons, where pupils rarely have any additional support, the work that they are given is not always informed by the targets on their IEPs and is not sufficiently modified to enable them to complete the task successfully.
61. The co-ordinator has worked hard to support colleagues in adapting planning from the national literacy strategy and extending the opportunities for writing. Teaching has been observed, areas for improvement identified and in-class support provided by the co-ordinator. However, there are still weaknesses in teachers' subject knowledge and there is too much variation in their expectations of pupils' potential to achieve.

MATHEMATICS

62. Mathematics is well taught overall and this helps most eleven-year-olds to reach above average standards with a good proportion of them reaching higher standards. In the past two years the standards have improved significantly due to the impact of the national numeracy strategy, better resources and improved teaching. The majority of pupils achieve as much as they should, although nine-year-olds could make more rapid progress. Eleven-year-olds often achieve very well and make good progress during their last year in school. They have a good grasp of the basic number facts, calculate accurately and use the four operations, although only the higher attaining pupils use fast ways for mental calculations. In terms of teaching and standards, the school is now achieving as well as at the time of the last inspection.
63. Pupils respond to the good teaching; in lessons they are keen to do well and all of them work hard. Consistently good teaching of eleven-year-olds ensures that they are well prepared for secondary education. During the inspection they were solving problems that involved early aspects of algebra and using their good basic knowledge of the four number operations to create mathematical formulae. This particular topic will be continued in the secondary school to which most pupils will transfer in September and so gives a good link between the two stages of education.
64. Teachers use good simple resources, such as small writing boards, to make sure that all pupils have a go at answering questions and are fully involved in the lesson. Teachers are well prepared, provide clear explanations and carefully work through examples on the board. This ensures that pupils know what they are doing and helps them to get down to work quickly. In a very good Year 5 lesson, pupils worked very hard on identifying percentages of shapes that were shaded. The sharp and lively start to the lesson meant that pupils understood what they had to do and all made good progress.
65. In most lessons pupils get through a lot of work, but occasionally they spend too long on doing work that they can already do and this hinders their progress. In some lessons teachers also under-estimate how much pupils could learn. In the more successful lessons, teachers carefully make sure that pupils of different levels of attainment are given work that builds on what they already know. For instance, in one successful Year 3 lesson, the teacher had different activities planned for groups of pupils. Those who had clearly understood place value were given a more difficult task while the teacher worked with a group who were still struggling. In a good Year 5 lesson, right from the start, the teacher aimed different questions at groups of pupils according to how well they had understood work from previous lessons.
66. During the past two years the subject has been well managed. The performance of pupils is carefully analysed and the work that pupils do is changed according to how well they have done in regular tests. The subject co-ordinator understands the aspects of teaching that need more development, for instance the need to provide different work for different groups of pupils, she has been very successful in providing guidance and support to colleagues by looking at teachers' planning. There is some scope to increase the co-ordinator's access to performance data to enable more identification of the areas requiring some development.

SCIENCE

67. Standards attained by the present eleven-year-old pupils, as at the last inspection, are above average in all areas of science. The most recent national tests for eleven-year-olds indicate that the high standards have been maintained. The sustained rise in standards is the result of teaching that is consistently good and sometimes very good or excellent. As a result, all pupils make good progress and they achieve well.
68. Teachers have high expectations, mark pupils' work carefully and insist that all written work in books and folders is appropriately completed. As a result pupils produce work of a good standard which is very well presented. Homework is used very well to reinforce learning, especially in Year 6.
69. Eleven-year-olds apply their good understanding of electricity and simple circuits as they design alarm systems that incorporate a pressure pad. They successfully investigate and experiment, for example, testing a range of materials to see which is the best insulator. Higher and average attaining pupils make reasonable predictions about what they might discover. They have a good understanding of the idea of 'fair testing' and observe and discuss their results, offering explanations for their findings. Higher and average attaining pupils use what they have learned in mathematics lessons to show their results in a bar chart or line graph. For example, they use a line graph to show the temperature loss over time in the investigation into different insulators. Lower attaining pupils make careful observations during investigations and, with help, record them and sometimes explain the changes they observe. All pupils take pride in the presentation of their work.
70. Throughout the school pupils have a good understanding about plants and animals and what they need to stay alive. Year 3 pupils learn about different foods and higher attaining pupils understand what makes a healthy diet and the dangers of eating too much fat and sugar. Year 4 pupils find out about where different animals live and learn to classify them according to their environment, what they eat and how they travel. Older pupils use a range of reference material to learn about the particular features of plants and flowers. A real strength of the science teaching is the way in which it encourages pupils to do their own investigations and experiments. This approach ensures that they remain curious and enthusiastic about science.
71. Teachers plan their lessons well and make sure that work meets the needs of all pupils and that they all make good progress. Teachers make sure pupils know what they are going to learn and also make their expectations clear. As a result pupils enjoy science lessons, they work hard and take a good deal of pride in their success. At the ends of lessons teachers also make a point of asking the pupils to think about what they have achieved and what they need to do next. Lessons are well organised and effectively resourced, with equipment being on hand when required. Teachers' own good subject knowledge enables them to teach with confidence and give clear explanations when appropriate. They ask challenging and probing questions which help pupils to clarify their own understanding. All these elements contribute to pupils' good learning.
72. The subject is very well managed by an enthusiastic and knowledgeable co-ordinator. She supports her colleagues well by helping them with planning and advising them on teaching methods. She has introduced a new programme of work that teachers find very helpful. Pupils' progress is regularly assessed, the results are thoroughly analysed and this helps to build a clear view of the subject's strengths and weaknesses. There is a clear view of what needs to be done next and how further improvements will be made. It is the school's intention to start an after-school science club in order to extend the already good level of interest pupils show in the subject.

ART AND DESIGN

73. This subject continues to be a strong feature of the school. Only two lessons were seen; additional evidence was drawn from pupils' work in progress, work on display and discussion with the co-ordinator. The subject has a high status in the school; pupils experience a rich and exciting curriculum and attain very good standards. No firm judgement on teaching is possible, but all the indications are that it is at least good and very good in the aspect of design.
74. Much of the work on display is initiated by work with artists in residence projects. This has recently been extended with support from the EAZ and work that combines art and design with other subjects. Year 3 and 4 pupils, for example, worked on a project on 'making friends, breaking friends' which led to some evocative written work and illustrations about being bullied. Their work was displayed in the local library. Pupils have also been involved in work with an artist that focused on designing and creating a 'transformation' of the main corridor. They worked with a good range of materials, including pastels, glass paints on acetate and oils, to create panels and hangings on an environmental theme. This also linked well with work in literacy; Year 3 pupils wrote an 'artist's log' that described the process of preparation through sketches, learning the techniques for using glass paints and linking individual acetate panels together to make a hanging.
75. As they move through the school, pupils' skills in drawing and their confidence in using a variety of materials to represent their ideas and observations develop well. Year 3 and 4 pupils made good use of line and colour in creating a very striking panel based on Picasso's 'Guernica'. In one lesson, Year 5 pupils used toning and shading techniques to improve their still life pictures. Year 6 pupils successfully used a variety of techniques and methods to portray movement, for example, using repeated reliefs of people in action. In another lesson, pupils successfully blended pastels to create slightly unfocused images of a crowd.
76. Much of the work in art provides opportunity for pupils to work on collaborative projects, thus supporting their social and cultural development. Year 5 pupils, for example, have created very impressive collages using pastels, oils, dye and paper to depict images of stories and dreams. Collage was also used well in a series of bold and colourful panels that retell the story of 'The Mousehole Cat'. Pupils' design skills are used well, for example, in creating posters to convey messages about healthy eating and in sketches and plans for making instruments.
77. Clear guidelines for planning, good support from the co-ordinator and regular in-service led by the artists in residence result in teachers having good subject knowledge and being confident in guiding pupils through some challenging tasks. Resources for practical work are very good, but there is a very limited range of reference books in the library.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY (DT)

78. Standards attained by eleven-year-olds are above average. They are better now than when the school was last inspected. The issues raised then of extending opportunities for pupils to develop the design aspects of the subject and to spend more time testing and evaluating their work have been addressed and improved.
79. The high standards result from good teaching which often links DT with other subjects, for example, in the design of a pressure pad to be incorporated into an alarm circuit,

mentioned earlier in science. Year 6 pupils worked to a design brief developing ideas well, deciding what they would need, and designing switches and facing and solving problems. The teacher used her good knowledge well, supporting pupils, skilfully, intervening as appropriate and offering suggestions and leading thinking without directly giving answers to problems. Pupils used design sheets to write brief procedural notes adding labels to well constructed diagrams. Eight-year-olds were designing monsters and incorporating a pneumatic system to make them move. In earlier lessons, these pupils had investigated ways in which a pneumatic system could be constructed using a balloon, a piece of plastic tubing and a plastic bottle. Some pupils incorporated this type of system into their designs. Before developing their own ideas, these pupils carefully examined a number of commercially produced toys which had moveable parts to determine how the moving mechanisms worked. They carefully drew sketches to record their ideas and initial designs, labelling them carefully. These were then evaluated and suggestions from other pupils helped to improve them further.

80. Evaluating and studying products, and testing out ideas play an important part in lessons. Ten-year-olds evaluate a range of commercially produced biscuits before designing and making their own. They study a range of commercially produced musical instruments to see how they work and how they are constructed before designing and making their own. Eight/nine-year-olds make model chairs out of card, first investigating ways in which chair legs might be constructed so as to have appropriate strength and rigidity to withstand reasonable weight. Because they are given plenty of opportunities for making things, pupils confidently use an increasing range of tools, materials and components. They make good progress in developing skills of cutting, moulding, shaping and fixing. Design skills become more sophisticated with older pupils being able to draw quite detailed and well-constructed plans.
81. Pupils enjoy DT and work together very well in small groups, developing and exchanging ideas. Teachers' good subject knowledge enables them to give effective support to pupils. This makes a significant contribution to the good progress pupils make. The co-ordinator works hard supporting colleagues and has been influential in improving standards in the subject. She supports teachers in their planning, seeing that it follows the national guidance, with the result that pupils are developing a wide range of skills and understanding. Because of the links with art, the subject has been enriched by the work of artists in residence. This experience has offered pupils further opportunities to use and develop designing and making skills and to learn a range of new techniques.

GEOGRAPHY

82. Pupils make satisfactory progress throughout the school in geography and standards attained by eleven-year-olds are broadly in line with the expectations for their age group. This is similar to that found at the last inspection.
83. It was not possible to see many lessons during the inspection but evidence from planning, pupils' work and talking with pupils suggests that teaching is satisfactory. Teachers use a good range of resources, such as photos, books and visits to give the pupils opportunities to research aspects of the topics that are covered. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when it was suggested that there should be more opportunities for independent research. The school is using national planning guidance as the basis for lessons and much of the geography work makes good use of the local area. This involves the pupils in visits and practical experiences, such as when they visit the local park to consider its facilities and how it could be improved, or they carry out a pedestrian survey in Leigh's town centre to evaluate the benefits of the pedestrianised zone. These local visits give real purpose to what they are learning in

geography.

84. Younger pupils study the town of Leigh and give directions to find different buildings in the town. They successfully describe where the school is situated and locate and mark places of interest on a map. Year 4 pupils learn about a village in India and compare this with their own locality. They begin to understand some of the similarities and differences between life in Leigh and life in rural India. They are very aware that children attend school in both places but the schools are very different. They begin to appreciate their own good fortune of being able to turn on a tap for water rather than have to go and fetch it from a communal supply. The previously mentioned visit to 'Hope Carr Barn' gave older pupils firsthand experience of water filtration and water treatment. Pupils in Year 6 have studied two different environments and looked at their own town compared with Coniston in the Lake District. This has given them opportunities to learn about contour lines, and Ordnance Survey symbols and to use six-figure grid references.
85. The subject co-ordinator is enthusiastic and provides good leadership. She arranges for sets of books to be available for each topic and this has given pupils opportunities to carry out individual research, such as when making booklets in Year 5 about volcanoes. She is aware that the use of CD-ROMs and the Internet would enhance the subject further.

HISTORY

86. Pupils make satisfactory progress throughout the school and standards attained by eleven-year-olds are broadly in line with the expectations for their age group. This is a decline since the last inspection.
87. Younger pupils have recently visited the Diva Centre at Chester, which has given them firsthand knowledge of everyday life in Roman Britain. They talk enthusiastically about what they have learned. They know that the lifestyle of the rich was more elaborate than that of the poorer Romans and talk knowledgeably about the house of a rich person. They know that it was called a villa and that the floors would have been made from mosaic. Pupils have prepared glossaries of vocabulary associated with the Romans, which has extended their literacy skills. Older pupils in Year 4 learn about invaders, and using what they had learned in previous history lessons, compare Roman settlements with those of the Anglo Saxon times and then consider the later invasion by the Vikings. They know that resources, such as water, building materials and land suitable for farming would be needed for a settlement. They then consider their own environment and look at the reasons that the town of Leigh developed in the nineteenth century and understand that the resources of coal and the proximity of the canal would be reasons for the town's development.
88. Older pupils have enjoyed learning about the Tudors and have benefited from a visit to a Tudor building, 'Hall i' th' Wood' where they dressed as Tudor servants. This gave them good insight into what life was like in those days. After listening to a tape about Tudor times, pupils make a tape about modern life. This experience helps them to reflect on how present day life is different from the past and the making of a tape, improves their skills in speaking and listening. Year 6 pupils, learning about life in this country since 1930, begin to appreciate some of the effects of the Second World War. They know that after the war, many were homeless because of the bombing, but they are also aware that wartime gave a boost to the fight for equal rights for women. They discuss the impact that the introduction of television has had on everyday lives and know that many people were concerned that it would change family life.

89. It was not possible to see many lessons during the inspection, but evidence from looking at planning, pupils' work and talking with pupils suggests that teaching is satisfactory. Teachers use a good range of resources, such as photos, books, videos and visits to give the pupils opportunities to understand the importance of using evidence to learn about the past.
90. The subject co-ordinator is enthusiastic and provides good leadership. An issue in the previous inspection was that there should be more opportunities for independent research and this remains the case.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

91. Standards attained by eleven-year-olds are in line with expectations. Although this is similar to the situation at the last inspection, it represents considerable improvements, as the demands of the subject are different. The teaching of ICT is good and teachers' good subject knowledge enables them to teach confidently. This improvement in teaching is the result of effective whole-school training.
92. Resources have also been improved; almost all the computers have been replaced since the last inspection and incorporated into a good ICT suite. Other useful equipment has been added, including an interactive whiteboard and sensing equipment. The former is used effectively to support class teaching and the latter is used to measure light and temperature changes in science.
93. A satisfactory range of opportunities is provided for pupils to learn and use skills in ICT. As a result of these opportunities and good teaching they develop confidence in their own abilities, make good progress and achieve well. A feature of most lessons is the support pupils give to each other and their enthusiasm for the subject. These contribute to the good progress made in learning.
94. Progress is good throughout the school. Year 3 learn about the Internet and its power. They use it to access a website and search the site for information, for example seeking information about the Romans in Britain. With help from the teacher, they compose and send e-mails. Year 4 pupils use the Internet to further their science knowledge, successfully finding out facts about endangered animal species. Year 5 and Year 6 pupils successfully use spreadsheets to develop their mathematical understanding. Year 5 pupils calculate averages from given data and Year 6 work out areas and volumes of shapes from given dimensions.
95. Management of the subject is good. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and enthusiastic and gives good support to teachers. The adoption of the national guidance gives good coherence and direction to the lessons and ensures that teachers plan work that meets the needs of pupils. There are few computers sited in classrooms and this, in some part, restricts pupils' use of ICT. This has usefully been recognised and, in its move towards the full implementation of a good development plan, the school has recently increased the number of computers and is shortly to install these in classrooms. The school is currently working on procedures for assessing pupils' progress.

MUSIC

96. Standards achieved by eleven-year-olds are broadly in line with national expectations. As it was not possible to see many lessons during the week of the inspection, it is not possible to make a judgement about the quality of teaching. However, the scheme in use provides good coverage of all the aspects of music, such as singing and learning

about and creating music. Teachers use a carefully planned sequence of lessons for pupils to develop good knowledge of music

97. Pupils respond well to music and they show interest in musical activities. For example, they enjoy listening to the piano as they come into assembly and a number of children are learning to play musical instruments, such as guitars, violins and keyboards as well as descant, treble and tenor recorders. There is a good range of musical instruments to support the curriculum. These include some from other cultures, such as rainmakers. Pupils in Year 6 are thoroughly enjoying being involved in an end of year concert with a Samba theme. Pupils enthusiastically play steel band instruments, which are on loan from the local secondary school. They play with a strong sense of rhythm and it is evident that they are enjoying themselves. They all remember their parts and play confidently.
98. In one lesson, Year 3 pupils listened attentively to different types of music and recognised the structure of the pieces of music. They explored their own feelings about the music that they were listening to through appropriate movements and devised sequences, working in groups. They persevered with the activity and evaluate one another's ideas.
99. The management of the subject is good. The co-ordinator has recently led training with the teaching staff in order to introduce the recently purchased music scheme. This has helped them to be confident in their use of the scheme and the appropriate resources. Recently, the Friends Association has given financial help, which has enabled the school to upgrade resources. Each year group has its own CD player and a wide range of untuned and tuned percussion instruments has been purchased in order to support the new music scheme.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION (PE)

100. During the inspection, it was only possible to see three lessons, all of which were focused on athletic activities. Wet weather meant that two of these took place in the hall and lesson plans had to be modified to take account of the confined space. No lessons with Year 6 took place and it is not possible to make an overall judgement on standards and the quality of teaching. However, lesson plans, discussion with the co-ordinator and displays around the school show that all aspects of the subject are covered and that it has a high status in the curriculum.
101. In the lessons seen, pupils' skills were broadly in line with expectations. A group of Year 3 pupils worked hard to improve their performance as they skipped between two cones and tried to both increase their speed and reduce the time that it took for the activity. Year 4 pupils showed reasonably good control in jumping and running; the majority are well-co-ordinated, but sometimes the 'finish' to movements is rather uncontrolled. Many Year 5 pupils are aware of the impact of exercise on the body and the reasons for 'warming up' before starting activities. In one lesson, pupils worked well in groups, organising equipment, timing and recording performances and encouraging each other. The majority sustained activity at a reasonable rate, with some very proficient at fast skipping! As with the Year 4 pupils, movement was generally well controlled, though occasionally rather 'ragged'.
102. Planning is based on national guidance with a good range of supplementary materials to support teaching of specific aspects of the subject. Year 3 and 4 pupils have regular swimming lessons; some pupils have additional lessons out of school hours and all can swim the expected distance (25 metres) by the end of Year 5. This represents good

achievement in this aspect of the subject. Resources are very good and supplemented by equipment won in local competitions. Funding from Sport England and the EAZ has promoted good links with the local secondary school; Year 5 and 6 pupils use the facilities there, benefit from specialist teaching and participate in tournaments organised for the local cluster of schools. Provision for other year groups is more restricted; accommodation creates some difficulties because there is no field and space in the playgrounds and hall is very limited.

103. Good use is made of links with local clubs to provide some specialist coaching and to promote pupils' interest in sport. A good range of extra-curricular activities is open to Years 5 and 6, including football, netball and rugby. Pupils are generally well-motivated and interested in sport; for example, participation in a cross-country event led to some children joining a local athletic club. The school's success in local competitions indicates good standard of achievement in games.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (RE)

104. Pupils make satisfactory progress throughout the school in RE and standards attained by eleven-year-olds are broadly in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus.
105. Younger pupils learn about Judaism and know that, 'Jewish people believe in one God who is the creator of the world'. They know stories from the Old Testament such as Moses and the Burning Bush and the story of Abraham. Year 4 pupils know that the season of Advent is when 'you get ready for Christmas', they write their own prayers and they know that the stations of the cross are 14 holy places to do with the story of Easter. Pupils in Year 5 learn about Islam and label the different parts of the mosque. They know that the Moslem world family is called the Ummah and that Moslems are concerned for each other in whatever country they live. They visit local churches and know the names for different parts of the church and explain what significance they have. Year 6 pupils have good knowledge of the books of the Bible and make a Bible bookcase, showing the different books of Old Testament in their law, history, wisdom and prophecy groups. They write their reasons as to why they think that the Bible is a best seller such as 'the Bible is a great storybook', or 'Christians get comfort and strength from reading it'.
106. In the few lessons seen the teaching was good. As a result, pupils enjoy their RE, they work hard and their work is well presented and carefully done. In a lesson following a visit to the local Parish Church, pupils in Year 5 enjoyed discussing what they had found out about different parts of the church such as the stained glass windows. They know that the windows, apart from making the church look beautiful, were there originally to tell Bible stories to people who could not read. Teachers have good subject knowledge and ask good questions which help pupils to think about what they are learning. Pupils in Year 6 enjoyed a lesson assembling a Hindu shrine. This practical activity ensured that pupils were involved in what they were learning; they enjoyed putting out the cloth, the puja tray, the statue of the god, the candles and the flowers and understood the significance of each article. The teacher's good subject knowledge, having attended such a ceremony herself, gave pupils accurate information about Hindu worship in the home.
107. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and gives good subject leadership. She has introduced a profile for each topic where each child records his/her feelings before it begins; at the end, pupils write about what they found difficult and what they would like to learn more about. This provides a good strategy for the pupils to reflect on what they have learned.