

INSPECTION REPORT

GARSWOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Garswood, St Helens

LEA area: St Helens

Unique reference number: 104778

Headteacher: Mr Kevin Cooney

Reporting inspector: Susan Walker
21678

Dates of inspection: 6th – 9th May 2003

Inspection number: 246409

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
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Hamilton Road Garswood St Helens Near Wigan
Postcode:	WN4 OSF
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Janet Richardson
Date of previous inspection:	1 st December 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21678	Susan Walker	Registered inspector	Educational inclusion, Information and communication technology.	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What the school should do to improve further?
19361	Keith Ross	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
2911	Eric Steed	Team inspector	Science, Art and design.	How good are curricular and other opportunities?
21020	Tess Galvin	Team inspector	Special educational needs, English as an additional language, English, Music.	
31334	Barbara Atcheson	Team inspector	History, Geography, Religious education.	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development.
25577	Bill Jefferson	Team inspector	Mathematics, Physical education.	
30935	Kath McArthur	Team inspector	Foundation Stage, Design and technology.	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Garswood Primary School is a bigger than average primary school for boys and girls aged 4-11. This popular school is situated in the local village where most pupils live. The majority of pupils live in a wide variety of private housing. The number of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is below the national average, as are the number of pupils on the special educational needs register. Virtually all pupils are of white ethnic origin and there are no pupils who speak English as an additional language. On entry to the school children's attainment is slightly below average. The school is widely involved in local and national initiatives that benefit the pupils' education very well. Consequently, it has been awarded a much greater than average number of national awards including the Basic Skills quality mark award, the Early Years Kite mark and Investors in People. The school was awarded 'Partnership Promotion School' status in 2002 by the Teacher Training Agency in recognition of a commitment to Initial Teacher Training. It is one of the few schools in the country to have four teachers with advanced skills status on the teaching staff.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Garswood Primary School is a very effective school whose numerous strengths far outweigh its relatively few areas for development. This is due to very good leadership and management and a very clear vision for where the school is heading. This reflects the school motto of 'working together, striving for excellence'. By the time that pupils leave the school they attain well above average standards in English and mathematics and are a credit to the school with their very good attitudes to learning. The level of excellent and very good teaching that the pupils receive is well above national average and this gives excellent shared capacity for future improvement. The school gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils attain well above average standards in English and mathematics in Year 6.
- The curriculum for children in the reception class is very good, as is teaching. The same can be said for the teaching and curriculum for pupils in Years 5 and 6.
- The headteacher and senior management team provide very good leadership and management of the school and are committed to future school improvement.
- The school provides very good leadership of special educational needs and very effective support for pupils from the 'Excel team' of learning assistants. As a result pupils achieve well.
- The school provides very good provision for pupils' social, moral and cultural development, which results in them having very good attitudes, behaviour, and relationships.
- The very good systems of support that the school provides result in a very caring ethos.
- Very good partnerships with the community and other schools. An excellent partnership with a range of teacher training institutions to train future teachers.
- Many pupils benefit from the very good range of extra-curricular activities.
- Very good information for parents and an excellent school web site.

What could be improved

- Pupils' attainment and progress in music, especially in Year 6.
- The level of challenge for higher attaining pupils in Year 2 and Years 3 and 4 in some lessons.

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 December 1997. It went through an unsettled period two years ago when staff changed, but it has made very good recent improvement. The few key issues, assessment, appraisal and information for parents have been addressed very well and almost all other aspects of school life have improved markedly.

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
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	C	D	A	A
mathematics	B	B	A	A
science	C	B	C	C

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

When children start school, their attainment is slightly below average for their age. They make good progress in all six areas of learning during their time in the reception class. They make very good progress in their personal, social and emotional development. When they join Year 1, the great majority of the children have reached the early learning goals in all areas, and some are working into the next level. A strength is that the school ensures that almost all pupils achieve the expected levels for their age by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. In the 2002 national tests for pupils aged eleven, standards were well above average in English and mathematics against all schools nationally and those in similar socio-economic circumstances. Results were average in science because the school did not provide a booster class for pupils in science in 2002. It has taken effective action to put one in place in 2003. Trends over time show that standards are at least above average in mathematics, but are more variable in English and science. Nevertheless, the school usually exceeds its targets in English and mathematics. Inspection findings confirm that standards remain well above average in English and mathematics and are above average in science. Standards in design and technology and physical education at age eleven are above average and pupils make good progress.

In the 2002 national tests for pupils aged seven, standards were above average in writing and average in reading and mathematics against all schools nationally and similar schools. Inspection findings confirm a similar picture. Standards are below average in history at age eleven and below average in geography at age seven because the school does not devote sufficient time to the subjects. Standards in information and communication technology are in line with what would be expected for pupils aged seven and eleven and they make good progress. Standards in religious education are in line with those set out in the local education authority syllabus. In music standards are below average at age eleven. In all other subjects pupils aged seven and eleven attain in line with what would be expected for pupils of their age and make satisfactory progress.

There is no significant difference in the learning of boys and girls. Higher attaining pupils in Year 2 and older and higher attaining pupils in Years 3 and 4 do not make sufficient progress in some lessons, because they do not receive enough challenging tasks. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well due to the support they receive from the 'Excel team' of learning assistants.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils show very positive attitudes to their lessons and to their school and this helps them to try hard to improve in their learning.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Boys and girls collaborate and co-operate both in class and around the school.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. By the time that they reach Year 6 pupils are very thoughtful and helpful. They undertake their responsibilities with great care. Relationships throughout the school are very good.

Attendance	Satisfactory. Unauthorised absence is recorded as zero, but this cannot be verified because the school's good structures are not fully in place. A small number of pupils are late for the beginning of school.
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TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

All lessons seen were at least satisfactory, with four out of five being good and nearly a half very good or excellent. This reflects the fact that the school has four advanced skills teachers who support pupils' learning very well. Teaching is very good for children in the reception classes and for pupils in Years 5 and 6 and good and sometimes very good in Year 1. The successful features of the excellent and very good lessons observed were new topics securely based on pupils' previous learning; the purpose of the lesson is shared with pupils so they know what they have to do and endings of lessons are used very effectively to consolidate learning. Lessons are based on practical activities, they proceed at a very brisk pace maximising the time available for pupils to learn. Teachers provide clear explanations of vocabulary, ideas and techniques. Basic skills are taught very well. Pupils are very well managed because of very good or excellent relationships. Rewards are used very well to boost pupils' self-esteem and encourage them to persevere. Teaching is good in English, mathematics, science, design and technology, information and communication technology and physical education. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in lessons and they benefit from very good teaching from learning assistants and visiting specialists. Where lessons are satisfactory there are some minor issues that are not as good as they should be in specific classes. Such as the level of challenge for higher attaining pupils in Year 2 and higher attaining and older pupils in Years 3 and 4 and also the lack of knowledge and understanding in music and in occasional lessons in information and communication technology. Marking is an area for development in terms of consistency throughout the school. Homework supports pupils' learning well.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. It is a broad, inclusive curriculum. Children under five receive a very good curriculum. There is very good provision for teaching numeracy skills and good provision in literacy. Extra-curricular activities are very good. The time allocated to music, geography and history is insufficient.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. It enables the identified pupils to make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Currently, the school has no pupils who speak English as an additional language, but it makes suitable provision for such pupils as the need arises.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good provision for moral, social and cultural development and good provision for spiritual development. The school's very positive ethos allows pupils to flourish and grow in understanding. There is a strong sense of community, and also very good opportunities for pupils to learn about their own and other cultures.
How well the school cares for its pupils	A very caring and inclusive school with very good procedures in place to support pupils. Very good assessment procedures for checking what children in the reception class know. Similar quality procedures for assessing what pupils understand in English, mathematics and information and communication technology in the rest of the school.

The parents are very supportive of the school. They receive very good information about what happens in school and their children's progress. They have access to a very wide range of information through the school's excellent web site. There are very good links with the community and with other schools and colleges, which aid pupils' learning very well. The school makes an excellent contribution to training future teachers.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good leadership and management. The headteacher provides excellent personal leadership and has a very clear vision for where the school is heading. He is supported by a very able deputy headteacher and the senior management team helps to manage the school efficiently. The whole school team has a very strong commitment to future improvement.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The governing body has shared training with the school and has a similar commitment to future improvement.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very realistic due to very good monitoring and evaluation which is proven by the school's range of external awards. The school appointed a school improvement officer which led to a sharp improvement in the collection and evaluation of school data.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The available resources are used well to support pupils' learning. The headteacher puts the money into areas he feels strongly support a rich, practical curriculum. The school applies best value for money well.

Resources are very good because the school sets careful priorities for purchases. For instance, very good resources for information and communication technology are enabling pupils to make good progress. The level of staffing is good. The 'Excel team' (learning assistants) provide particularly effective support to pupils' learning. The accommodation is satisfactory overall, with weaknesses in the size of some classrooms, which limits what teachers can achieve, particularly when class sizes are bigger than usual for the school. The space for a library is limited and does not allow pupils to carry out research.

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 like coming to school and are becoming mature and responsible. • The headteacher and staff are approachable. • The school expects children to work hard and so they make good progress. • The school is well led and managed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extra-curricular activities. • Homework. • Information for parents. <p>8-10 per cent of parents in a very high return of questionnaires had concerns about these issues.</p>

The inspection team agrees with the parents about what the school does well. Inspection findings, however are that information for parents and extra-curricular activities are both very good. The provision of homework is good.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. In the last inspection in 1997 most children in the reception class achieved the expected standard at age five and many children were better than this. However, assessment on entry to school since that point shows that children regularly enter school slightly below the national average in literacy and numeracy, but with few children either well below or well above this standard. The current Year 2 pupils have one of the lowest baseline scores on entry for numeracy. This level of attainment accounts for some of the fluctuation in standards seen.
2. Children enter the reception class at the beginning of the autumn term of the school year in which they become five. There were 50 children in the class at the time of the inspection. Most children have previously attended nursery or playgroup, but a few have had no formal pre-school experience. The children make good progress in all six areas of learning¹ during their time in the reception class due to very good teaching. They make very good progress in their personal, social and emotional development. When they join Year 1, the great majority of the children have reached the early learning goals² in all areas, and some are working into the next level.
3. In the 2002 national assessment tests for pupils aged seven, standards were average against all schools and schools in similar socio-economic circumstances in reading and mathematics and above average in writing. Teacher assessment in science shows that standards were above the national average.
4. Trends over time in reading and writing show that with the exception of 2002 trends are almost always well above average in reading and writing. Trends over time show that in mathematics, with the exception of Year 2 pupils in 2002, standards achieved overall have been consistently above the national average for a number of years. Although all of these pupils achieved the expected standard, the proportion that achieved a level higher than might be expected was below the national average. There is little difference in the attainment of boys and girls aged seven in the national tests over time. Most are a term and a half ahead of other Year 2 pupils nationally. Boys attain slightly better standards than girls in mathematics over time. The school analyses the standards which boys and girls achieve and ensures that they achieve their potential. No evidence of differing standards between boys and girls were found during the inspection.
5. In the 2002 national assessment tests for pupils aged eleven, pupils were well above average against all schools and similar schools in English and mathematics and average in science. The school ensures that almost all pupils attain the expected level for their age.
6. Trends over time show that in mathematics pupils are always above average, but that attainment is more variable in English and science. In both 2001 and 2002, Year 6 pupils did not receive the same high standard of teaching as seen at present. Over three years boys usually attain higher standards than girls do, although no evidence of this was seen during the inspection. The school analyses pupils' attainment by gender to ensure that all pupils attain their potential. The school consistently meets its targets for the number of pupils who achieve the expected levels.
7. The apparent peaks and troughs in pupils' progress between Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 can be explained by the number of teachers who have changed in the past few years. The quality of

¹ The six areas of learning in the Foundation Stage curriculum are: personal, social and emotional development; communication, language and literacy; mathematics; knowledge and understanding of the world; creative development; physical development.

² The early learning goals are the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the foundation stage.

teaching over time has not been of the good quality seen during the inspection.

8. Inspection findings in English show that standards in Year 2 are average in speaking and listening and reading, but are above average in writing. Standards in Year 6 are well above average. Overall, pupils make satisfactory progress in the infants and good progress in the juniors, but the best progress is in Year 5 and 6 where teaching is better. Throughout the school most pupils listen attentively to their teachers and to each other. By Year 6 pupils use a good range of vocabulary in discussion. Most pupils in Year 2 enjoy reading and higher attaining pupils read confidently. However, all pupils in Year 2 do not receive books that are well matched to their abilities and this limits their progress. In writing pupils use the basic skills of handwriting and punctuation correctly, but spelling in some junior classes is not as good as it could be. By Year 6 pupils are using paragraphs and higher attaining pupils have a good grasp of using language to best effect. Pupils use their research skills on the computer, but they have less opportunity to do so in the library because it is not conveniently situated.
9. Inspection evidence in mathematics indicates that a high proportion of the current Year 2 classes are working at the expected level of attainment, but that the proportion working above expectation is small. A small but significant number of pupils work at a level below expectations. Infant pupils make satisfactory progress in their learning. Pupils work confidently at the expected level for their age, for instance, when working with multiples of 2, 5 and 10. They use number lines well to support their work in numeracy. They recognise a good number of two and three-dimensional shapes. However, standards are well above average at the end of Year 6 and junior pupils make very good progress due to the very good teaching that they receive, particularly in Years 5 and 6. Boys and girls understand the equivalencies between fractions, decimals and percentages and can calculate using ratio. They use their knowledge of metric measures to practise their number work to three places of decimals. They construct line graphs and work average speed from time and distance graphs.
10. Current standards in science at age seven are at the national average level and at age eleven are above the national average. All pupils make satisfactory progress in their learning. In Year 2 pupils make good use of 'similarities' and 'differences', 'cause and effect' when discussing how materials change. They have sound knowledge and understanding of why you need a 'fair test'. By Year 6 pupils demonstrated understanding of the need to make predictions, to observe closely, to measure accurately, to record gathered data faithfully and to draw conclusions based securely on the evidence that had been accumulated. They can explain why a test may not be fair and were able to plan a suitable fair test to cover each of the activities on offer during the observed lessons.
11. In information and communication technology, pupils attain standards in line with what would be expected for pupils aged seven and eleven, but they make good progress due to the very good resources which they now use. However, a slight lack of knowledge and understanding of techniques pupils of this age are expected to use, for example 'hyper links' limits the standards achieved.
12. In music, Year 2 pupils are broadly in line with the standards expected of pupils of their age. In geography, Year 2 pupils do not reach the average standard for their age and they make unsatisfactory progress due to insufficient time being allocated to the subject. Standards in religious education are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus and pupils' progress is satisfactory. In all other subjects standards at age seven are in line with what would be expected of Year 2 pupils and they make satisfactory progress.
13. At age eleven standards are better than average in design and technology and physical education and pupils make good progress due to good teaching. Standards in history are below average and pupils make unsatisfactory progress due to the amount of time allocated to the subject. In all other subjects standards are in line with what would be expected for pupils aged eleven. Standards in

religious education are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus and pupils' progress is satisfactory. However, in Year 6 there is a below the national average amount allocated to music and this does not allow pupils to cover the curriculum in sufficient depth. Also teachers are not confident in teaching music. The school has already recognised music as a priority for this academic year.

14. Pupils' learning is aided by the fact that the vast majority stay in the school throughout their primary years and so their strengths and areas for improvement are well-known to staff. However, in recent years five teachers have moved out and five new teachers have been appointed, some at short notice, and in addition there have been short periods where supply teachers have taught in the school. Pupils' learning has been disrupted somewhat in some year groups by these events.
15. Pupils are taught in mixed-age classes in Years 3 and 4 because of the numbers in these year groups. There is a two-year rolling programme to ensure that pupils do not study the same aspects of the curriculum in the following year. This is more effective in some lessons than others. In subjects such as history and geography work is not well matched to pupils' age and ability. In some classes which operate a rota of activities in English, older and higher attaining pupils are not sufficiently challenged and this does not aid their learning well enough.
16. The number of pupils on the special educational needs register is lower than average. Because they get such a very good start in the reception class they begin their infant years with a good grasp of basic skills. The standards pupils with special educational needs attain are often below or well below those expected for the pupils' ages, but they are satisfactory in relation to the pupils' identified needs and specific targets. The school's very good programme of support for these pupils is very well organised to identify pupils who need extra help in class. This ensures that they make similar, and sometimes better, progress compared to their classmates. Arrangements for supporting pupils with statements of special educational needs are very effective and ensure that they attain standards that are in line with their prior achievements.
17. The learning of lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs is aided by the school's very good resources for information and communication technology. Specific programs, such as those in mathematics, allow pupils to revise and consolidate their skills on an individual basis.
18. Currently, the school has no pupils who speak English as an additional language, but it makes suitable arrangements when this happens. The school's provision for gifted and talented pupils is in the early stages of development. It provides very effectively for them in Year 5, but the provision has not yet been extended across the school because techniques and strategies are still being trialed. There is a satisfactory policy to help teachers in identifying and supporting such pupils.
19. Parents feel that pupils are making good progress and the school feels that pupils achieve well in their learning. Overall, considering the changes in the curriculum and the turnover of staff since the last inspection, the school has maintained standards appropriately.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

20. Pupils' attitudes, values relationships and personal development are all very good. This agrees with the school's assessment that pupils are "happy and productive" and supports parents' views well. This is a good improvement since the last inspection.
21. In the reception class relationships are warm and friendly, and the children express this clearly by writing "I like school because the teachers are kind". Each child's self-esteem is sensitively promoted, and achievements are positively rewarded with praise and stickers. Children show very good attitudes to their learning, behave well and are interested and involved in every activity.

22. Pupils are keen to come to school. They have very positive attitudes to learning and show good levels of interest. They quickly become involved in a wide range of activities and become independent learners when they are offered the opportunity to do so. Most pupils behave very well in and around school and are polite and courteous to adults, although a small minority can become over excited and display inappropriate behaviour on occasions. There are numerous examples of very positive attitudes, particularly where the quality of teaching encourages warm relationships and fosters the confidence of the pupils. In one Year 6 class pupils were very interested and enthusiastic about reading their play scripts. Pupils shared what they had done with each other, to the spontaneous applause from the rest of the group, showing a high degree of respect for each others' work. During a history lesson on John Lennon in Year 6, pupils listened intently and interacted in a very positive way. They were interested in their learning. The school has a 'buddy system' where older pupils look after the infants, play with them and generally look after their well-being. There are also 'buddies' in the junior playground. There is a 'bus stop' for pupils who are feeling miserable for one reason or another and 'buddies' are quick to respond to their needs. This strategy supports the ethos of an inclusive school very effectively.
23. Pupils work co-operatively and constructively in groups. In a Year 5 art lesson, pupils showed a good level of co-operative work in groups. There was a very good adherence to the conventions of discussion. In a Year 1 English lesson pupils played together amicably and shared resources. Pupils enjoy learning. In a Year 2 mathematics lesson pupils responded confidently to questions and were proud of their knowledge. High standards of presentation seen in some of the scrutiny of work show that pupils do have pride in their work, however, this is not consistent across the whole school. In lessons pupils have a real sense of worth when they talk about what they have achieved.
24. Pupils are tolerant of each other. They play contentedly together despite the large numbers of pupils on the playground at any one time. They show a growing understanding of each other's needs. Pupils say that bullying is very rare. Boys and girls relate well to each other. They understand that if they disobey the rules it will have an effect on other people, for instance it will upset them.
25. Pupils develop very mature attitudes as they move through the school. By the time they reach Year 6, pupils are thoughtful, helpful and willing to learn. All pupils are willing to undertake simple responsibilities such as taking the registers and acting as monitors. They organise themselves in a mature way, taking responsibility for tidying up for themselves, looking after their belongings and collecting resources for practical subjects. They show very good initiative. For instance, two of the appointed 'buddies' noticed that a group of boys were sitting on the willow weave seat, which was out of bounds as it was newly planted. One of the boys was pulling the structure and so the 'buddies' went over, had a quiet word and the boys dispersed without argument. Opportunities to learn about citizenship are created, for example, through the class councils.
26. Pupils with special educational needs generally have very good attitudes to learning, behave well and thrive on the good support, which they receive from teachers and very good help they receive from learning assistants. As a result they make similar progress to their peers. Pupils with special educational needs enjoy coming to school. Most listen well and try to answer questions that have been set to meet their individual needs. Pupils' confidence is generally very good when their contributions to lessons are sought and valued, and when teachers and peers celebrate their successes. Pupils who have statements of special educational needs apply themselves very well and are responsive to the very good support they are being given, particularly in one-to-one situations to assist their personal as well as academic development.
27. Attendance is satisfactory and broadly in line with the national average. Unauthorised absence is recorded as zero. However, the school's good procedures have not been fully carried out this year. Consequently, unauthorised absence cannot be verified. A small but significant number of

pupils are late for the beginning of school thus missing the start of lessons.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

28. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall, with many strong features. **All lessons seen were satisfactory or better with almost a half of such lessons very good or excellent. This proportion is well above the national average and reflects the fact that this school has four advanced skills teachers on the staff.** It supports both the school's and parents' view that teaching is very good. The best teaching was consistently seen in the reception class and in Years 5 and 6. Teaching is good and sometimes very good in Year 1. The amount of very good and excellent lessons observed is a major improvement since the last inspection.
29. Teaching for children in the reception class is very good and is recognised by the school's award of the Early Years Kite mark. Lessons are very well planned to provide practical, imaginative and investigational activities for pupils. The reception class contains very good resources and staff take full advantage of them to enhance children's learning. The collaborative learning that all the adults in the reception class provide is a strength. Children's work is very well displayed by all staff and much use is made of the digital camera to record children's learning.
30. The following are features of the excellent and very good lessons observed during the inspection, both in the infants, juniors and the reception class. All lessons were very well planned and resourced.
- **New topics are securely based on pupils' previous learning.** The purpose of the lesson is shared with pupils, so they know what they have to do, and endings of lessons are used very effectively to consolidate pupils' learning.
Such as in a Year 1 physical education lesson, where pupils were kept on track by the purpose of the lesson being referred to throughout the session. In a Year 5 science lesson pupils played the instruments that they had made and other pupils evaluated their performance relating it to the challenge that had been set. Similarly, in a Year 5 design and technology lesson, pupils talked of their success and what they would modify when making bread for their café.
 - **The curriculum is based on practical activities.**
For example, in a Year 5 art and design lesson, where pupils were encouraged to evaluate materials before making decisions about what they would use.
 - **There is a very brisk pace maximising the time available for pupils to learn.**
For instance, in a Year 5 PHSE lesson the teacher promoted pupils' learning superbly by setting specific time limits for each task, or in a Year 6 mathematics lesson, where the use of the computerised whiteboard allowed a great deal of ground to be covered in a short time.
 - **Very good knowledge and understanding leading to clear explanations of vocabulary, ideas and techniques.**
Such as in a Year 6 English revision lesson, where the teacher's high quality reading and very good explanation of how a character's voice can aid the reader's understanding allowed the pupils to comprehend the text much more effectively.
 - **The very good teaching of basic skills, which is validated by the Basic Skills Quality mark.**
For instance, in a Year 6 revision mathematics lesson, where the computerised whiteboard allowed all pupils to see and understand the scales of capacity.
 - **Very good management or pupils which is based on the very good or excellent relationships which exist.**
Such as in a Year 1 mathematics lesson, where the very good relationships made pupils confident in talking about their work to their teachers and to interested observers.
 - **Endings to lessons are used very effectively to allow pupils to evaluate their learning.**
For example, in a Year 6 revision lesson, pupils indicated what they securely knew as a result of the lesson and what they still needed to grasp. They rewarded their teachers with a spontaneous round of applause as recognition of everyone's hard work.

- **Very good use of rewards to boost pupils' self-esteem and encourage them to persevere.**

As in Year 5 lessons where the use of 'praise pads' (where pupils evaluate each others performance) gives individuals instant feedback on what they do well.

31. Where teaching was judged to be good, lessons showed some of the positive features described above and consequently pupils made good progress in their learning. There is good teaching, overall, in English, mathematics, science, art and design, design and technology, information technology and physical education. Teaching is satisfactory overall in geography, history, music, and religious education.
32. Support in whole-class lessons for pupils with special educational needs is good. It is effective in enabling pupils to participate fully and with confidence in all their work. Teachers make good use of pupils' individual education plans to inform their planning and match the work they provide to the pupils' individual needs. Also pupils' learning benefits very well from the very good teamwork between class teachers, learning assistants and visiting specialists from outside agencies. The learning assistants are particularly effective and make a valuable contribution to both teaching and pupils' learning. The quality of teaching is very good when the learning assistants teach pupils individually or in small groups. This is because the assistants are friendly, encouraging, and have a very good knowledge and understanding of each pupil's particular strengths and areas of difficulty. They give pupils work that helps them to confidently gain new skills and knowledge therefore they make very good progress. This was evident when a learning assistant worked with pupils in Years 3 and 4 on games and important words related to the pupils' specific needs in reading. Also when another assistant worked on the computer with a Year 6 pupil with a statement of special educational needs.
33. In lessons seen during the inspection, all teachers made effective use of the numerous teacher training students to support pupils' learning. For instance, by supporting groups of pupils during the 'task part' of the lesson.
34. Where lessons are satisfactory there are some minor issues that are not as good as they should be in specific classes.
 - Behaviour management in one Year 3 and 4 class does not allow pupils to maximise their learning, such as when they call out and hold private conversations in a science lesson.
 - The level of challenge for higher attaining pupils in Year 2 and in some lessons for higher attaining and older pupils in Years 3 and 4.
 - The lack of knowledge and understanding in music and in occasional lessons in information and communication technology.
35. Marking is an area for development in terms of consistency throughout the school. There are examples of very good practice where teachers tell pupils how well they are doing in their learning – "great idea!" "good suspense!". Many teachers mark supportively using stickers as a reward for the effort which the pupil has put in to the task. However, where marking is not good enough, spellings remain uncorrected and when areas for improvement are commented upon in marking they are not followed through in subsequent pieces of the pupils' work.
36. There is a recent good quality teaching and learning policy that gives teachers good guidance in how to help pupils learn. The school makes good use of teacher's individual strengths by timetabling, for instance, one teacher in Year 6 to teach German and one teacher in Year 5 to teach information and communication technology to both classes. This supports pupils' learning well.
37. There is a new homework policy and inspection findings are that homework supports pupils' learning well, despite some parental concerns. For instance, in Year 6 pupils were given the task of writing an instruction leaflet for a pair of boots as part of their English lesson. In a Year 5 mathematics lesson in order to consolidate their learning, pupils were asked to explain to their

parents, the 'think of a number' problem solving technique that they had just learnt.

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

38. The curriculum offered to pupils between the ages of 5 and 11 is broad and meets statutory requirements. This agrees with the school's view of the curriculum. The curriculum is not fully balanced because provision for music is not yet completely in place. The school has just replaced its former scheme of work by recently buying a new scheme that is securely linked with the National Curriculum. This has not been integrated into teaching and learning because there has not been time to do so. There is insufficient time allocated to music, geography and history for adequate coverage of the subjects in order to improve pupils' learning. The curriculum promotes pupils' intellectual, personal and physical development effectively. Generally this maintains the situation at the time of the last inspection, but also includes some improvements that have strengthened overall provision.
39. The curriculum for children in the reception class is very good. It is securely based on the early learning goals, because staff have very good knowledge and understanding of young children's need for a practical integrated curriculum.
40. All the subjects of the National Curriculum are in place together with religious education. During the last inspection it was noted that in some subjects the school's schemes of work then being followed were "linked to the National Curriculum" whilst other schemes were new and not then fully implemented in each class. Since that time the school has adopted nationally available guidelines for all National Curriculum subjects, except music. These have sensibly been augmented by the retention of those elements of the former schemes that had proved to be successful. Policies are in place for all subjects and these are subject to an annual review by members of staff.
41. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. The very good teamwork between classroom teachers, learning assistants and visiting specialist staff makes the curriculum more accessible for these pupils. The school provides a flexible range of support to meet the various needs of individual pupils. The most effective is the help pupils receive from learning assistants when they are taken out of class lessons for extra tuition. Teachers use pupils' individual education plans well to plan suitable work to meet the needs of individuals. The school ensures that the provision in pupils' statements is in place and reviewed annually in line with national guidance. The school plans the arrangements for the withdrawal of individual pupils for additional literacy and numeracy help to ensure they do not miss work in other subjects unless it is unavoidable.
42. The school's provision for gifted and talented pupils is in the early stages of development. It provides very effectively for them in Year 5, but the provision has not yet been extended across the school, because techniques and strategies are still being trialed.
43. Since the last inspection the coverage of personal, social and health education (PHSE) has expanded to give discrete timetabled time for the subject, for example, during circle time. It is now very good. The policy also enables the teaching of PHSE within other subjects as opportunities arise during the school day; this is good practice and helps pupils to understand that PHSE is equally important in all aspects of the curriculum. Education for citizenship is now planned as an integral element of PHSE. The school has written a policy on race relations. There is a good quality inclusion policy in place that underpins all aspects of school life. Policies for other areas of non-subject curriculum provision are in place and are scheduled for regular review in order to support pupils' learning.
44. The governors have satisfactory policies in place for sex education and for drugs' awareness. Both are taught as an integral part of the science programme of study. There is an effective programme of health education programme that includes a Health Week.

45. The last report stated that long, medium-and short-term planning was securely in place and that teachers in each year group of classes planned collaboratively together in order that pupils should receive the same coverage of subject information. This good practice remains in place. There is a two-year rolling programme in Years 3 and 4 that ensures that pupils in Year 4 do not repeat topics already taught. In literacy and numeracy, generally the curriculum meets the needs of higher attaining pupils, but this practice has not been undertaken with sufficient rigour in other subjects. In science, the curriculum meets the needs of higher attaining pupils in the upper junior classes. This developing good practice now needs to be applied across the school.
46. The curriculum for numeracy is very good and the curriculum for literacy is effective, and this results in the good progress made in these areas by the time pupils leave the school. In all subjects the curriculum is planned effectively to give pupils good opportunities to practise their speaking and listening skills.
47. There has been good progress in the expansion of provision for extra-curricular activities. Provision is now clearly a very good feature of school life and is available to both boys and girls of all ages. Over half the pupils in the infants and three-quarters of the pupils in the juniors take part in these activities and this supports their learning well. Good provision for a wide range of activities has come about because teachers and other adults are willing to give generously of their own time. Clubs and activities include seasonal sports (each open to boys and girls), gardening, conversational Greek, drama, photography, textiles and short-term taster meetings for clubs that are available within the village. Trainee teachers also provide additional facilities during their time in the school, for example during the week of the inspection a dance club was available. Visits and visitors also enrich the curriculum. All classes undertake at least one educational visit each year that is directly linked to a topic that is being studied. Each visit is planned to enhance pupils' social development and their understanding of the world beyond the immediate environment.
48. Links with partner institutions and the community are very good and support pupils' learning very effectively. There are a range of links with other schools and institutions aimed at school improvement. Staff also make effective use of the local city learning facilities. Sponsorship by the local chamber of commerce has helped set up a bank in Year 5, which gives pupils practical experiences of mathematics. The school has also worked well with British Tree Conservation volunteers and a willow artist to create a safe garden environment.
49. Overall, the school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. This is a clear improvement from the last inspection, particularly in the area of cultural development.
50. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. As a result of effective teaching in religious education, pupils develop a good insight into Christianity, Judaism, Islam and Hinduism. Religious education also gives pupils an insight into how religious belief impacts upon peoples' lives, for example, the influence of prayer on the religious behaviour and lifestyle of Muslims. An effective PHSE programme across the school gives pupils the opportunity to understand human feelings and the way they impact on people. The whole school ethos is one where pupils can grow and flourish, respect others and be respected and this allows them to learn. This aspect was highlighted by a dance-drama workshop presented by the local education authority focused on 'being sensitive to and respecting similarities between people'. Teaching styles value pupils' questions and give them space for their own ideas and concerns, encouraging pupils to relate to learning in a wider frame by asking Why? How? Where? and What? However, there are not enough other planned opportunities for pupils' spiritual development in lessons. Pupils pray at lunchtime and at the end of the day. The school prayer is known by all and used in assembly where there is often the visual focus of a candle to allow pupils to concentrate and to provide a moment for reflection.

51. Provision for pupils' moral development is very good and provides a very good moral ethos to the school. The school motto 'working together, striving for excellence' is particularly evident throughout the school. Members of staff are very good role models in the way they care for individuals and are seen to work hard and to be fair. The school makes good use of 'circle time' to explore how to behave correctly. The difference between right and wrong is made clear and any inappropriate behaviour is explained in a quiet, sensitive manner. All staff consistently implement the school's policies for behaviour and equal opportunities. Pupils are expected to respect the views of others and to listen to each other and most do so, in this very inclusive school. Pupils are taught how to recognise the moral codes of other cultures through their religious education as they study the Torah and the Ten Commandments. Assemblies, which have a theme for the week, provide a very good model of moral virtue and the school's values are reinforced effectively through classroom displays. There is a half-termly citizenship and merit assembly that recognises and rewards those pupils who have been positive role models for other pupils.
52. Provision for social development is very good. The whole school ethos fosters a strong sense of community with common inclusive rules. Pupils are given very good opportunities to work in pairs and in small, mixed gender groups and to share their work with the whole class. Pupils are encouraged to work co-operatively, for example, in an information communication and technology lesson when knowledgeable boys and girls helped others to 'log on'. The dance-drama workshop provided good role models who encouraged the pupils to recognise and respect social differences. The school provides many corporate experiences for the pupils through assemblies, team games, school productions and residential experiences. There is also a residential weekend for older pupils. Assemblies also help them develop personal qualities such as thoughtfulness, honesty, and moral principles. Teachers successfully encourage pupils to become independent and to have self-respect. The very good provision of 'praise pads' in Year 5 classes where pupils nominate each other for their positive qualities gives a unique ethos to these two classrooms. At present there are class councils in preparation for a school council, which the school will introduce next year. There is a class council book, which shows that pupils have their views taken into account for example if equipment needs replacing. Class councils are used to solve practical problems and offer advice to other pupils. They choose the most improved pupil of the week; both girls and boys taking into account both attitudes and standards of work. When pupils do an outstanding piece of work, or do something that is particularly noteworthy, their name is put on a leaf on the 'Garswood Tree' in the hall and this helps to raise their self-esteem.
53. The school's provision for cultural development is very good and prepares pupils very well for life in a multi-cultural society. The school provides effective opportunities for pupils to explore their own cultural notions and values by taking them to visit the glassmaker in St Helens, Wigan Pier and Liverpool City Centre. A visiting African drummer both extended the pupils' cultural knowledge of music and promoted their awareness of the traditions and values of diverse cultures. There have also been visits from the Black Umfolosi gumboot dancers and the Molam Laos refugees (musicians from south-east Asia). The celebration of the Muslim festival of Eid extends pupils' knowledge and use of cultural imagery and language as pupils decorate their hands with Mendhi patterns. The school's provision for art and design makes a helpful contribution to pupils' knowledge and understanding of other cultures. They have very good opportunities to learn about European cultures past and present. Greek parties, inspired by a teacher who once lived in Greece, provides pupils with opportunities to participate in Greek dancing, cooking and tasting Greek food. Pupils learn to speak German and there is a very good link with similar schools in Germany and Poland. Pupils also learn French. A café, in the Year 5 role-play area, provides a good contribution to pupils' cultural diversity and awareness. Pupils' enjoyment as they take part in the role-play is obvious. They use French language prompt cards with a good degree of effort and unselfconscious application. Pupils listen to a good range of music and discuss the music for the week in assembly and this helps them to develop their knowledge and understanding.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

54. The school's very effective caring ethos is promoted well by all adults working as a team. This, together with a family atmosphere, provides a very good foundation for developing the very good attitudes to school that pupils show. As at the previous inspection, the school continues to provide very strong pastoral support and guidance for all its pupils. This reflects the school's priorities.
55. The governors place a high priority on health and safety matters and so pupils feel safe and secure in school. There are very good procedures to identify and control health and safety risks and to ensure that the premises, equipment and working practices are safe. First aid procedures are implemented effectively and there are sufficient staff trained in first aid. There are appropriate procedures in place for recording accidents and notifying parents of any injury that may require further monitoring.
56. Procedures for child protection are very good and meet statutory requirements. There is a good policy and procedures are communicated to staff very effectively. They are aware of their responsibilities if they feel a child is at risk.
57. The induction arrangements for children starting school are good, and ensure that they settle quickly and enjoy coming to school. A good programme is in place to ease pupils' transfer to secondary school.
58. The school promotes healthy eating appropriately, for instance, pupils sell toast and fruit at breaktime. There is a Healthy Eating Week as part of the curriculum. Parents appreciate the fact that the school houses a before and after school club.
59. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are satisfactory overall. When the registers for the previous academic year were checked, the school's good procedures were correctly followed. However, this is not the case for this academic year and for this reason it is not possible to verify the school's unauthorised attendance. The school is aware of the need to ensure that records of attendance are properly maintained and comply with statutory requirements.
60. The school's behaviour policy is very well worked out and gives very clear guidance to staff on practices that ensure and encourage appropriate behaviour. All staff implement this policy very well. The anti-bullying policy is clear in its purpose and approach to prevent bullying in school. Lunchtime routines are well-established and midday supervisors work effectively to ensure that the lunchtime is a pleasant social occasion.
61. There is an effective co-ordinator in charge of PHSE. Procedures for monitoring are satisfactory and procedures for promoting aspects of pupils' personal development are very good overall. An example of good practice was seen in a Year 5 PHSE lesson when pupils were understanding and recognising how they can play a positive part in challenging stereotypes. The teacher used the lesson very effectively to assess many aspects of pupils' social and emotional development.
62. The school has a very good Internet policy that parents sign. This tracks whether pupils are allowed to use the Internet and whether their names, photographs, or work may be used on the school's excellent web site. Very good records are kept of the parents' responses.
63. The school has devised very good links with other agencies to ensure the provision outlined in statements of special educational needs is implemented. Pupils with special educational needs, including emotional needs, receive very good support from the outside agencies. The special educational needs co-ordinator is responsible for liaising with a range of other professionals, parents and carers. These duties are undertaken very well, as is the organisation of annual review meetings. All statements and reviews are up-to-date and the school implements the specified provision very effectively, including access to extra staffing.

64. The school implements very good assessment procedures to identify pupils with special educational needs and comply with the new national guidance. The pupils' progress towards the targets in their individual education plans is checked each term. Staff record the pupils' achievements in lessons and use this information to plan future work for them. Therefore pupils make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. The school uses the information effectively and consistently for reviewing the appropriateness of pupils being retained on the school's special educational needs register and deciding what further help they may require. This has resulted in a few pupils making such good progress that they no longer need so much help. This represents good practice.
65. A key issue from the last inspection was for the school to make more effective use of assessment information. There has been very good action taken to address this problem since a new co-ordinator took over responsibility for assessment two years ago. There is now a good policy for monitoring, assessing, recording, reporting, and accountability. Good procedures are now followed by overall effective use of assessment to inform teachers' planning and pupils' future learning.
66. The reception class team have a very practical day-to-day system of recording significant moments in children's learning on 'sticky labels' to give them an instant record of achievement. Towards the end of the reception class, very good assessment is made of children's progress towards achieving the early learning goals. This forms a benchmark against which results of subsequent tests in English and mathematics are measured.
67. At the end of the infants and throughout the junior department, pupils undertake a very good, comprehensive range of screening tests in order to monitor their progress and also to predict future attainment in English and mathematics. Detailed analysis also identifies trends between different year groups and any gender differences. This information is used to focus on areas for improvement in teaching and learning. Assessment of pupils' achievement in science is not as structured, detailed or as consistently applied as it is for English and mathematics. Some upper junior teachers use it purposefully. In other parts of the school, assessment shows the science topics that have been taught, but not what individual pupils can or cannot do in relation to National Curriculum targets. In information and communication technology assessment is used very well to track pupils' skills development and to reward them with a certificate that acknowledges their progress.
68. A very good 'traffic light' system of recording attainment has been introduced which has great potential. It allows teachers to swiftly record whether pupils have fully grasped a concept. Fully implemented for science and foundation subjects and used effectively by all teachers, it would provide accurate assessment across the whole curriculum and enable the good system of target setting already implemented for English and mathematics to be developed. A levelled portfolio of pupils' writing is being maintained to support teachers' judgement of standards. This is very good practice but has not been extended to cover other curriculum areas.
69. A good system has recently been put in place to monitor and support pupils' academic progress. Individual records of achievement are to be maintained throughout a pupil's years in the school. This file of information will follow the pupil into secondary education.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

70. Parents' views of the school are very positive, even more so than at the time of the last inspection. This agrees with the school's views. Parents see the particular strengths as the commitment of staff, a strong family ethos and the fact that it is an inclusive school. They believe their children make good progress because the school expects children to work hard. These views are endorsed by the findings of the inspection, although a greater level challenge would

ensure that more higher attainers would achieve higher levels in Year 2 and Years 3 and 4.

71. Parents of pupils with statements of special educational needs are appropriately involved in annual review meetings. The school invites them to contribute to the discussions about the continuing needs of their child and the progress they have made since the previous review. The school is also efficient in consulting the parents who have individual education plans to inform and involve them in identifying their child's needs. They contribute to setting targets and work to achieve these at school and at home. Also the school involves pupils in setting and evaluating their learning targets.
72. The school has good links with parents. Parents feel there have been many improvements over recent years. For example, to information and communication technology, to the school grounds and to improved security. There is a very clear policy and a co-ordinator for school-family-community links, who works enthusiastically. She maintains a parents' skills register, organises parental help in school and family learning projects and effectively aims to involve parents in their children's learning.
73. Parents' contribution to support the work of the school and their children's learning is good overall. Appropriate home/school agreements are in place. These identify clearly the responsibilities of the school and of parents and show expectations for homework, pupils' behaviour and shared reading. Nearly all parents have signed and returned these agreements, indicating their commitment to supporting their children's education. A small but significant number of parents act as helpers in school, whilst many more inundate the school with offers of help, for example, to provide lifts to sports events. In turn the school offers them opportunities to get recognised qualifications. Such as basic skills in computer and a 'help your child early reading course'. Many classroom learning assistants are parents of children at the school and they and the school have benefited greatly from this initiative.
74. Additionally, the school values the support provided by the Parents Association (PA). Besides raising funds which supplement the school's budget and enable the school to purchase much needed resources, the Association organises a variety of events that bring people together socially. This facility further strengthens the link between home and school.
75. Parents are provided with very good information about the school through, for example, monthly eye-catching and informative newsletters and a very readable, prospectus which emphasises open partnership with parents and encourages them to visit the school. This is a marked improvement since the last inspection. Additionally, the wide range of opportunities to communicate with parents, includes an impressive school website showing such information as examples of children's work for each class, a list of current topics and the opportunity for parents to offer assistance if they have a particular skill. Annual reports to parents on children's progress are good, with a very helpful section highlighting pupils' attitudes to learning and their personal development.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

76. Leadership and management are very good overall and have enabled the school to make rapid recent progress since the last inspection when many aspects were not fully in place. This agrees with the school's own evaluation of its performance and supports the parents' view that leadership and management are good.
77. The headteacher has taken very strong action to strengthen leadership and management and to maintain his very clear vision of where the school is heading. He provides excellent personal leadership. The numerous local and national awards which the school has gained testify to the success of his priorities. The school has a very strong and inclusive ethos that supports pupils'

learning very effectively. The school is aiming towards the award of the Inclusion Quality Mark.

78. The headteacher took an effective decision to appoint a teacher as a School Improvement Officer some years ago to be responsible for strategic thinking and planning. This management post now blends seamlessly with the present role of deputy headteacher who very ably supports the headteacher. They work together for the school's good, by recognising their strengths and allocating responsibilities accordingly. A key role is the deputy headteacher's analysis of data from all areas of school life and this gives the senior management team a clear picture of standards throughout the school, which enables them to be effectively involved in target setting.
79. The senior management team has changed almost completely since the last inspection. It is now managed by the deputy headteacher. The change in the structure has been fairly recent, but a team building weekend dedicated to sorting out roles, responsibilities and management structure means that there is a unity in the way that the team works. The headteacher has nurtured and incorporated most of the four advanced skills teachers into the senior management team and this strategy means that there is a voice for all areas of school life. This has ensured that his priorities are smoothly carried out. The deputy headteacher and senior management team provide a good role model for other teachers in the school.
80. The school has worked hard to improve the role of subject co-ordinators. The skills of a number of co-ordinators are recognised by the local education authority, who use for instance, the expertise of the literacy, mathematics and information and communication technology and Early Years co-ordinators among others to support other schools. These co-ordinators have made a clear impact on their subjects in school. For instance, all co-ordinators have an action plan to improve pupils' learning and run 'show and tell' staff meetings to give their colleagues ideas on how to be more effective in lessons.
81. The school has a good policy for special educational needs and there is a named governor for this aspect of the school's work. However, the governor and the special educational needs co-ordinator do not meet regularly enough to check and review the provision. The school provides a very good level of resources to meet the needs of this group of pupils. The quality of the leadership and management of the special educational needs co-ordinator is very good. In the short time that she has had responsibility for the provision she has developed a very clear knowledge and understanding of her role. Also she has a very good knowledge of the very effective systems already in place and the specific needs and provision for individual pupils. However, she does not check and review formally the quality of teaching and learning for these pupils. The school uses its funds for special educational needs very effectively. This has a very positive effect on pupils' learning and progress. The deputy headteacher's management of the Excel team of learning assistants is similarly effective in ensuring that they feel part of school life.
82. The headteacher and governors have needed to manage a great deal of stressful change in the recent past with regard to personnel issues and staff turnover. However, this has strengthened the school community's commitment to succeed and culminated in a new school motto "working together and striving for excellence" that underpins the work of day-to-day life in the school. The school now has excellent potential for future improvement.
83. A combination of the 'Investors in People' award and a very good system of self-review means that all staff, including the non-teaching staff, are fully involved in analysing the school's strengths and areas for development. This structure provides a very clear link between setting school priorities for improvement and personal targets for development through performance management. Consequently, there is a clear rationale for the ambitious school improvement plan. This area is a major improvement since the last inspection.
84. There is a monitoring timetable and clear systems are in place for monitoring of teachers' planning, assessment files and marking and also, pupils' work. There is evidence that this has

been carried out, but it is fairly new to the school and has not had a sufficient impact on every teacher's performance.

85. The governing body is now stable after a period of change. The role of chair of governors has changed several times in the last few years. The governing body has received up-to-date training to carry out their role effectively. There are a suitable number of committees to enable them to carry out their role economically. The effective liaison between the school and the governing body, including joint training opportunities, means that they have a good overview of the school's strengths and priorities. They share the headteacher's vision for the future. The governors need to be aware that the school is not fully using its good systems for coding its registers so as to establish rates of unauthorised absence at present.
86. The school's educational priorities are well supported through its financial planning. There is a limited budget, but the school ensures that spending is effectively linked to the needs of the school improvement plan. There is a clear plan for future deployment of staff and resources to make the best possible impact on pupils' learning. The school has made very effective use of funding it gained to create a spacious and air conditioned computer room. Outside funding is to be used to improve the grounds still further. The school spends more than it receives to support pupils with special educational needs and this is reflected in the inspection team's judgement on provision for such pupils.
87. The school buys in all possible services from the local education authority, as this is an effective economic solution. For example, the budget is checked regularly by a visiting bursar and financial statements are prepared for the governors in advance of their meetings. There has been a recent audit and the school has taken good action to amend any issues that were identified. For instance, the deputy headteacher now monitors and audits the school fund. The headteacher and governors are fully aware of the principles of comparison and challenge and use these wisely. For example, they have tracked the impact of the work of the Excel team of learning assistants to see whether the present deployment is more effective than providing support for pupils in their classrooms. They also take parents' views into account.
88. The school is making increasingly effective use of new technologies. This is more evident in the classrooms than in the office. For instance, pupils' individual education plans are now computerised, planning is being trialed on computer, and the school has prioritised the use of computerised whiteboards in the classroom. The administrative staff make a satisfactory contribution to the smooth day-to-day running of the school.
89. Learning resources are very good overall, including the resources for pupils in the reception class (Foundation Stage). The quality and quantity of classroom books, and computer resources are very good. The library space and book stock is inadequate, but the school is currently reviewing the provision. The school provides a very good level of resources for pupils with special educational needs. Resources are good in art and design, design and technology, geography, history, science and religious education.
90. There are a good number of teachers and support staff to support pupils' learning. There are very good procedures for the induction of staff new to the school, and for newly qualified staff. Each new staff member has a mentor whose role is to ensure they quickly become familiar with all aspects of the school, and to support them through their first year. The school provides a comprehensive staff handbook that details all procedures, policies and school documentation. The phase co-ordinator mentors qualified new members of staff. Newly qualified teachers work closely with their individual mentors, who give valuable and supportive feedback throughout their first year. The headteacher frequently visits the class informally, and observes their teaching and learning, and gives feedback and advice. In addition, subject co-ordinators offer advice, support and guidance in their particular area of the curriculum. The learning assistants, who willingly share their knowledge and experience of the pupils, particularly those with special needs, provide

further support. Professional development is offered through courses provided by the local authority and those provided within the school for all staff. The induction process is considered constructive, supportive and valuable, and new staff feel that they quickly become equal members of the staff team. The school has an excellent potential for training new teachers.

91. The accommodation is satisfactory overall. Recent improvements include essential repairs to the fabric of the building, refurbished class and shared areas and an additional classroom built. A high quality computer suite provides a welcoming, bright and well resource area to work. However, some classrooms are small, especially in Years 3 and 4 and restrict freedom of movement, particularly when class sizes are large for the school. Also the library is small and situated in a main thoroughfare thus making it difficult for pupils to carry out independent learning and research. The accommodation is accessible for pupils with disabilities. The school makes effective use of its small area for outdoor provision for reception class children and is aware of the need to improve matters as funds permit. The site manager and cleaning staff ensure the premises are clean and orderly and well maintained, setting a very good example to the pupils to take a pride in their school.
92. Outside, attractive features such as a grassed area with sufficient space for a football pitch, established trees and the provision of pagodas and quiet shaded sitting out areas, give pupils freedom of space when they are outside at breaktimes and the lunch hour.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

93. In order to raise standards still further the headteacher, governors and staff should:
- (1) *Improve attainment and progress in music, particularly in Year 6 by:
 - Improving staff confidence and expertise in teaching the subject;
Paragraph Nos. 12. 186.
 - Increasing the time allocated to music lessons;
Paragraph Nos. 12. 38. 183.
 - Putting in place a system for teachers to check pupils' musical attainment and review their progress.
Paragraph Nos. 184.
 - (2) Improve the level of challenge for higher attaining pupils in Year 2 and Years 3 and 4 in some lessons by:
 - Being more aware of the needs of higher attaining pupils and older pupils in mixed-age classes;
Paragraph Nos. 15. 34. 70. 109. 118. 125. 138. 176. 203.
 - Making better use of existing assessment when planning lessons.
Paragraph Nos. 125. 159. 168.

The governors should also consider the need to:

- Improve the amount of time allocated to history and geography;
Paragraph Nos. 12. 13. 38. 160. 163. 166. 168.
- Improve the level of attendance and pupils' punctuality;
Paragraph Nos. 27. 59. 85.
- *Improve provision for outdoor play for children in the reception class.
Paragraph Nos. 96. 105.

** Already in the school improvement plan.*

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

62

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

59

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	14	15	22	11	0	0	0
Percentage	23	24	35	18	0	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

YR – Y6

Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	319
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	32

Special educational needs

YR – Y6

Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	27

English as an additional language

No of pupils

Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0
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Pupil mobility in the last school year

No of pupils

Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	7
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	3

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.2
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2002	17	24	41

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	16	17
	Girls	23	24	24
	Total	37	40	41
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	90 (98)	98 (100)	100 (98)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	15	17	16
	Girls	23	24	24
	Total	38	41	40
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (98)	100 (98)	98 (98)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest 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	2002	29	21	50

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	24	27	28
	Girls	20	19	20
	Total	44	46	48
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	88 (75)	92 (77)	96 (94)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	23	27	28
	Girls	20	18	20
	Total	43	45	48
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	86 (n/a)	92 (n/a)	96 (n/a)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – Irish
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Black African
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British – Indian
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background
Black or Black British – Caribbean
Black or Black British – African
Black or Black British – any other Black background
Chinese
Any other ethnic group
No ethnic group recorded

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
317	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
2	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0

The table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only. It gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	15
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.2
Average class size	24.5

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	166

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/02
	£
Total income	720181
Total expenditure	705544
Expenditure per pupil	2184

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	5
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
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate-77%

Number of questionnaires sent out	319
Number of questionnaires returned	246

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	68	29	2	0.5	0.5
My child is making good progress in school.	66	31	2	0.5	0.5
Behaviour in the school is good.	59	37	1	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	53	37	8	1	1
The teaching is good.	74	24	3	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	45	45	8	1.5	0.5
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	73	22	5	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	70	27	2	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	50	41	7	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	60	34	3	1	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	64	32	0.5	0.5	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	50	31	10	2	7

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

94. The school makes very good provision for children in the reception classes. This is a strength of the school and gives the children a very good start. A combination of:
- Very good, and sometimes excellent teaching;
 - Very good planning that provides a wide range of exciting activities;
 - Very good knowledge and understanding of the early years curriculum;
 - Very good quality assessment, monitoring and tracking of progress;
- ensures that the children benefit from all their experiences in the secure, welcoming atmosphere of the class, and they enjoy coming to school. The effective staff team are very well led by the Foundation Stage co-ordinator, they know their children well, and expect them to succeed.
95. Children enter the reception class at the beginning of the autumn term of the school year in which they become five. There were 50 children in the class at the time of the inspection. Most children have previously attended nursery or playgroup, but a few have had no formal pre-school experience. To ease the transition into school, the staff establish good links with parents and families. They make home visits, and invite children and parents to make several visits to the class. The school runs a weekly 'Tots Club' for younger children, and there is a home-school lending system for books and activities. Parents support their children by encouraging them to complete their homework each week.
96. When children start school, their attainment is slightly below average for their age. The children make good progress in all six areas of learning during their time in the reception class. They make very good progress in their personal, social and emotional development. When they join Year 1, the great majority of the children have reached the early learning goals in all areas, and some are working into the next level. Since the previous inspection, there has been good improvement in the provision for the youngest children, although the establishment of a suitable outdoor learning area remains an area for development in the current school improvement plan. The local education authority and Initial Teacher Training Institutions use the reception class as an example of good practice.

Personal, social and emotional development

97. All staff place great emphasis on personal, social and emotional development, and the children flourish in the caring atmosphere of the school. Very good teaching and well-planned activities ensure the children make very good progress, and they all reach, and many exceed, the early learning goal. The staff are very good role models, supporting and helping each other as a team, showing the children how to work and play co-operatively. The children quickly and efficiently work together to put away the equipment when they hear the 'tidying up' music. They care for themselves, get ready for physical education lessons and look after their own clothes well. They work together co-operatively, and enjoy discussing news with their 'talking partner', and share equipment happily, for example in the 'Chinese restaurant' role-play area. The children are encouraged to be more independent, and to develop a sense of responsibility. They 'self-register' every morning by placing their name card in the correct ring, and select activities independently from the wide range available each day.
98. During a 'circle time', the children considered what makes them special. They became more confident because their responses were listened to with respect, and this showed them how to consider others' feelings and listen carefully to each other. Children's work is very well displayed, and they write their own labels, which adds value to their efforts and encourage them to try harder. They think about friendship, and "paint a picture to make a friend feel happy" using bright colours. They discuss and write out simple class rules, such as "Wear a band in the outside area",

and show that they clearly understand the difference between right and wrong when they write, “Don’t break the toys”. Relationships are warm and friendly, and the children express this clearly by writing “I like school because the teachers are kind”. Each child’s self-esteem is sensitively promoted, and achievements are positively rewarded with praise and stickers. They show very good attitudes to their learning, behave well and are interested and involved in every activity.

Communication, language and literacy

99. The great majority of the children meet the early learning goal in reading, writing, speaking and listening by the end of their time in the reception class, and a significant number are working at the next level, particularly in reading and speaking and listening skills. This is due to very good teaching that enables all children to make very good progress in these areas. The children show good recall and enjoy recounting nursery rhymes and favourite stories. They retell the tale of ‘*The enormous turnip*’ with figures on the felt board, and put the main events in the correct order. They often work in pairs as ‘talking partners’, and learn to listen to each other. Most children speak clearly and confidently in front of the whole group or class, for example when reporting back to the class at the end of an activity. One boy was so excited by what he had learned during a science investigation that he spoke at great length, describing clearly how the car rolled faster as he made the slope steeper.
100. All children enjoy listening to stories, and frequently use the comfortable library area, selecting confidently from the good range of books. They show good recall of favourite stories, and recognise the title, author and illustrator on the cover of a book. Each child chooses a reading book to take home, and talks about it to the nursery nurse every week. Frequent practice ensures they use a range of strategies when they meet a new word; clues in the pictures, ‘sounding out’ the letters, and stretching words, demonstrating this technique with their hands. All children know the sound of each letter. More able children blend letter sounds like ‘ee’ and ‘ch’ and use this knowledge well in both reading and writing, and their reading skills are higher than those normally seen at their age.
101. The well-equipped writing table is popular, and writing activities are purposeful. The children write letters, cards, and booklets, recounting their activities and retell favourite stories. They make lists of what they need when designing a model or a sandwich. Children are expected to write independently, rather than copying the teacher’s script, and most are developing a clear legible style. In one interesting lesson, a group of children practised painting the letters ‘o’ and ‘g’ onto the playground with large brushes and water. All children recognise and write their own names, know where to put a full stop, and make good progress from recording in picture form to early writing, showing the dominant letter sounds in each words. They enjoy ‘reading back’ their work. By the end of the year, higher attainers write several, more complex sentences, often with two phrases, using appropriate capital letters and punctuation.

Mathematical development

102. Very good teaching together with a very wide range of practical investigations and resources enable the children to become skilled at counting, sorting, matching, finding patterns and making relevant connections in order to use numbers, make calculations and recognise shapes. They all make good progress, and meet the early learning goal by the end of the reception class. The children count while they change groups, ensuring they stay focused on their tasks. They all count to 10 and back, many to 20, some can go further, and when the teacher counts to 8, the children know that 9 comes next. One boy wrote 1000, and others knew that if they removed one zero, it became 100. The teacher made very good links with the ‘*Bear Hunt*’ story from the literacy lesson by using a child’s idea of finishing the number line at the same point as the bear hunt. Most children recognise the numerals up to 10, and the higher attaining children record the number of moves when programming the computerised turtle. Children recognise and name a circle, a square, a rectangle and a triangle, and use them in colourful designs. They are beginning to use

comparative vocabulary well, saying if a line is longer or shorter, or if a ramp has to be lifted higher or lower to make a car travel faster. Buying toast at breaktime helps them to learn the value of different coins, and they practise showing the hours on a large clock face. The mathematics area of the classroom is very well resourced with a wide range of games, equipment and activities that stimulate the children's interest and consolidate their knowledge. A weekly activity for homework supports class activities well.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

103. Very good teaching, the imaginative use of good resources and a strong emphasis on practical investigational experiences ensure that the children make very rapid progress and meet the early learning goal. The digital camera is used very well to record the children whilst they are busy at work. The children discover the conditions plants need by planting seeds and watching them grow in the well-tended garden area. They investigated movement and forces by rolling cars down ramps, and discovered that the steeper the ramp, the faster the car rolled. They access the computers confidently, both in class and in the computer suite, and used the mouse well to point and click and change colour to draw Christmas trees with decorations. All the children operate the cassette recorder to listen to story tapes. The classroom has a well-stocked construction area, and the children designed and built large models with both commercial kits and recycled materials, using tools safely and glue to make strong joins. They used their writing skills well to list the equipment they needed, and to describe their design for sandwiches, showing an awareness of healthy foods.
104. They begin to develop a sense of place by walking round the school site on a 'Bear Hunt', or mapping track for the programmable computerised turtle. They are very interested in the way they change and grow over time and enjoy looking at the class photograph album, showing each child from a baby to the present day. In a well-planned activity, a visitor introduced the children to toys from the past, and they enjoyed investigating the toys. Over the course of the year, the children learn how major faiths celebrate, including the Hindu Divali festival and the Christian Easter and Christmas. The Chinese restaurant shows them food, clothes and lifestyle from a different culture, and they enjoy wearing the Kimonos and 'eating' with chopsticks. Visits, for example to Chester Zoo and the theatre, as well as visitors to the class from the firemen and the postman broaden and enrich the children's experience.

Physical development

105. All children make good progress and reach the early learning goal for physical development through good teaching and well-planned activities. Every day, the children use the courtyard area. It is equipped with a small climbing frame and a tunnel on a suitable soft surface, but there is too little space for them to move freely or use wheeled toys, skipping ropes, or bats and balls. They have two lessons in the school hall each week, learning to work with regard to others in both large and more confined spaces. They show increasing control and good co-ordination when they climb, balance, hop, run and jump and move in different directions, travelling confidently on various parts of their bodies. The children thoroughly enjoyed working with the visiting 'Dance in Education' team, and this gave them a good opportunity to express their movement ideas imaginatively. The children's ability to manipulate small objects is developed well by a variety of activities when the children use scissors, pencils, chalk and tools, thread beads and laces and manipulate jigsaws and small world equipment. They show increasing skills when they manipulate the computer mouse to control items on the screen.

Creative development

106. Children meet a very good range of creative activities, and are taught very well, ensuring they all meet the early learning goal. The music area is very well equipped with bright instruments that appeal to the children and encourage them to experiment with sounds. They enjoy songs, recall

the words well and have lots of opportunities for singing, for example *'We love the register'*, and *'Two elephants went out to play'* during a mathematics lesson. The children sing enthusiastically, but not very tunefully as yet. When an African drummer visited the class, the children enjoyed playing the large free-standing drums, and responded enthusiastically to the sounds and rhythms they made. They made their own instruments, drums, shakers and beaters. The well-resourced art area provides a very wide variety of activities. The children paint, cut and stick materials for texture and effect on pictures, collages and models. Bright colours are used imaginatively and freely to express ideas, and work is displayed attractively in the 'Art Gallery', labelled with the children's own writing. They mix colours and media well to produce large pictures of the staff, using fingers and brush strokes boldly, creating texture for hair and clothes. They use pencils and crayons to produce increasingly detailed small line drawings when illustrating stories and booklets. In the role-play area, the children acted as waiters and customers in the Chinese restaurant, ordered food and discussed the menu. The staff participate actively alongside the children, encouraging them to discuss and communicate their ideas, giving them valuable opportunities for self-expression and language development.

ENGLISH

107. Inspection evidence indicates that standards are average in English by the end of Year 2 and well above average by the end of Year 6. This is a similar picture to the school's 2002 national test results. From an average starting point in Year 1 pupils' achievement is good by the time they leave the school. In the past few years the school has focused on raising standards in writing and this has been successful. Therefore, Year 2 pupils reach above average standards and Year 6 pupils reach well above average standards in writing. Year 6 pupils now reach higher standards in writing than reading. This differs from the national picture in which Year 6 pupils perform better in reading. Statistics show that Year 6 boys appear to reach higher standards in the school's national tests, but inspection findings show that girls and boys actually attain similar standards to one another. The school has made good improvement in the whole subject since the time of the previous inspection, for example in writing standards, teaching and book resources.
108. The main strengths are:
- The standards in writing and the good teaching of handwriting and punctuation;
 - The very good provision for pupils with special educational needs;
 - The school has very good systems for teachers to check pupils' attainment and review their progress;
 - Teaching is sometimes very good or excellent.
109. The main areas to develop are:
- The Year 2 teachers' ability to match the work in reading more closely to the learning needs of the higher attaining pupils;
 - The Years 3 and 4 teachers' ability to give higher attaining pupils work that is hard enough;
 - The marking and teaching of spelling in Years 3 to 6.
110. Standards in speaking and listening are average by the end of Year 2 and above average by the end of Year 6. Across the school most pupils listen attentively to adults and to each other, for example when teachers question pupils. The subject co-ordinators have recently asked staff to use a greater variety of activities to extend pupils' speaking and listening skills, for example discussion in pairs and acting out a role. In some year groups staff now implement the strategies successfully and pupils' progress is starting to improve. This was evident in a Year 1 lesson when the average attaining pupils used puppets and soft toys to act out the story about the bears in the story *'Whatever Next'*. Also in Year 2 when pupils took turns to answer questions from their classmates as if they were the character in the book *'Amphibby Anne'*.
111. Pupils' progress accelerates rapidly in Year 5 because teachers give pupils lots of very well-

planned activities in which they work collaboratively and co-operatively and discuss their work purposefully. This was very evident in an excellent Year 5 lesson when pairs of pupils (boys and girls) performed a rap poem to their classmates. They watched with close attention as the performers spoke the words clearly and rhythmically and performed the actions with obvious enjoyment. Pupils spontaneously congratulated their classmates and a pupil gave out stickers as rewards for successful performances. Pupils use a good range of vocabulary to make well-thought-out contributions about the quality of the performances of their classmates.

112. Standards in reading are average by the end of Year 2 and above average by the end of Year 6. The school now has a very good range of interesting books, which add much to pupils' cultural development, and as a result most pupils enjoy reading. Some of the higher and average attaining Year 2 pupils read confidently and with good expression. They sometimes need prompting to use the range of strategies that they know, such as reading for meaning and initial letter sounds, to tackle the unfamiliar words that they meet. On the other hand some higher attaining pupils in Year 2 do not achieve as well as they should. This is because the teachers do not always give them work that is at the right level for them. Sometimes, the books they give pupils to read are too easy for them and on other occasions the text is too difficult.
113. Higher and average attaining Year 6 pupils read with good expression and have good skills in finding information from books. However, their knowledge of how books are organised in a library is under-developed. The main reason for this is that the library is located in the foyer and it is not easily accessible to pupils. The school is aware of this and it is reviewing the provision.
114. Through good teaching pupils make good progress in writing across the school. Staff teach effectively the basic skills of handwriting and punctuation. Also teachers use marking effectively to praise pupils for their efforts and achievements. Therefore pupils are confident writers, for example in Year 2. Higher attaining and average Year 2 pupils punctuate sentences accurately. Higher attaining pupils begin to use speech marks and exclamation marks correctly. For instance, a higher attaining pupil wrote, "Mr. Shiver jumped up and splat! He was squashed as flat as tracing paper". Standards in spelling are satisfactory. Pupils from Year 2 onwards use joined fluent handwriting.
115. In the juniors pupils continue to make good progress across a range of forms of writing, such as poetry, story, and persuasive writing. The quality of marking is mainly good, because most teachers point out to pupils how to improve their work. Therefore Year 6 pupils of all abilities use paragraphs and punctuation, such as speech marks and commas, correctly. A higher attaining pupil wrote "The scorching sun reflected off the sides of the spaceship as they drifted through space". On the other hand a shortcoming in the marking and teaching is that most teachers do not focus enough on improving pupils' spelling (except in Year 5). Therefore the spelling of some average and higher attaining pupils is unsatisfactory. Across the school most teachers have high expectations of the presentation of pupils' work and so pupils set their work out neatly.
116. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Therefore the pupils make good and sometimes very good progress in relation to their prior attainment. The quality of teaching is very good when the learning assistants teach pupils individually or in small groups. This is because the assistants are friendly, encouraging, and have a very good knowledge and understanding of each pupil's particular strengths and areas of difficulty. They give pupils work that helps them to confidently gain new skills and knowledge so they make very good progress. This was evident when a learning assistant worked with Years 3 and 4 pupils on the middle vowel sounds in words, such as cup and peg, and the key words that he needed to know in reading. The pupil worked very hard and succeeded in reading many of the words. The assistant responded enthusiastically "Wow, look how many you got this time that you didn't get last time! Fantastic!" The same successful approach was evident when a learning assistant worked on the computer with a Year 6 pupil with a statement of special educational need.

117. Across the school the quality of teaching and learning is good. Teaching is mainly satisfactory in Years 2 to 4. It is sometimes very good in Year 1, and very good or excellent in Years 5 to 6. A strong feature of most lessons is that teachers manage pupils' behaviour very well. This is achieved through the very good relationships that they have with the pupils; they are friendly yet firm. Therefore most pupils' behaviour is good and it is often very good in the juniors. Pupils work together as friends and have very good attitudes to their work. This contributes very positively to their learning. In the excellent lessons teachers use the national literacy strategy flexibly and creatively. The main features of the lessons are that teachers use their considerable expertise to plan and organise the work so that learning is interesting and fun. The rate at which pupils learn is very brisk and the teachers check the pupils' work very carefully. This was very evident when Year 5 pupils identified the spellings from their own writing that they needed to learn. They traced the words on a friend's back and quickly and accurately wrote down spellings, such as '*claustrophobia*' (a higher attaining pupil), '*frequency*' and '*occasion*' (an average attaining pupil). Also in the Year 6 lessons the teachers checked regularly the work of individual pupils and offered them very effective verbal advice and support.
118. The shortcomings in Year 2 were that teachers did not involve pupils actively enough during the introduction, and pupils spent too much time listening to the teacher. Therefore, some pupils lost concentration and did not learn as much as they should. In Years 3 and 4 the main shortcoming is that some teachers do not give higher attaining pupils work that is hard enough. They give the higher attaining and the average pupils work that is at the average level. Therefore the higher attaining pupils make unsatisfactory progress, particularly the Year 4 pupils. This was very evident in a lesson when the teacher gave the higher attaining Year 4 pupils the easy task of designing posters for the school, such as 'Walk don't run'.
119. The school has a very good range of procedures to check pupils' attainment and review their progress. It uses effectively the information that it gains from the procedures to target pupils who need extra support and to group pupils by ability in lessons. Across the school, teachers make good use of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning in English. On the other hand, given the very good standards in writing, teachers in the juniors do not make enough use of pupils' literacy skills in other subjects, such as geography, history and religious education. They do use pupils' literacy skills well in design and technology across the school and in science in Year 6.
120. Leadership and management of the subject are very good. The co-ordinators use their considerable expertise, for example in teaching, to give very effective advice and support to staff. They are continually looking to improve the subject, for example in strategies for speaking and listening and spelling. Resources are very good. They check and review teaching systematically. The system is not as effective as it could be because it does not focus enough on what pupils learn. The co-ordinators have the commitment, ability and support to improve the subject further.

MATHEMATICS

121. Standards are average at the end of Year 2. Inspection evidence indicates that a high proportion of the current Year 2 cohort is working at the expected level of attainment for their age, but that the proportion working above expectation is small. Infant pupils make satisfactory progress. Standards are well above average at the end of Year 6 and junior pupils make very good progress due to the very good teaching that they receive, particularly in Years 5 and 6. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress due to the support that they receive. Inspection findings agree with the results of the 2002 national assessment tests. Overall, improvement since the last inspection is very good.
122. Year 2 pupils investigate the number of alternative pizza toppings and use their own methods of representing their findings. They use their understanding of number to solve money-related

problems. Most pupils consider division as equal sharing in practical situations before formalising the process. They work with multiples of 2, 5, and 10, but have yet to derive the associated division facts. High attaining pupils have not progressed to solving whole number division problems that include remainders. Most can add three tens and unit totals up to 100 and understand the place value of each digit involved. They can work $\frac{1}{2}$, $\frac{1}{4}$ and $\frac{3}{4}$ of shapes and $\frac{1}{2}$ and $\frac{1}{4}$ of quantities, but have not considered the equivalence of fractions. They use number lines confidently to support their work in addition and subtraction. Pupils measure capacity using non-standardised measures. They estimate before measuring in centimetres and metres and predict which objects are heavier or lighter than a kilogram. Most pupils sort two-dimensional shapes according to length of sides, number of vertices and straight or curved sides. They recognise a good range of three-dimensional shapes that includes cylinder, sphere and pyramid. They do not classify two-dimensional shapes related to reflective symmetry. Pupils work with co-ordinate pairs and have constructed tally charts before drawing a good number of block graphs, pictograms and Carroll diagrams. They do not use a symbol to represent more than one unit. A small but significant number of lower attaining pupils work at a level below expectations.

123. In Year 6, higher attaining pupils work above expectations in all areas of mathematics for their age. Mentally, they work percentage parts of three digit totals. They check that their answers are sensible and can explain their conclusions. Boys and girls understand the equivalences between fractions, decimals and percentages and can calculate using ratio. They work the area of compound shapes using formulae and confidently work in four quadrants to rotate, reflect and translate two-dimensional shapes using positive and negative integers. They use their knowledge of metric measures to practise their number work to three places of decimals. They construct line graphs and work average speed from time and distance graphs. Less able but mathematically competent pupils use step-by-step methods, involving four number operations, to solve word problems. They use their own ideas to search for a solution. They have well-developed understanding of place value that enables them to round numbers to the nearest tens of thousands. Pupils have clear understanding of inverse operations related to multiplication and division. They can work out the area and perimeter of irregular quadrilaterals. Boys and girls know the language associated with probability and can extract data from pie charts using their good understanding of fractions and percentages. They can order large numbers and also order to two places of decimals. They recognise obtuse and acute angles and work the perimeter of irregular, straight-lined shapes. They construct tally and frequency charts. This supports their ability to graph both grouped and discrete data.
124. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is good. It is satisfactory in the infants and is very good in the juniors. This represents good improvement compared to the last inspection, when teaching in both departments was judged to be satisfactory. The major strength overall is how effectively teachers manage their pupils as very good rapport ensures very effective, friendly control. Consistency in the quality of marking is an area for development. In some classes marking is exemplary. For instance, teachers not only congratulate pupils with words and stickers, but also by giving advice on how to improve their learning. In many books, inaccuracies in spelling go uncorrected and so good opportunities to support pupils' learning in literacy are missed.
125. In the infants, good teaching of basic mathematical skills is supported by the teacher's good subject knowledge. Resources and planned homework are used effectively to promote pupils' learning. Evidence based upon looking at pupils' previous work and the inspection of two Year 2 lessons, indicates that potentially higher achieving pupils are insufficiently challenged by the work planned for them. Day-to-day assessment is not sharp enough to identify these pupils, in order to plan appropriate tasks and have higher expectations from the very start of group work. All pupils complete their written tasks on worksheets. This does not enable pupils to practise skills and develop independence in setting out their work. A very good Year 1 lesson was developed with good pace and effective questions challenge pupils' thinking very well. Group tasks are clearly matched to the needs of all pupils and further division of tasks takes place within these groups. This represents excellent planning based upon the use of high quality day-to-day assessment.

126. Three excellent lessons were inspected in upper junior classes, in Year 6 and Year 5. The hallmarks of these lessons are:
- Pace and challenge, allied to good humour and warm relationships;
 - Excellent use made of individual, white boards and a computerised whiteboard;
 - Excellent planning, teaching methods and teacher subject knowledge.
- Year 6 pupils are taught in ability sets as they prepare for the national tests. In one such lesson higher attainers create a clear buzz of excitement, as they begin their attack on a challenging task. Their teacher's enthusiasm and good humour is infectious. Pupils respond with particularly neat, accurate work and total concentration throughout the lesson. In the lower ability set, excellent use is made of individual whiteboards and a computerised whiteboard to consolidate pupils' ability to interrogate various millimetre scales. Scrutiny of Year 3 and 4 pupils' workbooks identifies a quantity of work where pupils from both year groups do the same work that is occasionally repetitive. As a consequence, progress in learning slows.
127. Pupils with special educational needs receive high quality support from very capable learning assistants. The mathematics curriculum is strengthened by the introduction of government initiatives, such as Springboard and booster classes that are generally led by very capable learning assistants. Pupils assessed as being in need of extra support use commercial, interactive mathematics programs within these groups. The very high quality of these programs includes assessment of individual pupil responses. Examination of achievement printouts clearly identifies their positive value. Work undertaken by pupils within these groups contributes significantly to the overall high standard of mathematical achievement in the juniors.
128. Generally, mathematics makes a good contribution to pupils' social development. All pupils enjoy mathematics and are very keen to learn. They co-operate well when sharing resources and listen carefully to answers being given by their peers. When their teachers' encourage neat presentation, they respond most positively and many older pupils' work is immaculate. When pupils are challenged, their interest and concentration is excellent. When this is not the case, they look for distractions. Behaviour is never less than satisfactory and overall it is very good in mathematics lessons. Older pupils say that regular homework is valuable and helps prepare them for the next stage in their education.
129. The National Numeracy Strategy is firmly embedded in teaching mathematics. Assessment procedures to track pupils' progress are very good. Results of such testing are used very well to set targets for individual pupils and to monitor overall progress of boys and girls in different year groups. The use of information and communication technology to support numeracy skills is becoming well-established in most classes. Information and communication technology supports data handling in a good number of attractive classroom displays.
130. The subject is very well managed by an experienced co-ordinator. She is an excellent teacher of mathematics and provides a superb role model for her colleagues. She monitors the quality of teaching and learning on a regular basis, gives demonstration lessons and monitors and supports planning and assessment. Very good resources support the teaching of mathematics well. The school's policy to have pupils use whiteboards and pens to record responses is a particularly positive and successful initiative.

SCIENCE

131. Standards at age seven are at the national average level and at age eleven are above the national average. This represents an overall lowering of standards since the last inspection when standards were reported to have been above average at age seven and well above average at age eleven. However, this does not detract from the quality of either teaching or learning over time, but reflects the difference in the standards displayed by pupils at the time of their entry into the school. As at the time of the last inspection, the progress made by pupils remains satisfactory at

ages seven and eleven. The progress made by pupils with special educational needs is good, because they receive effective support from a range of adults.

132. The school is successful in ensuring that a very high percentage of pupils attain the expected levels for their age. In the statutory tests in science in 2002 pupils in Year 6 were well above the national average at Level 4, but below average at the higher Level 5. The school has analysed this position and put in place additional time for revision (a booster class) this year. Following good practice, the pupils have been given opportunities to state where they believe that they require additional information and help and planning for revision lessons has covered these areas.
133. In Year 1 pupils have satisfactory knowledge of some differences between living creatures and of how these differences effect where they live. They can name external parts of the human body and know the five senses. Higher attaining pupils have developed the ideas of 'bigger' and 'smaller', 'faster' and 'slower' in relation to studies of animals and forces. Pupils who were interviewed in Year 2 had good knowledge of why certain materials were suitable for some purposes but unsuitable for others. They make good use of the ideas of 'similarity' and 'difference', 'cause' and 'effect' and 'change', for example when describing how some materials changed by heat may return to the original state, whilst others cannot. Their descriptions are much enhanced by good vocabulary and spoken language skills. Work completed in books show that pupils have sound knowledge of a fair test from investigations carried out; this knowledge was confirmed during the interviews. They understand that predictions need to be confirmed and that their ideas may not always be accurate.
134. In Years 3 and 4, pupils' workbooks and oral contributions to lessons show that most pupils are working at the age-related levels. In the lessons observed pupils showed sound basic knowledge of the structure of the human skeleton, the function of the parts and were able to recognise and name bones viewed on x-ray plates. Year 5 pupils demonstrated satisfactory knowledge and understanding of how sound may be altered in tone and pitch by changing the length and tension of vibrating elastic bands. They used their knowledge of the structure of fair tests to good effect when setting up investigations.
135. In Year 6, pupils demonstrated very good speaking and listening skills when carrying out a number of investigations as part of their revision. During these activities pupils demonstrated understanding of the needs to make predictions, to observe closely, to measure accurately, to record gathered data faithfully and to draw conclusions based securely on the evidence that had been accumulated. They can explain why a test may not be fair and were able to plan a fair test to cover each of the activities on offer during the observed lessons. In both Year 6 classes pupils showed that an above average percentage were capable of attaining the level expected for their age.
136. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is good, but it is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. Teaching in Years 3 and 4 was at least satisfactory or good. In Years 5 and 6 this quality rises to be at least very good and often excellent, showing a good, and sometimes very good improvement since the last inspection. Pupils' enjoyment and their positive attitudes to science are direct results of the quality of the overall good teaching of science throughout the school. The majority of pupils behave very well with only a very small minority calling out or generally disrupting lessons in one mixed-age class. Year 2 pupils who were interviewed displayed a high degree of social manners, waiting for others to finish speaking before speaking themselves. They enjoy their lessons because they say, "lessons are always interesting". When required to do so in lessons pupils co-operate and collaborate amicably and purposefully. They settle sensibly and quickly at the beginning of lessons; a factor that ensures that most lessons begin on time and that little time is lost. The last report mentioned that pupils were able to work independently as required; there was little evidence of this during the current inspection, except in Years 5 and 6. Relationships throughout the school are very good and this too is a factor in maintaining a positive working and learning atmosphere during lessons.

137. The subject makes good use of opportunities to consolidate pupils' learning.
- Good use is made of opportunities for pupils to practise speaking and listening skills during feedback and the endings of lessons;
 - Suitable attention is given to links with mathematics, for example, through the use of collected data in graphical representations;
 - Very good use is made of the school grounds, including the 'wet area' for environmental study;
 - The lunchtime gardening club enhances pupils' knowledge of aspects of 'living and growing' through practical experiences.
138. However, the following areas need attention:
- The composition of groups, particularly in Years 3 and 4 to ensure older and more able pupils receive sufficient challenge;
 - The use of information and communication technology to give pupils opportunities to carry out their own investigations within topics.
139. Lessons are much enhanced by the well-informed support of learning assistants that is afforded to teachers and pupils alike. Pupils with special educational needs receive particularly good support and this is an important reason why they make good progress in their learning.
140. Marking throughout the school is regular and provides encouragement and praise that is appropriate to individual output. In the best examples teachers use marking to offer advice on how to improve current work.
141. The quality of leadership and management is satisfactory. The co-ordinator has been in post for almost one year. He is well qualified to lead the subject, has good subject knowledge and a firm determination to raise standards at the higher levels at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. The current policy is of good quality and planning ensures that the coverage of the curriculum is secure. Resources are now good and well matched to the needs of the present curriculum. The co-ordinator is not yet carrying out full monitoring of pupils' books, teachers' planning or the standards of teaching and learning in classrooms. This is because he is new in post. The headteacher has sensibly allowed him time to settle into his role and to receive induction from the former co-ordinator; monitoring proper is scheduled to begin during the next school year. The school's capacity to improve standards at the higher end of the pupils' ability range is good.

ART AND DESIGN

142. At the ages of seven and eleven standards are at the national average. This was also stated to have been the case at the time of the last inspection. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in their learning. There have been good improvements since the time that the school was last inspected.
143. Evidence gathered during the current inspection shows that infant pupils continue to mix their colours satisfactorily and are also able to produce shades and tones. By the end of Year 2 pupils have developed sound observational drawing skills. This was evident in their pencil drawings of dried seed heads, in which they have carried out careful depictions of the detailed structures of the fruits, and in drawings of parts of buildings. There has been good development of the original fruit sketches into wall hangings in fabrics with appliqué additions. Figure drawings also show that some pupils are gaining the ability to depict observed features in good detail. The development of a wider range of media is seen in the use of a computer program to produce figures from basic geometrical shapes.

144. Watercolour paintings of landscapes in Year 5 show that by this time pupils are using the medium with increasing understanding of its properties. Drawing is often used effectively to provide illustrations in pupils' workbooks and displays, notably in science, where these skills very often add considerably to the quality of presentation. Card and paper three-dimensional work in Years 3 and 4 is of sound quality as are the 'Paper Art Emotions' in Year 5 where folding, coiling, curling and fringing has resulted in an array of individual facial features. In the same year pupils show good cutting, placing and sticking skills in their designs to depict traditional nursery rhymes and myths in fabric collages. Year 6 pupils have used drawing and painting/pastel colouring skills effectively, particularly in decorative pictures of mosques and alien creatures.
145. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is good and in one lesson seen it was excellent. In the lessons seen the pupils' overall very good attitudes and standards of behaviour were directly related to the quality of teaching. This shows clearly that a good improvement has taken place in the standard of teaching and in pupils' attitudes and behaviour since the last inspection. Pupils are presented with interesting tasks and given encouragement to do their best. Teachers' subject knowledge is good. In conversation, pupils state their liking for art, they point out examples of what they like from amongst the work on display.

146. Reasons for improvement include:
- The introduction of national guidelines;
 - The willingness of members of staff to seek and use advice;
 - Teachers sharing the purpose of the lesson with pupils at the beginning of sessions;
 - Basic skills are being taught effectively;
 - Pupils being encouraged to consider how their work may be improved.
147. Leadership and management are good. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic, well qualified and has good practical knowledge of the subject. She has accumulated a suitably broad range of two- and three-dimensional media resources to fit the needs of the scheme of work. Studies to enhance pupils' cultural development have become more sharply focused since the last inspection. Planned studies have broadened to include a range of artists other than painters, the addition of women artists together with the art of Africa, India, Islam and Australian aboriginal people. These studies include fabrics and artefacts as well as graphic arts. Whilst the co-ordinator has opportunities to monitor medium-term planning, she does not yet monitor standards of teaching and learning in classrooms by planning and working alongside her colleagues. The headteacher is aware of this need and has planned for this to take place in the future. The subject is well placed to make significant progress.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

148. Standards are above those expected for pupils aged eleven, and they make good progress. They complete the full design process and produce good quality products, finished to a high standard. Pupils in Year 1 make good progress and reach standards that are above average. By the age of seven, standards are in line with those expected, and progress is satisfactory. Limited evidence was seen of pupils planning a design or evaluating their product. This is a slight decline in standards overall since the previous inspection. Pupils with special educational needs make progress in line with their classmates, participate well in mixed-ability groups and are included in all activities because they are well supported by the staff.
149. In Year 1, pupils read the story '*I will not ever, never eat a tomato*' and their task was to design and make a salad to appeal to a young child. They prepared well, thinking about the colours, taste and texture of the ingredients, and gave them appealing names including 'yellow slippers' for the peppers and 'moon greens' for cucumbers, showing good consideration for their target consumers. Good teaching challenged them to justify and improve their choices at all stages. They used knives safely when making the salads, ate and evaluated the finished products with great relish. When they made masks, this class looked closely at genuine African masks, and incorporated ideas from these to producing dramatic, textured results. In Year 2, progress in the development of skills and knowledge of the design process is slower. When they designed finger puppets, they joined materials with stitches and glue and made up plays to use them in the puppet theatre. However, the initial designs were careless, and contained very little information about materials to be used, or evidence of a final evaluation of the puppet.
150. Progress improves in Years 3 and 4 due to good teaching. Skills are developed well, and pupils learn to prepare a 'design brief', showing the purpose of their product. Pupils consider commercial packaging, and research ways to strengthen their own packages. The school digital camera is used effectively to keep a record of pupils' work, and the photographs of pupils holding their picture frames show that they take a real pride in their work. They made good use of their scientific knowledge when they were challenged to design a mouth that opens and closes for their 'moving monster', and incorporated pneumatics and levers into their system. They choose and selected appropriate equipment from the wide range of well-prepared resources, and worked in groups to design and make their monster.
151. Year 5 pupils introduced a 'cam' into the mechanism of a moving toy. They built a prototype,

made a set of working plans, and constructed well-finished models that were rigorously evaluated for possible improvement. Their working methods when designing and making breads for the French café showed good links with mathematics, as they carefully and accurately weighed and measured the ingredients. By Year 6, the pupils can work independently. They made a paper pattern when designing a pair of slippers. They carefully considered the construction, looked for the best ways to join fabric and materials, made refinements as they worked and gave good reasons for their choices. The finished slippers were of a high standard, bright and varied, and reflected each individual's taste in style, texture and colour. They used tools safely, remembered to tie long hair back, and utilised bench hooks when using hacksaws to cut resistant materials. They use their literacy skills well to write instructions, make lists of materials and write full, clear evaluations. Although pupils discuss their work in-groups, teachers occasionally miss opportunities to develop speaking and listening skills by asking them to report their design ideas and activities to the class at the end of a lesson.

152. All pupils show good attitudes, concentrate well and work hard because they enjoy the practical activities and meaningful projects. They work in friendship or mixed-ability groups, and co-operate well, happily sharing tools equipment and ideas. They are well behaved and relationships with teachers and with other pupils are good.
153. The quality of the teaching and learning is good overall, and satisfactory in Year 2. The strengths of the teaching are:
- Good use of a wide range of materials and resources;
 - Good planning of purposeful projects;
 - The way skills are built up progressively through the school.
154. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The enthusiastic co-ordinator has used her broad skills well to increase the knowledge and confidence of all staff. The well-balanced curriculum and teachers' plans are monitored to ensure statutory requirements are met. There is a good policy and the school follows a nationally recognised scheme of work to ensure pupils know and understand the full process involved in designing a product, and acquire the skills needed to do so. Pupils are assessed in design and technology each year using the school's 'traffic light' system. The subject is well resourced and equipped.

GEOGRAPHY

155. At the end of Year 2 standards are below expected levels and pupils make unsatisfactory progress. This is because insufficient time is spent on the subject. Standards at the end of Year 6 are in line with what would be expected of eleven-year-old pupils nationally and progress for junior pupils is broadly satisfactory. This maintains the position from the last inspection. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because of the number of adults who support their learning.
156. In Year 1 pupils follow the travels of Billy Bear who goes on holiday with pupils and the teacher. This helps pupils to work from direct experience. Most of the pupils in Year 1 are beginning to ask suitable questions of a geographical nature and with effective support from their teacher they can compose questions that will tell them what it is like to live in Scotland. They know which resources to use and can use a globe to find the British Isles and an atlas to find Scotland. They have also been on a walk around their immediate environment. Analysis of work shows that they have also identified attractive and unattractive areas within that environment. Consequently, their learning is good and they are working at an appropriate level. Pupils in Year 2 have worked with plans and can use two digit co-ordinates satisfactorily, however, recorded work in Year 2 is limited. Discussion with Year 2 pupils showed that although pupils can find the British Isles on an atlas and find Liverpool and Manchester on a map, their knowledge and understanding of the geographical curriculum is limited and they do not use geographical terminology freely when

talking about the subject.

157. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 are not yet at the expected level. They are acquiring new knowledge and understanding about life in India and are beginning to demonstrate an awareness of localities beyond their own as they compare their own lives with those of the people in Chembokoli. They are also increasing their knowledge and understanding of environmental and change recognising the ways in which the environment can be changed.
158. Year 5 pupils build effectively on their previous learning as they study the different characteristics of various countries in the world. They have a French café in the role play area and are learning French which aids their understanding of other countries and their culture. Year 6 are beginning to develop an understanding of how human and physical processes can change the features of an environment such as a mountainous region. Discussion with Year 6 pupils shows that they are very knowledgeable about Germany. They are learning German and have a strong link with a German school that is of a similar size to their own. As a result they know about the country from personal experience. They have considered how to improve their own environment and have drawn plans to scale. Their investigations employed both primary and secondary evidence and they appropriately use subject specific vocabulary. The amount of recorded work across the school is limited.
159. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory in both infant and junior classes, with some good and very good teaching seen in Year 5 and 6 during the inspection. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the subject across the school. In Year 1, the teacher's enthusiastic approach ensures that pupils make good progress over the course of the lesson. In many classes pupils of different abilities are doing the same work, giving no challenge to the higher attaining pupils. Pupils' effective literacy skills are not in evidence in their previous work. How work is recorded and marking is inconsistent. This together with the reduced time allocation gives rise to standards that are below the expected standard by the end of Year 2.
160. There is evidence of good direct teaching in Years 5 and 6 where the subject is effectively related to the pupils' own experience. Despite the good teaching observed the reduced curriculum time has meant that although recorded work is of a good standard, the amount is limited and there is little evidence of challenge for the higher attaining pupils.
161. In the infant classes, pupils' attitudes to the subject are good. Pupils are keen and enthusiastic about the subject. They listen attentively and work both collaboratively and co-operatively as they research the information they require. Pupils' attitudes to the subject in junior classes are also good. Pupils interact in a positive way in lessons and work industriously. However, analysis of work shows that presentation is not always of a consistently high standard and that not all pupils take a pride in their work. As a result of the good support that they receive from teachers and learning assistants, pupils with special educational needs make good progress.
162. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. Geography and history are managed under the title of Humanities. The co-ordinator has only been in post just over a year and is very enthusiastic. There is an action plan, a suitable policy and a scheme of work in place. Display supports the subject well in some classrooms. Because it is not a priority the co-ordinator has not had the opportunity to monitor the quality of teaching and learning in the subject in order to understand the levels at which pupils are working and so to improve standards.

HISTORY

163. At the end of Year 2 standards are in line with the expected levels and pupils make satisfactory progress. Standards at the end of Year 6 are below the level of what would be expected of eleven-year-old pupils nationally and progress for junior pupils is broadly unsatisfactory. This is

because insufficient time is spent on the subject and this does not allow pupils to increase their skills, knowledge and understanding of the subject. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because of the number of adults who support their learning.

164. Pupils in Year 2 show an increasing sense of chronology as they sequence the main events in the Great Fire of London. They know where the fire started and that the fact that the houses were made of wood, close together and that the weather was dry were all contributory factors. Pupils are beginning to discover the different sources of information that can be used to find out about history. They know that facts about the Great Fire of London were recorded at the time. Discussion with pupils in Year 2, shows that pupils are enthusiastic about history and that they have a good knowledge and understanding of historical facts, major events and key people. They talk knowledgeably about Florence Nightingale. They are beginning to see why people acted as they did. They know that Florence Nightingale was not allowed to go to war as she was a woman and they know what conditions were like in the hospitals before she went out and the changes that she made. They are beginning to recognise the different ways in which the past can be represented and why people acted as they did.
165. Analysis of work in Years 3 and 4 shows that pupils are beginning to relate episodes from the past and show an understanding of major facts surrounding major events. However, limited coverage does not allow for the depth of knowledge and understanding that will lead to standards reaching the required level by Year 6.
166. In a lesson in Year 6, good use of chronological resources enable pupils to place events in the correct time frame as they study the life of John Lennon. Most pupils were able to describe the changes that took place in his life and the consequences that resulted. They used the Internet and other sources of information to improve their knowledge. Discussion with Year 6 pupils shows that although pupils do have some factual knowledge and understanding of some aspects of history, this is limited. They can describe the characteristics of some past periods and recognise some changes that have occurred, but they do not have a wide enough nor a deep enough knowledge and understanding to explain or suggest the consequences of principle events. They do know how to use a variety of sources of information, but are sometimes confused between different periods of time, for example the Tudors and the Victorians. Whole units of work have been covered by a single visit from a visiting speaker. More work has been done on 'How Life has changed in Britain since 1948', but there is very little written record of work and no real depth to the pupils' understanding as a direct result of too little time being spent on the subject.
167. The quality of teaching and learning in the infant classes is good. Teachers have a good subject knowledge and understanding. A clear focus, good use of appropriate resources such as Big Books together well-framed questions extend pupils' knowledge and understanding of historical facts in lessons, whilst appropriate activities consolidate and increase pupils' skills. In the infant classes, pupils' attitudes to the subject are good. Pupils are keen and enthusiastic about the subject. They listen attentively and take an active part in their learning. With the teachers' good guidance they are learning how to use effectively the historical skills, knowledge and understanding that they have gained.
168. The quality of teaching and learning in Years 3-6 is satisfactory. Some good teaching was observed in one of the upper junior classes. The lesson was lively and interesting and the teacher had a good knowledge and understanding of the subject, combined with a confident delivery. Lessons are very well managed. However, analysis of pupils' previous work showed limited coverage of units of work. Pupils of different abilities were doing the same work, giving no challenge to the higher attaining pupils. Literacy skills were not fully evident in pupils' recording and marking was inconsistent. This together with the reduced time allocation gives rise to standards that are below the expected standard by the end of Year 6. Pupils' attitudes are satisfactory. Pupils interact in a positive way in lessons and work collaboratively. However, analysis of work shows that presentation is not always of a consistently high standard and that not

all pupils take a pride in their work. As a result of the good support that they receive from teachers and learning assistants, pupils with special educational needs achieve in line with the rest of their classes.

169. Leadership and management of the subject are both shared with geography under the title of Humanities. The co-ordinator has only been in post just over a year and previously to that she was a newly qualified teacher. She is very enthusiastic, but as yet has not had the opportunity to monitor the quality of teaching and learning in the subject in order to understand the levels at which pupils are working and so to improve standards. Resources to support pupils' learning are good.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

170. Standards in information and communication technology are in line with those expected nationally at both ages seven and eleven. Pupils are making good progress because of the very good resources that the school now possesses and the impact that government training has had on teachers' confidence in using computers. However, these have not been in place long enough to raise standards still further. There has been very good improvement since the last inspection.
171. Discussion with pupils and analysis of pupils' previous work confirms that Year 2 pupils know that information and communication technology is more than just working on the computer. Pupils talk confidently about their experiences using the video recorder and working a programmable floor turtle. They correctly name the parts of a computer, such as a 'cursor' and a 'mouse' and know about 'drop down menus' and how to change colours and fonts. Higher attaining pupils in both classes know how to amend their work on the word processor, while lower attaining pupils produce simple repetitive sentences. All pupils can use a CD-ROM to search for information. Displays around the classrooms show that pupils have had satisfactory experiences in using a data-handling program to produce graphs of, for instance, their favourite animals. Higher attaining pupils produce attractive overlapping and repeating patterns using a graphics program, while lower attaining pupils produce a simpler pattern of a shape within a shape.
172. In Year 6 the majority of pupils in both classes begin to produce a satisfactory multi-media presentation on life in the 50s and 60s. They design pages of text based on their research from the Internet and history books. Pupils work hard to find the best pictures to paste into their pages. One class is able to add sounds to pages of text, but the other pupils are selective about what they want to add and find relevant music from the correct period from the Internet. This class shows a greater awareness of the audience for their work in the way that they vary their coloured backgrounds and fonts and letter sizes to obtain the best effects. Pupils' typing skills are variable, but at least adequate for the task. In a good link with art, pupils studied a variety of artists before manipulating images in a graphic program to convey figures in motion.
173. The quality of teaching and learning is good at both key stages. The strengths are:
- Step-by-step instructions in how to carry out tasks (often making very good use of the computerised whiteboard to do this);
 - Good teaching of basic skills;
 - Well-organised management of pupils in the computer room so that no time is lost;
 - The very good co-operation between all pupils and adults;
 - Endings to lessons are used effectively to evaluate what has been achieved.
174. Pupils in Year 1 were captivated when their teacher showed them how to resize and paste shapes to fit their task. Teachers make good use of the digital camera in lessons to capture pupils' learning in action. In a Year 5 lesson a video camera was used effectively to record pupils' speaking skills. In lessons seen teachers use a good range of strategies to meet the needs of all pupils. For instance, putting the pupils in mixed-ability pairs, but with a clear expectation that the higher attaining pupils will demonstrate to others how to achieve various effects. In Year 1 the

higher attaining pupils are encouraged to work independently, so that teachers can check what they can do, for instance 'logging on' by themselves.

175. The learning of pupils with special educational needs is well supported by computers. Learning assistants often use them on a one-to-one basis to teach or consolidate a specific skill. From the youngest children upwards, good use is made of an individualised computerised mathematics program to support the learning of basic skills. For instance, Year 5 pupils learnt how to work with hundreds, tens and units.
176. However, a few areas need improvement:
- In a Year 2 numeracy/information technology lesson the pupils lost interest at several points, because the task was too repetitive to move their learning forward in an interesting way;
 - Year 6 pupils' learning is being limited because they are not being introduced to hyperlinks (a technique to link the pages together) to improve their multi-media presentations.
177. The quality of leadership and management is very good. The two co-ordinators have achieved much since the last inspection, not least the setting up of the computer suite. They are ably supported by the headteacher. The computer suite is now fully timetabled to give best value for the school's investment. Teachers are given the opportunity to teach important lessons such as English and mathematics in the computer room. The curriculum is fully covered by the government scheme of work. There is a very good catalogue of improved resources for all subjects, which the co-ordinators have put together to guide teachers towards an effective resource for any topic. The school can borrow equipment from the local education authority to carry out activities such as data logging to support work in science. The school makes good use of the technician that they 'buy in' to troubleshoot problems on the computers. For instance, the school has just used him to network all classroom computers so that pupils can get extra practice in the classroom on familiar programs. The school has an excellent website, which has been set up by one of the co-ordinators, and its quality has been recognised by the local education authority. There is a very good Internet policy that is very specific about what information about pupils can be used on the website. The school makes very good and sometimes inspirational use of its computerised whiteboards. However, tiered steps would help smaller pupils (and shorter members of staff) to reach the icons at the top of the computerised whiteboard.

MUSIC

178. Pupils reach average standards by the end of Year 2 and their achievement is satisfactory. The organisation of the school's timetable meant that it was possible to see only three lessons during the inspection: two taken by classroom teachers and one by a visiting specialist (African drumming). Therefore no judgement can be made on the quality of teaching overall. Standards in Year 6 are below average. Further evidence comes from discussions with pupils and teachers, lesson planning, and observations of singing in assemblies. Improvement has been satisfactory since the time of the last inspection.
179. The main strengths are:
- Music is a high priority in the school improvement plan;
 - The subject makes a very good contribution to pupils' cultural development;
 - Visiting specialists enhance pupils' learning;
 - Pupils with special educational needs make good progress.
180. The main areas to develop are:
- Staff confidence and expertise in teaching the subject;
 - The time allocated to music lessons;
 - A system for teachers to check pupils' attainment and review their progress.

181. The subject makes a very good contribution to pupils' cultural development. This is because teachers give pupils many opportunities to listen to a wide range of music in classrooms and in assemblies. Also they invite specialist visitors into the school, such as the Key Strings (a string duet) and Molan Laos (musicians from south east Asia). A Year 2 lesson taken by a specialist in African drumming was seen during the inspection. The specialist teacher promoted very successfully pupils' cultural knowledge and understanding as well their skills in music. Therefore the rate of learning was very good.
182. Year 2 pupils reach average standards in the work. They use a variety of percussion instruments, such as tambours, maracas and chime bars, to copy carefully the teacher's three beat drum pattern. Pupils practised and improved their performance, danced rhythmically and expressively to taped music and tried on traditional costumes (from Ghana). Pupils' attitudes and behaviour were exemplary because the teacher quickly gained pupils' attention by playing a range of drums. Also he allowed all of them to explore and play a variety of instruments. Therefore pupils were keen to participate, listened and concentrated hard, and obeyed instructions promptly. Pupils' smiling faces showed that they thoroughly enjoyed the experience.
183. Throughout the year the school allocates a below average amount of time to music lessons. The lessons are taught each week for only half of each term. The low amount of time has more impact on the attainment of Year 6 than Year 2 pupils because the Year 6 curriculum requires a greater depth of knowledge. Discussion with Year 6 pupils shows that they explored and created their own music in Year 5, but teachers have given them little opportunity to create their own music this year. Therefore, teachers are not reinforcing and building upon pupils' skills regularly enough to consolidate them. As a result, pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills are currently below the level expected for this age. This is evident in their knowledge of technical words such as tempo (fast or slow) and dynamics (loud or soft) or the correct names for percussion instruments. Singing is taught in hymn practice each week. Standards in singing are mainly satisfactory; pupils sing with clear diction and enthusiasm.
184. Teaching was satisfactory in the few class lessons seen. A strong feature of the lessons is that teachers manage pupils' behaviour very well through the very good relationships that they have with them. They are friendly yet firm. Therefore pupils' behaviour is good and they are motivated to concentrate and learn. Most pupils listen attentively to the teacher and follow instructions promptly. This was evident in the Years 3 and 4 lesson that took place in the playground. Most pupils followed carefully the teacher's instructions for the actions to the skipping song and ignored the possible distraction of another class taking part in a games lesson nearby. A shortcoming in the teaching is that the teachers do not develop pupils' skills sufficiently, for example in singing or playing instruments. Also the school has a system for teachers to record the work that pupils have covered in the subject, but the system does not ensure that teachers check pupils' attainment and review regularly their progress. Teachers make limited use of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning in music, for example they record pupils' performances.
185. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because staff know their needs very well and involve them as fully as possible in the activities. This was evident in a Year 1 lesson when the teacher reminded a pupil of the type of behaviour expected of him (that was set out in his individual behaviour plan). As a result the pupil sat and listened in the same way as his classmates. In the Years 3 and 4 lesson a pupil with special educational needs was unable to take part in skipping to 'Skip to my Lou'. The specialist learning assistant threw and caught a beanbag with the pupil so that she was involved as much as possible.
186. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. This year the subject is a high priority in the school improvement plan because staff felt this was a subject in which they were under-skilled. The co-ordinator's action plan (part of the improvement plan) rightly identifies that staff need up-to-date resources to guide them in their lesson planning. These have been

purchased recently. However, the action plan does not include an essential feature: that the co-ordinator checks and reviews teaching and learning in order to have a clear overall view of teaching and standards. On the other hand the co-ordinator checks and reviews teachers' lesson planning and is keen to develop the subject further.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

187. By Year 2, standards in physical education are in line with those expected nationally and pupils make satisfactory progress. Standards in Year 6 are above expectation and pupils make good progress. The school has made satisfactory improvement since the last inspection.
188. Pupils have swimming lessons at different times of the year in all junior classes. Current Year 6 pupils will have their lessons from immediately after national tests until the end of the summer term. The previous year group all achieved the local authority's 'Water Safety Certificate'. This is awarded on the basis of a pupil being able to swim 25 metres and to perform a variety of water safety skills. Swimming provision and achievement are particular strengths of the physical education programme.
189. Year 1 pupils learn different ways of using a large ball. They demonstrate satisfactory skills in kicking, dribbling, rolling, throwing and receiving a ball in the early stages of preparation for playing team games. They demonstrate good control when passing and bouncing a ball round, over and under different parts of their bodies. Judgement related to standards in Year 2 is made from observing pupils in the playground at lunchtime. It was not possible to inspect lessons because of a professional performance of 'Dance in Education' when lessons would have taken place. Pupils use floor space satisfactorily when running freely and skipping with and without ropes. They throw, kick and receive different sized balls with appropriate levels of skill, whilst being aware of the safety of others.
190. In netball, Year 6 boys and girls pass and receive the ball consistently well. They create and use space well that supports the flow of a game to a good standard. Good numbers of boys feint and give 'dummy' passes effectively. Most can throw the ball accurately, under and over arm to a team-mate ten metres away. Many pass, single arm, over much greater distances. They consistently obey the laws of netball related to travelling and guarding. Chest and bounce passes are a natural part of well-developed skills. In hockey, pupils demonstrate clear awareness of the safety requirements related to 'sticks' and 'turning' when playing a fluid six-a-side game. Skills of striking, receiving, dribbling and controlling the ball are generally well developed. In 2002 the junior girls football team represented the local authority in the Merseyside Youth Games in which they were runners-up.
191. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is good. Of five lessons seen in the recent inspection, the quality of teaching is very good in four. Very good lessons are characterised by:
- Very good subject knowledge;
 - High expectations;
 - Very good quality planning.
- In all lessons seen, class management skills are very well developed and teachers are dressed appropriately for physical activities.
192. In a satisfactory lesson, all the attributes of good teaching were evident, but insecure use of the laws of netball when coaching passing skills, detracted from overall effectiveness of pupils' learning. In small team situations, pupils were incorrectly taught to move both feet when in possession and pivoting to pass.
193. From an early age, pupils understand the effect of exercise on their bodies and the importance of warming up and cooling down. They co-operate very well in team games and when working in

pairs to practice and improve their games playing skills. They exhibit a clear enjoyment of physical activity and older boys and girls show little evidence of breathlessness after relatively violent exercise. Behaviour is very good.

194. The physical education programme is supported by a variety of positive initiatives. Links with outside agencies give pupils opportunities to be involved in a variety of activities. The physical education programme receives very good support from students undergoing teacher training. After school sessions are well attended, but younger pupils have very limited opportunities to be involved in extra-curricular activities. Junior pupils all experience outdoor and adventurous activities. Lower junior pupils pay a day visit to an activity centre. As many upper juniors who wish to attend, experience a residential weekend at a purpose-built centre in Wales. They take part in rafting as a team building exercise alongside the individual skills of archery, abseiling and fencing. This represents particularly good provision and provides very good support to pupils' social and moral development as teams often receive 'fair play' awards.
195. Leadership and management are very good. He has monitored lessons in the juniors and is about to do so in the infants. The subject manager for physical education has been in post for two years and is a subject specialist. His very good management is evidenced by a high quality application for an 'Active Mark Gold' application. Resources for the teaching of physical education and the accommodation are very good and both aid pupils' learning effectively.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

196. Pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 attain standards in religious education that are in line with those expected by the locally agreed syllabus. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection. Progress throughout the infants and the juniors is satisfactory.
197. Pupils study the world faiths of Hinduism, Islam and Judaism alongside Christianity, in line with the scheme of work as set out by the locally agreed syllabus. This gives pupils good insights into the faith and beliefs of others and is a contributing factor to the tolerant and respectful attitudes pupils show to one another.
198. Pupils in Year 1 are beginning to say what is important in their lives. Information and communication technology has been used effectively to scan photographs of each pupil with their friend and they have drawn pictures of 'special people' such as firemen and teachers. Before their visit to church pupils in Year 1 wrote their own questions, to help them to find out more about the church when they got there. The answers were then added to an 'ideas map' on the pupils' return, so that they could see what they had learnt that they did not know before the visit took place.
199. A picture of a Hindu mother and her baby provided the focus for Year 2 pupils to write their own version of what they thought that the mother would pray for her child. Year 2 pupils remember that Hindus have a shrine in their houses. They are beginning to communicate appropriately their ideas about religion and they are also starting to understand the importance of ritual within faiths and that prayers can be used by different people for different things. Discussion with pupils shows that they can give descriptions of people and events in different religions and use technical words correctly. They can retell stories from the Bible and know that, for instance, Hindus use a bell when they pray and wash their hands before prayer.
200. In Years 3 and 4 mixed-age classes pupils are giving accounts of people, places and events within faith communities, identifying key points in stories such as the Wedding in Cana and the story of Ganesh. They can give accounts of events such as Eid and are increasing their knowledge and understanding about special places such as a synagogue.

201. In Year 6 pupils demonstrate a satisfactory understanding of what is involved in belonging to a faith community, such as Islam, in terms of belief practices and symbolism. Analysis of pupils' previous work reveals only three pieces of written work, however, discussion with pupils showed that pupils were able to talk confidently about the religions they had studied. They understand that religion can be an important factor in the lives of individuals, citing the example of Islam where people pray five times a day, facing Mecca. They know that prayer mats have a compass to ensure that they are facing the right way and the importance of washing hands and feet before prayer.
202. The overall quality of teaching and learning across the school is satisfactory, with some good lessons seen. Where the quality of the teaching and learning is good:
- Teachers have sound subject knowledge and understanding;
 - They build effectively on previous learning and appropriate activities consolidate pupils' learning;
 - Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good and their very good relationships with their classmates and their teachers helps them to learn.

203. However, the following areas require some improvement:
- Some of the work set, however, is all at the same level and higher attaining pupils are not sufficiently challenged;
 - Marking is inconsistent. Where it is good it fosters improvement, but often it is just a tick to acknowledge that work has been checked;
 - The good skills that pupils gain in literacy and numeracy are not used to their full extent in religious education. The amount of written evidence is limited.
204. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. As a result of the good support that they receive from teachers and learning assistants, they achieve in line with the rest of the pupils in their classes. Pupils' attitudes to the subject are good. Pupils listen attentively and are enthusiastic when the learning is interesting. Most settle quickly and soon become absorbed in their task in classes where a small minority of pupils have a lapse in concentration teachers soon bring them back on task and as a result there is a settled learning environment in which good progress is made.
205. Leadership and management of the subject are both satisfactory. The co-ordinator has good knowledge and understanding of her subject, but as yet has not had the opportunity to monitor the quality of teaching and learning in order to raise standards further. She is aware of the need to improve the use of information and communication technology in the subject. There is a satisfactory form for assessment in the subject, but this is not consistently used effectively by teachers to inform their planning and provide suitable challenge for higher attaining pupils. Resources are good and are used well to support pupils' learning.