

INSPECTION REPORT

**PARISH CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY
SCHOOL**

St Helens

LEA area: St Helens

Unique reference number: 104793

Headteacher: Miss Rebecca Hill

Reporting inspector: Mr Tony Dobell
10373

Dates of inspection: 18th - 21st November 2002

Inspection number: 246413

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Rev Christopher Byworth
Date of previous inspection:	June 2000

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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10373	Mr A J Dobell	Registered inspector	Mathematics Music Physical education	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
19443	Mrs N J Walker	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
22452	Mrs M Farman	Team inspector	Areas of learning in the Foundation Stage English as an additional language English Art and design Design and technology	How well does the school care for its pupils?
28320	Mr R Willey	Team inspector	Special educational needs Education inclusion Science Information and communication technology Geography History	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is slightly below average size and serves an area close to the centre of St Helens. Most children come from the immediate area, which consists largely of terraced properties, but some come by bus from further afield. This is mostly because parents opt for this school because it is a voluntary aided Church of England school. Initial testing shows that levels of attainment are well below those normally found when children enter the Reception class. Almost all pupils are white and only two pupils speak English as an additional language. One child in the Reception class attends only in the afternoons: all other children are full time. All classes are for single age groups.

The school has 186 pupils on roll, of whom 29 are in the Reception Year. The numbers of boys and girls are broadly similar. An above average proportion (31.7 per cent) is eligible for free school meals and an average proportion of pupils (13.9 per cent) is on the school's register of special educational needs. Only one pupil (0.5 per cent) has a statement of special educational needs and this is below the national average. The nature of special educational needs includes specific learning difficulties, moderate learning difficulties, emotional and behavioural difficulties and speech and communication difficulties. The proportion of pupils joining or leaving the school during the course of the year (19.1 per cent in 2001-2002) is high and can have a significant impact on particular year groups.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very good school which has improved significantly since it was inspected previously. It no longer has serious weaknesses. The quality of teaching and learning is now good overall and excellent in the Reception class. As a result, pupils are attaining standards in English, mathematics and science which are well above those normally found by the time they leave the school. As a result of these successes, pupils gain in confidence and self-esteem and are enthusiastic about school and learning. This impressive improvement is the result of the excellent leadership and management provided by the headteacher since her appointment and the support that she has received from her colleagues and the governing body. Given the nature of the community that it serves, the standards now being achieved and its average costs per pupil, the school is now giving very good value for money.

What the school does well

- Attainment is well above the national average by the time pupils leave the school.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good overall with a significant proportion of very good and excellent teaching and the Foundation Stage is a strength of the school.
- Strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy are excellent and result in excellent progress in English and mathematics.
- The school offers a very good range of interesting learning experiences which engage pupils' interest and enthusiasm so that they have very good attitudes to learning overall.
- These very good attitudes are reinforced by the school's very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development and good provision for cultural development.
- Excellent systems for assessing pupils' attainment and progress underpin the very good progress that they make overall.
- The very good progress made by the school since it was inspected previously is the result of the headteacher's excellent leadership and management. She enjoys the full support of her colleagues and the governing body.

What could be improved

- Inconsistencies in the school's arrangements for child protection and the health and safety of pupils have been reported to the headteacher and the governing body.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has responded very well to its previous inspection. In particular, the quality of teaching and learning has improved and, as a result, pupils' standards of attainment have improved significantly by the time they leave the school, particularly in English, mathematics and science. Teaching and learning in the Reception class have improved markedly. Virtually all the key issues from the previous inspection have been met successfully. Where they have not, for example, in improving information and communication technology and providing an outdoor area for children in the Reception class, the school has clear plans to deal with them. These improvements result from the headteacher's clear-sighted and vigorous leadership and the support that she has received from all adults in the school. As a result, the school has a very good capacity to improve further.

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	E	E	A	A*
Mathematics	E	D	A	A*
Science	E	A	A*	A*

Key	
very high	A*
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

Since the school's previous inspection, attainment, as measured in the National Curriculum tests, has improved well at the end of Year 2 and very significantly at the end of Year 6. Pupils now make very good progress overall in their learning throughout the school. In 2002, at the end of Year 6, the school exceeded its agreed targets for the proportion of pupils attaining at least the national expectation of Level 4 in English and mathematics. These targets were quite challenging. Attainment at the end of Year 6 in 2002 was well above the national average in English and mathematics and in the top five per cent of schools which draw their pupils from similar backgrounds. At the end of Year 2, attainment is above the national average overall and well above the average for similar schools. Teachers' assessments for science at the end of Year 2 placed pupils at the national average.

Evidence from this inspection is that children in the Reception class are likely to attain the standards expected nationally in all areas of learning planned for them by the end of this school year. Attainment in English and mathematics is currently very good for pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 for this stage of the school year. In science, pupils in Year 2 are currently above the expected level, while pupils in Year 6 are well above the level expected. Attainment in information and communication technology is currently satisfactory in spite of the fact that teaching and learning are being adversely affected by the lack of a computer suite. In the other subjects of the curriculum, attainment is currently mostly in line with expected levels. However, in art and design, pupils in Year 6 are attaining above average standards. Overall, the school is achieving impressive standards of attainment.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have very good attitudes to learning. They are enthusiastic in lessons and are keen to make progress.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Most pupils behave very well, but two year groups in the junior years concentrate less well. Play is boisterous but friendly.
Personal development and	Pupils' personal development is very good and is fostered by the very good relationships which exist overall between pupils and between pupils

relationships	and adults.
Attendance	Attendance is slightly worse than the national average, but matches that of similar schools.

In the last full school year, four pupils were excluded for fixed periods on eight occasions. No pupils have been excluded during this school year. Pupils' attitudes and values have improved since the school was inspected previously.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Excellent	Good	Good

The quality of teaching is now good overall and has improved since the school's previous inspection because the proportion of very good and excellent teaching has improved markedly. Now, four lessons in ten are very good or excellent, a further third are good, just over one lesson in five is satisfactory and only one lesson in 20 is unsatisfactory. Excellent teaching is concentrated in the Reception class and in Year 6 English. Overall, the basic skills of literacy and numeracy are taught very successfully and teachers are maintaining standards of attainment in information and communication technology in spite of the current inadequacies in equipment. As a result of high expectations for behaviour and effort throughout the school, pupils are making very good progress overall. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in their learning towards the targets set for them and pupils who speak English as an additional language make very good progress. The school meets the needs of all its pupils very effectively.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school's curriculum meets statutory requirements and provides a very good range of learning opportunities. All pupils are fully involved in learning.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs; as a result, they make good progress in their learning.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The few pupils who speak English as an additional language make very good progress and have full access to all that the school offers.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	There is very good provision for pupils' personal development and for their spiritual, moral and social development. Provision for pupils' cultural development is good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Systems to promote pupils' academic progress are excellent. However, there are inconsistencies in the school's provision for child protection and some aspects of health and safety.

The very significant developments in the school's systems for assessing pupils' progress are a major reason for the improvement in attainment. The school has good links with parents who appreciate the improvements that have occurred since the previous inspection.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides excellent leadership and management. Subject leaders are effective and the senior management team has had a positive impact on the school's development.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body fulfils its statutory duties effectively and has a good appreciation of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has excellent strategies for analysing its performance, identifying new priorities and monitoring progress towards meeting its identified aims and objectives.
The strategic use of resources	The school uses its resources very effectively.

The clear-sighted and rigorous leadership of the headteacher is the central cause of the school's very considerable progress since its previous inspection. She has a very clear vision of how the school should develop and this is shared by her colleagues and the governing body. There is a very good match of teachers and other staff to the demands of the National Curriculum. Resources for learning and accommodation are adequate overall and the deputy headteacher has achieved good improvements to the school's learning environment. The principles of best value are applied very effectively. The school has improved very well since its previous inspection and is in a good position to improve further.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teaching is good and children make good progress. Behaviour is good and children become more mature and responsible. The school expects children to work hard and do their best. The school works well with parents who feel comfortable if they have to express concerns. The school is well led and managed. Children like school. 	<p>Of the parents who responded to the questionnaire:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12 per cent question the amount of homework; 18 per cent do not believe that they are well informed about progress; and 18 per cent do not believe that there are enough opportunities outside lessons.

The school issued 186 questionnaires and 34 were returned (18.3 per cent). These views therefore represent under one fifth of all parents and carers. The meeting held before the inspection was attended by 14 parents.

Inspectors support the positive views held by parents. The inspection team believes that the school makes satisfactory use of homework to support learning and that the range of activities outside lessons is good for a school of this size. There is some justification for parents' concerns about information about progress. The school recognises this and procedures are being improved.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. When compared to all pupils nationally, in the 2002 National Curriculum tests for Year 6, pupils from this school attained results which were well above the national average in English and mathematics and results in science were very high in relation to the national average. The outstanding results in science put this school in the top five per cent of all schools in the country. When compared with results in schools which draw their pupils from similar backgrounds, attainment in all three subjects was very high, again placing the school in the top five per cent of similar schools. The school achieved its challenging targets for the proportion of pupils attaining at least Level 4 in English and mathematics in 2002. These standards are a very significant improvement on those attained during the year in which the school was inspected previously. The data below shows the results which were achieved. National percentages are in brackets.

Year 6	Percentage at Level 4 or above	Percentage at Level 5
English	84 (75)	42 (29)
Mathematics	88 (73)	46 (27)
Science	100 (87)	73 (38)

2. The 2002 National Curriculum test results for Year 2 pupils were well above the national average in reading and above the national average in writing and mathematics. When compared to results in similar schools, attainment was in the top five per cent in reading and well above average in writing and mathematics. Science is not tested at the age of seven, but teachers assessed attainment to be at the national average. These standards are an improvement overall on those attained during the year when the school was inspected previously. The actual results are as follows.

Year 2	Percentage at Level 2 or above	Percentage at Level 3
Reading	87 (85)	48 (30)
Writing	90 (86)	13 (9)
Mathematics	99 (90)	30 (31)

3. Evidence from this inspection is that children enter the Reception class with levels of understanding and learning skills which are, on average, well below those normally found. They are making very good progress in the Reception Year and are likely to reach the levels expected nationally in the areas of learning designed for this age group.
4. Pupils go on to make very good progress in English and mathematics in Years 1 and 2 and good progress in science. Attainment and progress in literacy and numeracy are very good. The lack of emphasis on investigative and experimental work in science is preventing progress in this subject from being as rapid as in English and mathematics. In information and communication technology, the school's current lack of computers during this term is restricting progress, but pupils' knowledge and understanding are secure and attainment is satisfactory. In the other subjects of the curriculum, pupils are making sound progress overall and attainment is at the level normally found. The temporary use of a dance specialist to support teaching and learning in Year 2 is resulting in very good progress and above average levels of attainment in this area of physical education.
5. In Years 3 to 6, pupils make very good progress in English, mathematics and science and standards of attainment are well above those normally found. In information and communication technology, progress is currently restricted because of the lack of computers, although standards of attainment are satisfactory in most areas of the subject. Plans are in place to ensure that

pupils will have covered all the required areas of the subject by the end of Year 6. In art and design, standards of attainment are above those normally found by the end of the junior years and pupils make good progress. In the other subjects of the curriculum, attainment is at the level normally found and pupils are making sound progress. Where teaching is supported by colleagues with particular expertise, progress is impressive and levels of attainment are very high. This is the case in English in Year 6 and was also the case in dance in Year 3 because of temporary support.

6. Since its previous inspection, the school has concentrated on raising attainment in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. In this it has been very successful. This means that, by Year 6, attainment is well above that normally found in English, mathematics and science. In English, pupils' speaking and listening skills improve rapidly and are above those normally found in Years 2 and 6. There is very good progress in reading which is supported effectively by the school's 'reading buddy' system which pairs older pupils with younger pupils once per week. By Year 6, pupils discuss their reading analytically and explain why they like particular books or characters. Pupils' writing is of a high standard and there are good examples of imaginative writing in Year 2 and of very effective use of vocabulary in Year 6. In mathematics, pupils are undertaking work, for example, on multiplication in Year 2, which is ahead of where they are expected to be at this stage of the school year. By Year 6, pupils have a good level of competence across the different areas of the subject, although average and below average pupils are unclear as to how fractions, decimals and percentages are linked. In science, pupils in Year 2 have a very good understanding of the properties of insects and reptiles and, by Year 6 pupils have an impressive understanding of how scientific principles need to be applied to investigative and experimental work.
7. Most pupils on the school's register of special educational needs achieve below average scores in the National Curriculum tests at the end of Years 2 and 6, although they make good progress throughout the school. The quality of the individual learning programmes, which mostly concentrate on language, is good and supports their progress effectively. Targets are specific, realistic and mostly challenging. They are reviewed regularly and are usually, but not always, measurable. When targets are not achieved, they are amended sensitively in order to make them more attainable. Effective support from learning assistants enhances these pupils' levels of attainment and progress. The very small number of pupils who speak English as an additional language are included in learning very effectively and make very good progress. Their levels of attainment reflect their ability.
8. Since its previous inspection, the school has worked very hard to raise attainment and has made very good progress. Rigorous programmes of planning and assessment have enabled teachers to plan progress in learning for individual pupils. The school is in a strong position to maintain its current very high standards in English, mathematics and science and to make further progress.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. Pupils' attitudes towards school have improved well since the previous inspection and are now very good. The very large majority of parents say that their children enjoy coming to school and discussions with a number of pupils in different year groups confirm this. In fact, a boy in Year 5, when asked by an inspector what his opinion of the school was, replied, "I just can't stop coming here. I love it so much!" In lessons, pupils listen and watch very carefully and they join in with real enthusiasm. This was clearly demonstrated in a science lesson in Year 2 when pupils were studying a range of insects and reptiles brought in to school by 'the bug man' and their very good attitudes and concentration resulted in high-quality learning. Most pupils concentrate hard, do their best and are proud of their efforts.
10. These very good attitudes are further reflected in the school's improving attendance figures, which, although slightly below the national average at 93.4 per cent, are comparable with and often better than other schools in the local area. Punctuality has improved, but even so, a number of pupils still arrive a few minutes late at the start of the day. However, this is clearly not reluctance on the part of pupils, who are reliant upon parents and, if they do arrive late, hurry themselves along and

do whatever they can to catch up without causing any disruption to others.

11. Behaviour continues to be good. The majority of pupils follow the routines in classes and around the school very well so that there is a calm and orderly environment where everyone can feel comfortable and able to learn. Just over 90 per cent of parents believe that behaviour is either good or very good, but a small number of parents are not happy with how pupils behave in school. There is some slight justification for this because some pupils, particularly in two of the junior classes, find it difficult to behave properly and need much closer supervision and skilled handling than in other classes. A few pupils outside lessons are sometimes rowdy and inconsiderate towards others, particularly as they make their way down the stairs on their way to the playground. Nevertheless, during breaks and lunchtimes, pupils play and socialise well together. However, in the absence of any play equipment or games, pupils are left to make up their own activities, which are mostly chasing and charging and wrestling-type games. Although these activities are carried out without any animosity or hostility to others, pupils are clearly unaware of the potential risks they are taking with regard to their own safety. The school council is investigating what equipment pupils would like the school to obtain and is to make recommendations. Pupils respect each other's differences and offer each other a good level of support. Four pupils were excluded on a number of occasions last year for violence or other inappropriate behaviour. All of these pupils have now left the school and there have been no exclusions during this school year.
12. The school places strong emphasis on good behaviour. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, are expected to respond positively in any situation. They are actively encouraged to support each other in the classroom, during physical education and at informal times, such as lunchtime and playtime. This results in pupils working well together and developing very good relationships with their peers. For those pupils who do have difficulties with appropriate behaviour in classrooms, or within relationships, the school has strategies and support assistance in place to help them to modify their behaviour. Behaviour amongst pupils with special educational needs is usually good.
13. Relationships and pupils' personal development are very good and are a significant strength of the school. Children in the Foundation Stage make very good progress in their personal, social and emotional development. In lessons, pupils in Years 1 to 6 work very well together either in pairs or small groups sharing equipment and ideas so they learn from each other. They show high levels of independence in the way that they work alone and find information for themselves without bothering the class teacher unnecessarily. A particularly commendable feature is the way in which pupils take on responsibility and use their initiative. For example, Year 6 pupils are mature and sensible in the way that they help to supervise younger pupils in the dining hall and in the way in which they act as door monitors. They willingly take on complex roles, such as acting as receptionists in the office during lunchtime from time to time. Pupils have high self-esteem and therefore have the confidence to use their initiative well. They see what needs doing and they react quickly and responsibly. For example, when a piece of sticky paper left on the floor was causing a nuisance, a boy stopped in his tracks, walked back down the corridor and sensibly picked it up and put it in a waste bin.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

14. The quality of teaching is good overall and ranges from excellent to unsatisfactory. During the inspection, 45 lessons were observed. Of these, in just over one in ten the quality of teaching was excellent, in almost three in ten, it was very good, in one third it was good, in just over one lesson in five it was satisfactory and in one lesson in 20 it was unsatisfactory. This is a good improvement in the quality of teaching since the school was inspected previously. Excellent teaching is concentrated in the Reception class and in the teaching of English in Year 6. The small amount of unsatisfactory teaching was the result of the learning objectives for the lesson not being achieved.
15. At the time of the previous inspection, the quality of teaching for children in the Reception class was satisfactory. It is now excellent overall. This is because the teacher has a very clear

understanding of how young children learn. She takes great care to monitor and evaluate their progress in order to plan learning activities that will enable them to build on what they have already learned. A particular strength is the way in which the teacher and nursery nurse integrate and plan their activities so that individuals and groups of children are supported well. As a result of this carefully targeted teaching, the children are likely to attain the standards expected nationally by the end of this school year. They will have made very good progress in their learning.

16. In Years 1 and 2, the quality of teaching is good and this is an improvement since the previous inspection, when it was satisfactory. During this inspection, half the teaching observed was very good and, of the other half, two thirds were good and one third satisfactory. Very good teaching is characterised by clear learning objectives which are shared with pupils, interesting learning activities which engage pupils' interest so that they work with sustained concentration, high expectations and clear explanations of what is required. The result is very good-quality learning, which is reinforced by challenging questioning which tests and extends pupils' understanding. This high quality of learning means that pupils are likely to attain above average results in the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2 in 2003. It also means that they have made very good progress in their learning in Years 1 and 2.
17. In Years 3 to 6, the quality of teaching is good. This is again an improvement since the previous inspection, when it was satisfactory. Of the lessons observed during this inspection, one lesson in four was very good or excellent, four out of ten were good, just under three out of ten were satisfactory and under one in ten was unsatisfactory. Excellent teaching is concentrated in English in Year 6. Indeed, one higher-attaining pupil, at the end of the lesson, said to the teacher 'That was a super lesson. Thank you'. In these lessons, the pace of learning is high with challenging questions making pupils think through their ideas and articulate their thinking clearly. The learning objectives are referred to constantly so that pupils can evaluate their learning. Excellent relationships mean that pupils know that their ideas are valued so that they contribute to discussions with confidence. There is constant assessment of the quality of learning. As a result, pupils are working at a level well ahead of where they are expected to be at this stage of the school year. Exceptionally positive attitudes result in rapid learning of high quality. In contrast, in unsatisfactory lessons, the pace of learning is much slower, pupils achieve less and learning objectives are not met.
18. A number of positive features underpin the quality of teaching and learning. The school uses visitors with particular areas of expertise to raise the quality of learning. For example, the contribution of a specialist dance teacher resulted in teaching and learning of very good quality in physical education lessons for Years 2 and 3. Similarly, a visit from 'the bug man' reinforced learning about life processes and living things in Year 2, when pupils were able to observe snails, locusts, toads and snakes of different sizes in their lesson. Very good and excellent lessons are characterised by high-quality questioning which ensures that pupils are learning effectively. They are rooted in planning of high quality. Marking is regular and detailed and, at its best, clarifies for pupils what they need to do to make further progress. In the best lessons, relationships between pupils and between pupils and adults are friendly but positive so that adults and pupils are united in the pleasure of exploring new learning. However, there are two classes in the junior years where relationships are less positive and some pupils have short concentration spans. The time taken to manage the behaviour of these pupils slows the pace of learning for others.
19. Excellent use is being made of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies to improve standards of attainment in English and mathematics. There are examples of careful teaching to promote highly effective learning. For example, in a very good English lesson in Year 2, pupils correctly identified alliteration and rhyme. Similarly, in a very good mathematics lesson in Year 3, pupils' learning was aided by the teacher's skill at illustrating how to calculate fractions. The impact of these strategies is to enable pupils to make very good progress in English and mathematics.
20. In Years 1 and 2, the quality of teaching is very good overall in English, science and physical education. It is good in mathematics, geography, history and music and satisfactory in information and communication technology and design and technology. However, in information

and communication technology, the impact of teaching was adversely affected by the lack of equipment. No teaching was observed in art and design in Years 1 and 2. In Years 3 to 6, the quality of teaching is good overall in most subjects, although there are examples of very good and excellent teaching in English and very good teaching in mathematics, science and physical education. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in information and communication technology and design and technology, but, again, the impact of teaching in information and communication technology was adversely affected by the lack of computers for pupils to use. The unsatisfactory teaching was in one English and one physical education lesson.

21. Teaching is good for pupils with special educational needs. Provision for these pupils is planned well and support assistants are very effective in ensuring that they have full access to learning. Lesson plans take account of the needs of these pupils and work is designed to enable them to make progress towards the targets written into their individual education plans. For example, in a history lesson in Year 1, the support assistant focused well on appropriate vocabulary which not only enabled the pupil to make good progress in history but also supported the literacy targets in the individual education plans. Carefully managed teaching and support ensure that these pupils make good progress in their learning. The very few pupils who speak English as an additional language are supported very well in their learning through skilful questioning and careful explanations. Where necessary, teachers identify vocabulary which needs specific explanation. For example, in one literacy lesson a poem included some archaic language and the teacher was careful to explain the meaning of words such as 'doth'. As a result of careful teaching, these pupils make very good progress in their learning and attain standards which reflect their ability.
22. Overall, pupils make very good progress in their learning throughout the school. This is a direct result of the improvements in the quality of teaching that have been achieved since the school was inspected previously. Teachers now have very good information about pupils' attainment and progress and the school's systems ensure that this is used effectively to promote further progress. The school is in a good position to improve the quality of teaching and learning further.

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

23. Since the school was inspected previously it has extended and significantly improved its curriculum and the opportunities provided for pupils. The local education authority has provided good support, especially in literacy and numeracy. The literacy and numeracy consultants, for example, have taken lessons to demonstrate current good practice to teachers. The balance, breadth and relevance of the curriculum are now very good and meet statutory requirements well. The school's adoption of nationally approved subject schemes of work provides further in-built and systematic progression of pupils' skills and knowledge. The time allocated to the teaching of different subjects is broadly in line with national recommendations. More effective use is now made of curriculum time. The only unsatisfactory provision is in the teaching of control technology. The new computer suite will provide opportunities to widen the use of information and communication technology in other subjects. Subject leaders monitor teachers' planning and pupils' work in all subjects and the headteacher rigorously evaluates the impact of teaching, curriculum content and its organisation on pupils' learning. All subjects have co-ordinators and subject documents are all in line with the latest national guidance.
24. One effective strategy to improve the quality of the curriculum has been to bring in specialists to work with pupils. In particular, a part-time member of staff is teaching English to junior pupils and to Year 6 particularly and providing very good levels of challenge in excellent lessons so that pupils are reaching very high standards of attainment. Local clubs provide coaching for football and rugby and these sessions are popular with pupils. They not only motivate them, especially the older juniors, but also allow some pupils to achieve well when their performance in other subjects is low. The Schools' Music Service now has an input into the school, as does a dance consultant. A dental nurse has worked with pupils in Years 1 and 2 and a local resident, an American by birth, has talked to pupils about life in the USA. The curriculum is further enriched by an expanding programme of visits for all areas of the curriculum and for all year groups. In addition, an

increasing number of visitors contribute to pupils' knowledge and understanding in many subjects and themed weeks such as 'multicultural week' and 'science week' further enhance curricular provision. The school has also strengthened its focus on practical work in science, particularly for junior pupils. As a result, these pupils show signs of retaining more information than they do in lessons when they are not as actively involved.

25. The format of the daily literacy and numeracy lessons follows the guidelines of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. The effectiveness of the delivery of both these subjects is excellent, with work often being adapted for pupils with special educational needs and extension material provided for those of higher ability. The school has implemented the national strategies very effectively and this is reflected in the significant improvements in pupils' attainment. Other national strategies, such as 'Springboard' for mathematics and additional literacy have been very well deployed in order to support pupil learning. The good deployment of additional teachers to work with booster groups has supported pupils' learning well.
26. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good overall. There is an excellent working relationship between teachers and learning-support assistants. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and this is testimony to the effectiveness of the systems that are in place. These systems include systematic training in the provision for pupils with special educational needs. The good progress made by pupils with special educational needs is the result of the carefully planned provision made for them. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are also very well provided for and, as a result, make progress in line with their abilities.
27. The school offers a good range of opportunities for pupils to participate in activities outside lessons and many pupils choose to be involved in several of them. The programme caters for a wide range of interests including sport, music, drama and art. The provision is at the level often found in much larger schools. Visitors, including staff from local football academies and a rugby league club, enhance the level of provision.
28. There is very good provision for pupils' personal, social and health education. Appropriate strategies are in place to alert pupils to the dangers of drugs and other substances and sex education is handled sensitively according to the needs of different age groups.
29. The provision to promote pupils' spiritual, moral and social development has improved since the last inspection and is now very good. It is a strength of the school, although the provision for cultural development, especially that to develop pupils' knowledge and appreciation of other cultures and traditions, is not as good as in the other three areas. Nevertheless, the overall provision is an integral part of the school's high focus on pupils' personal development and is linked closely to the provision for their health and welfare.
30. The high quality of the provision for spiritual development is evident in attractive displays of pupils' work and the celebrations of what has been achieved. All staff set good examples for pupils in how they value others' talents, skills and achievements. They are particularly effective in raising pupils' self-esteem. In daily, well-planned school assemblies pupils are expected to enter and leave the hall in a quiet, respectful and orderly manner. The stillness and reflective atmosphere are reinforced by short periods when pupils are given time to think about their own values and beliefs. A candle is lit to give a visual focus. Local clergy make valuable contributions to school assemblies on a regular basis. Pupils are encouraged to develop a sense of belonging to a community that has shared values and responsibilities. The invitation to parents to join these assemblies helps to share the values that the school is trying to establish.
31. The provision for moral development has improved well and is now very good. The headteacher takes a strong lead in ensuring that all the pupils know and are encouraged, at every opportunity, to practise the school's values. As a result, kindness, thoughtfulness, consideration of others and politeness are praised and reinforced; for example, a 'citizen of the week' is acknowledged in assembly. Pupils are shown the difference between right and wrong and older pupils are expected to set younger ones a good example, which they generally do well. Whole-class discussion times

have been introduced to give adults opportunities to discuss moral issues with pupils.

32. The provision for pupils' social development is also very good. Adults expect and encourage all pupils to play a full and active role in the life of the school and to be responsible members of the class and school community. A school council has been introduced as part of a developing citizenship programme and Year 6 pupils commented upon its value, quoting proposed improvements to the school's security as an example of its effectiveness. They particularly enjoy the "buddies scheme" that encourages friendships with Reception pupils. The school places deliberate emphasis on promoting pupils' awareness of responsibility and self-reliance. Year 6 pupils are enjoying an increasing range of responsibilities which they undertake willingly and exercise well. The residential visits to Llangollen and Kingswood provide pupils with activities to develop their independence, initiative and ability to get on with others.
33. The provision for pupils' cultural development is good overall. In music, history and geography, pupils are introduced to aspects of other cultures through themes, visits and extra activities and dance and drama companies visit the school. Much less time, however, is spent developing pupils' understanding of other faiths, cultures and traditions. Opportunities are missed to strengthen this through work in such subjects as religious education, music and art and design. The school recognises the need to improve this provision and is developing strategies to enable greater contacts to be made with other faiths and cultural traditions in order to raise pupils' awareness of life in multicultural Britain.
34. Links with other educational institutions have developed and are now good, especially with the secondary school to which most pupils transfer at the age of 11. One of a number of benefits to pupils of this good relationship is that all Year 6 pupils are introduced to German and French by a specialist teacher once each week. The well-established transition arrangements, together with a number of social events to which pupils are invited throughout each year, help pupils to transfer happily and confidently to secondary school with minimum trauma. The school makes good use of the local community to support learning. There are links with the police, church, a local supermarket and the local rugby league club. Visits from the 'Crucial Crew' alert pupils to the dangers of drugs and other substances and to fire and railway safety.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

35. Although staff have a caring attitude towards their pupils, there are inconsistencies in the school's procedures for child protection, aspects of health and safety and the professional knowledge and understanding of staff. This means that the level of care remains unsatisfactory.
36. Risk assessments of the building and grounds are now carried out regularly and the headteacher and governing body have worked hard and successfully to address a number of concerns. For example, 'finger safe strips' have been fitted to doors, stairs have been made safer and fire and electrical equipment have been serviced and relocated more effectively. However, risk assessments have not been thorough enough to highlight the need to implement the essential practice of ensuring that fire doors are kept closed. Many of these doors are wedged open and this presents a serious potential hazard to the safety of everyone in the building.
37. Although teachers sometimes carry out risk assessments before taking pupils on visits, there are no formal procedures in place to ensure that this is always done. A very good feature of the school's care for pupils is the vigilance with which all teachers hand over their pupils to a known adult at the end of each day. However, lunchtime supervisors are not sufficiently aware of how children should play safely and so they accept potentially dangerous play as normal. For example, children as young as five were seen swinging over railings which border a concrete path and older pupils engage in wrestling-type activities such as slamming down on the backs of each other's necks, with no intervention from supervisors. The school's arrangements to protect pupils from all forms of abuse, whether in or out of school, are inconsistent. The headteacher has ultimate responsibility for managing this aspect of care and is due to undertake training in the near future. However, as a whole, staff have not had any up-to-date training and do not have a secure knowledge of the signs of abuse. As a result, not all staff recognise when a pupil may need help and so they do not all report, monitor and support effectively. Several members of staff have

knowledge of first aid and pupils receive good care when they sustain a minor injury.

38. The school provides a very good level of educational and personal support and guidance for pupils and this is a significant improvement since the previous inspection. Procedures for monitoring and promoting pupils' regular attendance are now very good and have resulted in a good improvement in attendance figures. Staff take an interest in their pupils, so that they feel valued and want to come to school. There are good procedures to promote acceptable levels of behaviour. Routines are well established so that an orderly and calm environment is created where everyone can get on with their work without distraction. There are high expectations for behaviour and good behaviour is recognised and rewarded fairly.
39. A few parents feel that the school does not deal with incidents of bullying effectively, but inspectors have found the procedures to be very good. The headteacher has implemented a number of systems for identifying incidents of bullying and enabling pupils to seek help. For example, pupils from each class have been nominated as 'bully busters' and trained in their role. Skilful surveys of pupils' feelings have been carried out to identify any unhappy pupils and the reasons why they are sad. The recently formed pupil school council was instrumental in introducing 'bully boxes' so that pupils can post a note confidentially to alert their class teacher to any worries that they might have.
40. Pupils receive good support to help them to mature and develop as responsible individuals. For example, from the time that children join the Reception class they are expected to play a part in the organisation of their classroom equipment and every child is given some form of duty. As pupils get older, they are entrusted with more demanding responsibilities. For example, Year 6 pupils help to supervise younger pupils at lunchtime. Older pupils are paired with younger pupils to share reading once each week and sometimes they man the school office at lunchtimes. As a result, most pupils grow into sensible and confident young people capable of playing an active role in society and this is an aspect of the school's work which virtually all parents are pleased with.
41. Pupils with special educational needs are integrated effectively into the school's caring systems. The school has procedures in place to identify pupils who may have a learning or physical disability. When a concern is first raised, either by the parent or class teacher, the pupil is monitored. If necessary, the pupil is placed on the school's special educational needs register at the appropriate stage. Pupils requiring specialist help with speech therapy or with a specific learning difficulty have the necessary support and guidance provided. The school integrates specialist help well and classroom assistants, when available, support pupils with special educational needs in line with the specialist guidance in their individual education plans.
42. The procedures for assessing pupils' attainment in English, mathematics and science are excellent. They provide a wide range of information about pupils' progress and are used extremely carefully to set targets for improvement. This is a very significant improvement since the unsatisfactory level found by the previous inspection. Information from assessments gives pupils and parents clear information about what pupils need to learn next. The school tells pupils what they need to do to improve their learning and to achieve more. Pupils are involved effectively in this exercise and so feel they have responsibility for their own learning.
43. The school has a clear overview of how assessment should be used to guide curriculum planning and teaching. This is because the school analyses the results of National Curriculum tests thoroughly. It has a clear picture of the effect that the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have on pupils' standards. All teachers use the results of assessment to build on pupils' levels of previous knowledge and to plan suitable work in future lessons. There is exceptionally careful monitoring and evaluation of progress in English, mathematics and science. This gives a clear picture of achievement and progress and is used effectively. For example, in the week of the inspection, the planning of lessons in mathematics in Year 2 was adapted because pupils were finding it more difficult to grasp the principle of multiplication than the teacher had anticipated. As a result of adaptations to planning, pupils' learning became more secure.
44. The marked improvements that the school has made in its assessment of pupils' attainment and

progress have played a major part in the improvement in attainment since the previous inspection. The school is determined to improve the unsatisfactory aspects of care that this report identifies.

45. The monitoring of progress and achievement in other subjects is slightly less rigorous but still gives useful information about how well pupils achieve against the National Curriculum attainment targets. There is consistent use of constructive marking across the school. However, the quality of the comments accompanying marking is at its best in the Reception class and in Years 2, 3 and 6. This means that there is inconsistency in how well pupils are able to use marking to improve and correct their work.
46. There are effective systems in place for assessing the attainment levels of children when they enter and leave the Reception class. These enable teachers to build on the work that children do in the Reception class and extend their early learning. The school uses a suitably wide range of tests to assess and plan for further progress. It uses the results of this analysis to group pupils according to their needs and abilities. This ensures that all pupils make very good progress in their learning.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

47. The school has continued to work hard at developing its partnership with parents and, as a result, parents' views of the school remain good. Parents are particularly impressed with how much the school has improved in all areas during the past two years. In a questionnaire, parents say they are especially pleased with the quality of the teaching and the expectation that their children should work hard and do their best. They are grateful that their children are happy in the school. A number of parents do not believe the school provides sufficient activities for children after school, but inspectors have found evidence to the contrary and judge the school's provision of activities outside class to be good. Some parents feel that they are not sufficiently well informed of their child's progress. Inspectors believe there is some justification in this and the school has plans in place to improve its procedures. In addition, although some of the end-of-year reports inform parents of their child's progress very well in all subjects, some do not. They concentrate too much on pupils' likes and dislikes and areas of learning which have been covered rather than what the child has learned. Some use language which is difficult to understand; for example, 'to calculate in abstract contexts'.
48. Even so, information for parents is good overall. Information on the general life of the school, on planned events and on how parents can help their children to learn is very good indeed. Parents are fully informed about the work that pupils do in lessons through individual class handbooks and most of these are very effective in encouraging parents to get involved in their child's learning at home. However, some again use language which is difficult for the lay person to understand. For example, a list of technical language used in English literacy lessons includes words such as 'mnemonic', 'word derivation', 'kenning', 'tanka' and 'limerick' with no explanation of what these mean.
49. The school has very good relationships with parents of pupils with special educational needs. Parents know who the special educational needs co-ordinator is and teachers make regular contact with the parents of pupils who have individual education plans to review the targets that have been set to enable them to make progress. Reviews are planned to involve contributions from all adults involved, including parents and all are included in meetings to discuss pupils' progress towards the targets set. Pupils on the register of special educational needs in Years 3 to 6 are also involved in this process. Parents of pupils with special educational needs give very good support to the school and to their children and play a significant part in the progress that they make.
50. The school is keen to develop its already good partnership with parents further and the headteacher takes every opportunity to thank parents for their efforts in supporting the work of the school. As a result, more and more parents are taking an interest in their children's education and realising how they can make a difference. Even though some parents are reluctant to attend formal meetings of an academic nature, they support the school in other ways. For example,

home/school reading records confirm that most parents listen to their children reading at home on a very regular basis. In addition, a good number of parents often help in lessons and elsewhere in the school. For example, parents make toast for any pupil in the school who wants it on at least three days each week. Another group of parents have responded to the school's initiative to make 'curiosity kits' for loan to families with the aim of helping to develop children's interest in reference books.

51. The school's links with parents are good overall. They are having a positive impact on pupils' attainment and progress and the school is in a good position to develop these links further.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

52. At the time of the previous inspection, leadership and management were unsatisfactory. Management systems were weak so that there was a lack of cohesion in the school's provision and the governing body was criticised for being insufficiently aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Leadership was failing to tackle perceived weaknesses so that the school was not being led forward systematically.
53. In the two and a half years since that inspection, the situation has been transformed. The new headteacher is providing excellent leadership and management which have enabled the school to make very rapid progress in a number of areas. The headteacher has a clear vision for the school. It is to provide pupils with learning of high quality within the school's Christian tradition so that pupils succeed academically and develop into confident and competent human beings. These aims are reflected impressively in much that the school does.
54. Sensibly, the school has concentrated on raising attainment in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. In this, it has been outstandingly successful. In the two years, between 2000 and 2002, attainment in the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6 has improved spectacularly from being well below the national average to well above the national average overall. Attainment for seven-year-olds has also improved and is now above the national average.
55. These highly impressive improvements have resulted from the measures that the headteacher has taken. She has very high expectations for her pupils' behaviour and effort and these expectations are realised in most classes in the school. They are underpinned by rigorous planning of pupils' learning so that they increase their knowledge, skills and understanding systematically. The headteacher has introduced excellent systems for assessing pupils' attainment and progress and follow-up systems to ensure that the information from these assessments is used to guide future teaching and learning. Information from the National Curriculum tests at the end of Years 2 and 6 and from optional tests at the end of Years 3, 4 and 5 is analysed rigorously so that any weaknesses in learning are identified and can be addressed. Learning is supported where appropriate by national schemes including the 'Springboard' programme for mathematics and the 'Additional Literacy' scheme in English.
56. The headteacher has only been able to achieve the success that she has because she has established an impressive unity of purpose among her colleagues. There is now an excellent commitment to improvement and a clear capacity to succeed. These are supported by a commitment to professional development for all staff. The quality of teaching and learning is monitored and evaluated rigorously and needs are identified and addressed either through whole-school professional development or through individual programmes. As a result, staff are now more confident and feel valued. High-quality training has been provided for support staff and they play a full and significant role in teaching and learning. New staff are introduced to the school's routines very effectively and the local education authority recognised this by inviting two of the school's teachers to address newly-qualified teachers appointed to the authority this term.
57. There are now very good systems for delegating responsibility to teachers for the leadership of the different subjects of the curriculum. Overall, subject leaders are now effective and some, for example, in English, music and physical education, who have only taken on these responsibilities

this term, are already making an impact. Subject leaders have a secure understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in their subjects and clear ideas about how to move forward. A senior management team of three has been established and has had a positive impact on the school's progress. It has the potential to be very effective.

58. The school has developed excellent systems for determining its priorities for development. These are incorporated into the school development plan after appropriate consultation. The detailed and comprehensive school development plan for 2002-03 is rooted in careful analysis of the progress of the previous plan. It is underpinned by a three-year strategic development plan. Priorities for development are financed by monies identified within the budget. School development planning is evolving into a continuing process of review, analysis, planning and evaluation which is moving the school forward successfully.
59. The governing body, under the leadership of its experienced and enthusiastic chair, has worked hard to improve its role in the leadership and management of the school. Governors have undertaken training and have visited other schools in order to obtain a better understanding of their responsibilities. The governing body now fulfils its legal responsibilities well. A sensible committee structure and links with subjects and year groups mean that governors now have a much more secure understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Governors share the headteacher's vision for the school and have clear ideas on how to move the school forward. They are now much better equipped to act as 'critical friend' to the school.
60. The school sees equality of access and opportunity as central entitlements for all pupils. Great care is taken to include all pupils in all that the school does and, in this, the school is very successful. The management of special educational needs is good. The new co-ordinator is very hard working and approachable. She has a clear view of what needs to be improved and how to achieve this. Much has already been reviewed, updated and improved in the short time in which she has been in post. There is the potential to improve the good provision currently in place. The school also ensures that the very small number of pupils who speak English as an additional language have full access to learning. The very good progress that they are making shows that the school achieves this successfully. The management of the Reception class is excellent and, as a result, the children are making rapid progress.
61. The school runs efficiently on a day-to-day basis and its routines are straightforward. Little time is lost in moving from one activity to the next. The school's use of new technology is satisfactory. It is used well in administration and pupils have a secure understanding of how computers work. However, the use of information and communication technology to support learning in other subjects is inconsistent and unsatisfactory overall.
62. There are very good examples of the principles of best value being applied successfully. Since the school's previous inspection there have been major improvements to the building and the learning environment and these are ongoing. Pupils are now offered a wider range of activities and their whole learning experience is of much higher quality. The school now gives very good value for money. The school's financial procedures are effective and are well managed by a part-time bursar. The school's accounts were last audited in November 2000 and the report identified a number of weaknesses in procedure. These have all been addressed and the visiting finance officer from the local education authority confirms that, as a result of the action taken, the school's procedures are now much more secure. Grants for specific purposes, for example, for special educational needs, are used appropriately and the headteacher has plans to introduce systems for improving the learning of gifted and talented pupils from January.
63. There is a very good match of teachers and support staff to the demands of the National Curriculum. Teachers and support assistants work very effectively together and support staff are very well briefed about their responsibilities. The school successfully supports initial teacher training.
64. There have been significant improvements to the school's accommodation since the previous inspection and it is now satisfactory for teaching the National Curriculum and religious education.

There is no playing field, although the school has access to an artificial grass pitch. The hard play area is not large and there is no equipment to support play at breaks and lunchtimes. The cleanliness of the building has improved markedly in the last two years and the caretaker and his team have coped well with a range of building alterations.

65. Resources for learning are adequate, overall. Resources for English, mathematics and science have improved well, but the quantity and quality of resources for geography and history are unsatisfactory. At the time of this inspection the provision of computers was unsatisfactory, but the school has clear plans in place to improve this provision markedly in the next few months.
66. A very great deal of hard work has resulted in the leadership and management of the school improving very significantly since the previous inspection. The school is now very effective and has the capacity to build on these successes and to improve further.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

67. In order to improve the quality of education further, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

- (1) address the issues relating to child protection and to health and safety which have been reported to the headteacher and the governing body.

(paragraphs 35, 36, 37)

In addition to this key issue, the governors should consider the following points for development when writing their action plan:

- to improve resources for learning in geography and history;

(paragraphs 65, 118, 122, 126)

- to develop the use of information and communication technology to support learning in other subjects.

(paragraphs 61, 98, 107, 121, 129, 132, 137, 144)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	45
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	43

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
Number	5	13	15	10	2	0	0
Percentage	11	29	33	22	5	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	186
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	59

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	26

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	2

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	16
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	20

Attendance

Authorised absence

%

Unauthorised absence

%

School data	6.2
National comparative data	5.4

School data	0.4
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)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2002	11	12

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	10	11
	Girls	10	11	12
	Total	20	21	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	87 (91)	91 (91)	100 (100)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	9	9	11
	Girls	10	12	11
	Total	19	21	22
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	83 (96)	91 (96)	96 (100)
	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)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2002	13	13

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	10	12
	Girls	13	13	13
	Total	22	23	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	85 (73)	88 (77)	96 (100)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	13	13
	Girls	13	13	13
	Total	22	26	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	85 (77)	100 (77)	100 (95)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

Ethnic background of pupils**Exclusions in the last school year**

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	159	8	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	2	0	0
Any other ethnic group	1	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	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)	10
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18.6
Average class size	26.6

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	132

Qualified teachers and support staff: Nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	N/A
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	N/A
Total number of education support staff	N/A
Total aggregate hours worked per week	N/A
Number of pupils per FTE adult	N/A

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	4
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	6

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001 - 2002
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	£
Total income	489,543
Total expenditure	497,676
Expenditure per pupil	2,720
Balance brought forward from previous year	36,942
Balance carried forward to next year	28,809

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	186
Number of questionnaires returned	34

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	59	35	3	3	0
My child is making good progress in school.	35	59	0	0	6
Behaviour in the school is good.	38	53	6	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	38	50	6	6	0
The teaching is good.	50	50	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	26	56	18	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	38	47	9	0	6
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	50	47	3	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	24	58	6	3	9
The school is well led and managed.	30	58	6	0	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	32	62	6	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	18	56	15	3	8

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

68. The provision for children in the Foundation Stage of learning is very good. This is a very significant improvement since the previous inspection when there were many weaknesses in the provision for pupils in the Reception class. The quality of teaching is now excellent overall, the classroom is stimulating and welcoming and there are now immediately accessible toilet facilities. These are all significant improvements since the previous inspection and are having a positive effect on the children's learning, progress and achievement. The school does not yet have an outdoor learning area for these children. However, it has recently received funding for this and has well-developed plans to provide a good range of outdoor learning opportunities. This work is scheduled to begin when the current major building works are finished.
69. Children enter the school's Reception class at the beginning of the academic year in which they are five. The class teacher is extremely skilful in providing work that meets the children's needs and abilities very well. This ensures that all the children, including those with special educational needs, are included in the planned activities and have equal access to the curriculum. The school uses the local education authority's scheme to assess children's achievement on entry to the Reception class. This indicates that most children begin school with very limited personal and social skills and many have difficulty in speaking and listening carefully. By the time that they begin work on the National Curriculum in Year 1, most children are likely to attain the expected levels in the six areas of learning designed for this age group. This represents very good progress and is a direct result of the patient, carefully structured and very high quality teaching. The teaching is particularly effective in promoting children's personal, social and emotional development. Adult interaction with the children is stimulating and enthusiastic and this is a very marked improvement since the previous inspection.
70. The teacher and nursery nurses work very effectively together. All adults keep careful notes of the children's responses in all areas of learning. They use this information to record the progress of each child and to plan work that meets the developing needs of all children. This builds very well on what each child knows and can do and gives a clear picture of progress throughout the Reception class. This is a very good level of improvement since the previous inspection.

Personal, social and emotional development

71. The teaching and provision for this area of the children's development are excellent. The class teacher, nursery-nurse and support assistant are calm, patient and sensitive to the needs of young children. They make sure that other helpers in the Reception class deal sensitively with the children. An excellent example of this is the inclusion of a child with special educational needs into all classroom activities. The classroom is stimulating, interesting and welcoming and invites the children to handle and use the good quality equipment in their learning. The teacher provides the children with interesting work areas. These enable all children to flourish and to develop an increasing awareness of their own and each other's worth.
72. All the children respond very well to adults and to each other. They work happily together and share equipment with goodwill. The children show a good level of respect for adults and each other, for example, responding immediately when asked to tidy away equipment. All adults encourage the children to choose their own materials, use them carefully and tidy away sensibly. This develops their awareness of how to care for and respect property very effectively. The children work with a clear sense of enjoyment and purpose. This is a direct result of the very high quality teaching. Most children are likely to meet national expectations in this area of learning. This is very good progress from the low average level of achievement on entry to the Reception class.

Communication, language and literacy

73. The teaching in this area of learning is outstandingly good and the planning and evaluation of progress is meticulous. It meets the needs of all children effectively and makes a positive contribution to their achievements. Most children enter the Reception class with below average standards in their ability to speak clearly. Many have great difficulty in listening carefully to adults and each other. The teacher ensures that the children learn to listen carefully and to follow instructions accurately. At the time of this inspection, most children were already working at standards expected for their age. This represents very good progress from their levels of attainment on entry to the Reception class.
74. All adults ensure that children have opportunities to see the value of reading and writing in most activities. For example, children are learning to use correct terminology such as 'author' and 'title' and are quickly developing the ability to recognise simple words. The constant reinforcement of learning is a key strength of the teaching. It makes children eager to read and write. They often choose to write, for example, by practising writing letters and word shapes on the whiteboard. They talk willingly about their work. Children of all abilities soon become interested in looking at books, trying to read words and listening eagerly to stories. The more able children are already beginning to form letters correctly and write their own names. This high quality learning reflects the excellent quality of teaching. Most children are likely to meet national expectations in this area of learning by the end of this school year.

Mathematical development

75. The very high quality teaching of mathematics has a positive effect on the progress that the children make in their learning and the standards that they attain from a low starting point. They have made very good progress since they entered the school in September. The teacher makes number activities very interesting and takes every opportunity to develop the children's awareness of the sequence of numbers and their relationships. They quickly develop a good knowledge of mathematical language. For example, they all know that four comes before five and that five comes after four. The vast majority of children achieve the levels of accuracy expected for their age as they match and count numbers. All children count confidently and recognise numbers to five. The more able children are beginning to understand the concept of place value in their practical work. Most children are likely to reach the expected standards in this area of learning by the time they enter Year 1.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

76. The teacher links work in this area of learning very effectively with other areas. For example, children work at drawing letters and numerals in rice and then explain what they are drawing. This makes good links with communication and mathematical skills. The very high quality teaching ensures children use the computer confidently and accurately. An example of this occurred when children showed secure mouse control as they clicked onto the desired program and sequenced objects by dragging them across the screen. All the children have opportunities to use headphones to listen to and to follow stories. This develops their interest in books and reading very effectively. Work in the water area successfully increases the children's skills of investigation through the very skilful questioning by adults. For example, 'How could you make the wheel go faster?' leads to children experimenting with plastic pipes at different heights. Opportunities such as these and the high quality of teaching ensure that most children are on target to meet the expected standards in this area by the time they leave the Reception class.

Physical development

77. The provision for the development of children's physical skills is good. The school has plans to make provision for outdoor learning in the immediate future to give the children more opportunities for climbing and balancing. All children have ample opportunities to develop their skills of moving in a large space through their sessions in the school hall. Most children already exceed the expectations for their age in this area of their development. The teacher makes sure that the

children increase their ability to control pencils, scissors and brushes. Most children have skills in this area that meet the expectations for their age. They experience a variety of activities, such as using malleable materials. This helps them to practise and refine their manipulative skills. The teacher promotes children's physical skills very well. This means that most children are likely to achieve the standards expected nationally by the time they enter Year 1.

Creative development

78. Although no direct teaching was seen in this area of learning, it is obvious that the teacher has high expectations for children's attainment. As a result, the children mix and use paint confidently and show good progress in their ability to observe and portray objects closely. This is evident from the paintings on display around the classroom. All the children have plenty of opportunities for imaginative role-play. This helps them to increase their ability to develop and express their own ideas. The teacher's planning shows that the children have opportunities to express themselves through singing and moving to music. They learn new words quickly and enjoy putting actions to songs. An example of this was when they sang 'Five little speckled frogs' at the beginning of a maths lesson. Most children are likely to achieve the standards expected nationally by the time they move into Year 1.
79. The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is very good. This ensures that they quickly develop positive attitudes to school and to learning. The most significant strength is the quality of teaching for these young children. The teacher plans adult-led activities very carefully. This ensures that all the children have high quality chances to express themselves and to experience direct teaching. The procedures to review and identify developing and changing needs are excellent. The school analyses the results of the entry assessment very carefully and uses these to plan work for groups of children and for individuals. The Reception class teacher has a very secure understanding of how young children learn and develop. This ensures that all children, including those with special educational needs, make very good progress in their early learning. This provision is a strength of the school.

ENGLISH

80. Standards in English, at the end of Years 2 and 6, are well above the national average. This is a significant improvement since the year of the previous inspection when pupils achieved standards well below the national average. Pupils make very good progress in all aspects of the subject. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Pupils who speak English as an additional language achieve very well and make progress similar to that of other pupils. These very good standards are a result of high quality teaching and the very effective management of the enthusiastic and well-informed subject leader. There is no significant difference between the standards achieved by boys and girls.
81. Pupils make particularly good progress in their speaking and listening skills. This is because the teachers give them ample opportunities to take part in discussions and drama activities. For example, pupils in Year 2 discussed their achievements in writing poems sensitively and talked about how to improve them. Pupils in Year 6 have used persuasive arguments confidently and enjoyed acting out plays such as 'Macbeth'. They talked eagerly about their work and about how they changed Shakespeare's language into that of the current day. In lessons, pupils are confident in responding to the teachers' questions and in sharing their work with the rest of the class. For example, in a Year 4 lesson the teacher asked, 'What's another word for a title'? A pupil replied, 'I didn't know it, but I know it now. It's a headline'. Listening skills are very good because the teachers usually make lesson introductions exciting and stimulating. This was evident in Year 1 where pupils listened carefully to the beginning of a story and correctly predicted it's ending. These very good skills continue through to Year 6 where pupils put themselves in the place of the Minister for Health. They became totally involved in debating the benefits of subsidising health clubs as an incentive to promoting a healthy lifestyle. In this lesson pupils were really prepared to listen to, evaluate and value each other's opinions. These achievements are particularly impressive because many pupils enter the school with underdeveloped skills in

speaking and listening.

82. Pupils' progress in reading is very good. Their interest in books begins in the Reception class and continues throughout the school. At the time of the inspection, the school library was not finished because of the continuing major building refurbishment. This limits pupils' opportunities to find somewhere quiet to carry out reflective reading and research. They do, however, have opportunities to read quietly in the classrooms and in small meeting rooms. There is very good support for the development of reading skills. For example, four pupils from Year 4 worked with a learning support assistant and rapidly improved their understanding of phrases such as 'When night was yet young'. Pupils thoroughly enjoy the recently introduced 'reading buddies' time when older pupils team up with younger ones. An example of this was seen when Year 4 pupils supported their Year 2 partners. This improves the younger pupils' reading skills and makes a positive contribution to all pupils' social development. Reading standards are high across the school. In Year 2, for example, pupils are confident in explaining the difference between 'fiction' and 'non-fiction' and know what is meant by terms such as 'author', 'illustrator', 'publisher', 'index', 'contents' and 'glossary'. By Year 6 pupils give well-considered reasons for why they like a particular book or author; for example, 'I like the 'Harry Potter' books by J K Rowling because they're exciting and make you think about what's going to happen next'. Another pupil said, "I enjoy looking at information books because I am very interested in finding out new facts" and yet another explained that, "Newspapers are really interesting because you can read about what's happening in the world". Pupils apply their reading skills successfully in other lessons, such as art and design and are confident in using reference books, CD-ROMs and the Internet when researching information.
83. Pupils achieve high standards in writing and make very good progress, particularly in the use of spelling, grammar and punctuation. By Year 2, many pupils already write interesting stories and have a good understanding of how to structure stories correctly. Careful teaching ensures that they know how to engage the reader's interest. For example, a Year 2 pupil wrote, 'Out of the sea came a shiny bright key. The key said "Leave this beach or you'll pay for this". After that the key vanished into thin air. I was very frightened...' This good rate of progress continues through to Year 6 where a pupil wrote, 'Johnny heard a cracking noise and the boat started swaying faster and faster. The sky was more atrocious and frightening. The rocks were covered in seaweed and very jagged. The mast on the boat started to crack...'
84. Again, skilful teaching ensures that pupils know how to plan, draft and redraft their work and how to use punctuation to create effect. Pupils apply these skills successfully when writing in other subjects, such as history when for example, they write pleading letters from Anne Boleyn and in word-processing. This enables other subjects to contribute well to progress in writing. In the specific skill of using grammar accurately, the teachers' constructive marking makes a positive contribution to improving standards. For example, a pupil wrote in response to marking, 'In my next work I will include more connectives and maintain the past tense'.
85. Standards, learning and progress continue to be good in the development of pupils' skills of handwriting and presentation. By the time they enter Year 3 most pupils are consistent in their use of joined-up handwriting. They write clearly, with well-formed script and use a suitable range of writing implements. The transition from pencil to fibre-tip pens is seamless and, by Year 6, pupils write in ink confidently.
86. Throughout the school pupils enjoy their literacy lessons and work hard because they are involved and interested in their own learning. Teachers share the lesson's learning objectives with pupils and, in addition, the pupils have their own learning targets. In lessons, they work very hard and with high levels of concentration. This means that pupils produce good work in the time available. Pupils enjoy working together; for example, in Year 5 the pupils worked very well together as they supported each other using the computer to word-process their work. They enjoy experimenting with language and produce poems using alliteration that aptly describes the subject. This is evident in a poem by a Year 5 pupil entitled 'Autumn Leaves' that begins with, 'Trudging trembling through the leaves, Crunchy, crunchy crisp...'

87. The teaching of literacy is good overall and over half of the teaching is very good or better. The analysis of pupils' written work confirms that consistently good teaching is having a positive effect on attainment and progress. This is a very marked improvement since the previous inspection when teaching was judged to be satisfactory. A very small minority of teaching was unsatisfactory because the learning objective was not met. Very good and excellent teaching has a clear and significant effect on the high standards pupils achieve. Teachers are enthusiastic and confident in their teaching and this is reflected in the rate of pupils' learning and their very positive attitudes to work. Lesson introductions enthuse and interest pupils and the summing up sessions at the ends of lessons enable them to reflect and share their learning. These are a significant strength of the teaching because they show the teachers' very good skills in using questions to establish what pupils already know. This provides a secure base for the next steps of learning.
88. All teachers read with clarity, enthusiasm and good expression. This makes pupils want to listen and gives them good examples for their own reading. In Year 2, for example, the teacher's lively reading of poems had pupils totally absorbed and involved. Expectations of achievement are high in lessons and pupils' thinking is constantly challenged. For example, in one lesson, the teacher asked 'What does 'justify' mean? Give me another word that means the same'. Teachers give pupils clear instructions that include the time they have to finish their work. This provides a sense of urgency and maintains a brisk pace to the lessons. It ensures that pupils work exceptionally hard and with good concentration, producing work of a very high standard.
89. Teachers use resources very well to support pupils' learning and there is a clear expectation that pupils use dictionaries to check spellings. All teachers make very good use of support assistants in lessons. This ensures that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, take a full part in the lessons and make good progress.
90. The leadership and management of the subject are very good. This contributes to the very good standards that pupils achieve and to the quality of teaching. The monitoring and recording of pupils' progress and achievements are excellent. They give a clear picture of strengths and areas for improvement and teachers use the findings of this analysis to plan future work. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection.

MATHEMATICS

91. By the end of Year 6, standards in mathematics are well above the standards normally found. This is a major improvement on the standards in the National Curriculum tests in 2000, the year when the school was inspected previously. In 2002, in the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, attainment in mathematics was well above the national average and very high in relation to standards attained in schools which draw their pupils from similar backgrounds. Overall, pupils make very good progress in mathematics in Years 3 to 6. In 2002, at the end of Year 6, girls outperformed boys by a considerable margin, but there is no evidence to suggest that this is a general trend from year to year.
92. By the end of Year 2, attainment is likely to be well above the levels normally found which is an improvement from the time of the previous inspection when attainment was satisfactory. In the National Curriculum tests for seven-year-olds in 2002, standards were above the national average and well above the average attained in similar schools. Pupils make very good progress in their learning overall. In 2002 in the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, girls outperformed boys and this has been the pattern for the last three years. The school is aware of this trend and is taking steps to address it.
93. By Year 6, pupils have a secure understanding of number operations although some pupils are confused about how decimals, fractions and percentages are linked. Most are competent when reducing fractions to their simplest forms. Pupils handle addition, subtraction, multiplication and division with impressive competence and most have above average skills in tackling numerical problems expressed in words. They represent data in graphical form and interpret information expressed in graphs. They have a very good understanding of the properties of the basic two-dimensional shapes and calculate perimeters and areas accurately. An analysis of pupils'

mathematics books in Years 3 to 6 shows that most pupils are working at levels of attainment which are ahead of what would be expected at this stage of the school year.

94. In Year 2, pupils accurately sequence numbers forwards and backwards to 20, count in tens to 100 and in 100's to 1000. They have a clear understanding of place value in tens and units and accurately write numbers in words. Higher attaining pupils are able to add numbers to totals above 100, for example, $90+20=110$. Pupils understand how to halve and double and round accurately to the nearest ten. They know the basic two and three-dimensional shapes and solve money problems accurately. They have a good understanding of how information is represented in a tally chart. During the inspection, they were being introduced to the new concept of multiplication. By the fourth lesson, higher attaining pupils understood how to calculate from rows, for example, that 10×2 or $2 \times 10 = 20$. Average pupils tackled simple examples competently, for example $3 \times 2 = 2 \times 3 = 6$. Lower attaining pupils could often get the correct answer, but struggled to record it accurately. In a whole-class session, pupils confidently recited the two times table and higher attaining pupils were able to go up to $15 \times 2 = 30$. Again, pupils in Years 1 and 2 are attaining at levels which are ahead of what is expected during the first school term.
95. Most pupils have good attitudes to mathematics and work with very good levels of interest and concentration. In most classes very good relationships mean that pupils are happy to answer questions and are not upset if they are wrong. This leads to some good examples of initiative as pupils explore how to deal with new concepts and ideas. These positive attitudes promote learning and progress. In Years 4 and 6, pupils had less positive attitudes and quickly lost concentration. In these lessons, the time taken to manage pupils' behaviour slowed the pace of the lesson and the pace of learning.
96. The quality of teaching is good overall and there were examples of very good teaching in Years 2, 3, and 5. Teachers have a secure understanding of the subject and use the National Numeracy Strategy very effectively to promote learning. For example, in the very good lesson in Year 2, there was skilful use of the whole-class session at the end of the lesson to reinforce learning and understanding. Lessons are planned very thoroughly and the assessment of pupils' attainment and progress is excellent. The results of these assessments are then used to plan future learning and lessons will be amended if necessary if pupils have not thoroughly understood previous work. The school does not specifically identify pupils who are particularly gifted or talented but has plans to do so in the near future. In mathematics, higher attaining pupils are challenged well by extension work and achieve high levels of attainment.
97. Work is regularly and thoroughly marked and there were examples of helpful comments indicating how pupils could make further progress in Years 2, 3 and 5. There were occasions when instructions to do corrections did not appear to have been followed. In very good lessons, teachers had very high expectations for pupils' effort and behaviour and interesting learning activities and very good relationships ensure that these expectations are realised. Overall, high levels of planning and focused teaching result in very good progress in learning. The careful provision of suitably graded work means that pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Support assistants are effective in enabling pupils with special educational needs to play a full part in lessons and to contribute to learning.
98. During the inspection, the subject leader was on leave of absence and the subject was being managed by the headteacher. There are excellent systems for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning, assessing pupils' attainment and progress and using the results of these assessments to plan future learning. These systems have been central to the highly impressive improvement in attainment achieved since the school was inspected previously. Given the transitional stage with regard to the school's provision of computers, there was little evidence of information and communication technology being used to support learning in mathematics. Where computers were being used, pupils were using them competently. Resources for learning in mathematics are now good and contribute positively to learning.
99. The highly impressive improvement in attainment is the result of very high expectations supported by rigorous and thorough systems for promoting attainment and progress. With these in place

and an excellent commitment to improvement throughout the school, there is an excellent capacity to maintain current standards and to improve them further.

SCIENCE

100. Standards of attainment are above average at the end of Year 2 and well above average at the end of Year 6. Most Year 2 pupils are attaining a level above that expected for their age and this was reflected in the work seen during the inspection. National Curriculum test results for pupils in Year 6 were very high in relation to the national average in 2002 and most pupils achieve at the higher levels. This is supported by the quality of work seen in Year 6 during the inspection. Standards in Years 3 and 4 are good and, in Year 5, they are very good. National Curriculum test results since the school was inspected previously show an excellent improvement in the standards that pupils attain in science.
101. Standards have improved markedly in the junior classes since the previous inspection. All pupils now make good progress in the development of enquiry skills and scientific knowledge because of the good, structured teaching, a firm emphasis on practical and investigative work and the use of a good and improved, range of resources. For example, Year 6 pupils, when investigating the elasticity of rubber bands, benefited from using "force meters" in pairs to measure the effect of different masses. Teachers plan lessons with clear targets and give due consideration to building on what pupils already know. Thus, in a very good lesson, Year 5 pupils deepened their understanding of "evaporation" and "condensation" when the teacher held a kettle of boiling water against the cold window and helped them to recall previous work on changes of state. Pupils were highly impressed by the instantaneous condensation that resulted. This made a useful starting point to discussing the nature of the water cycle.
102. The teaching for the infant pupils is also good, although evidence in pupils' work does not yet indicate the high focus on investigation opportunities as is the case with older pupils. First hand opportunities to observe different living plants and creatures are frequently made available. In a Year 2 class for example, a visitor brought a range of insects and reptiles and, supported by very good questioning, furthered pupils knowledge and understanding of the common characteristics of these animals. Pupils know that all insects have six legs while spiders have eight and that insects benefit from the value of camouflage. All pupils were thoroughly engrossed and attentive and the high expectations of the teacher were fully realised. The work of Year 2 pupils shows that they acquire a good range of basic scientific facts, appropriate vocabulary and learn how to write a simple report with labelled diagrams.
103. The practical nature of most lessons inspires an enthusiastic and lively response from the pupils. They often concentrate hard on what they do. Challenging questions promote good thoughtful responses from pupils. In a Year 4 lesson after playtime, the teacher introduced the concept of insulation by referring to two pupils. 'She is wearing more clothes than him and doesn't look as hot. Why?' Pupils responded with good suggestions such as, 'He's moving around a lot and gets hot' and 'His clothes are better for keeping him warm'. In a Year 3 lesson on plants, the teacher asked 'Is this test fair?' As a result pupils demonstrated a good understanding of the criteria for fair scientific testing. Lessons move at a brisk pace and teachers place a strong emphasis on scientific vocabulary. As a result, pupils use terms such as 'room temperature', 'particles', 'force' and 'gravity' with confidence and understanding when giving explanations about what has happened and when offering predictions.
104. The high quality support of classroom assistants ensures that pupils with special educational needs take a full part in lessons and that their ideas are valued. They contribute significantly to the good progress that pupils make in science. Higher-attaining pupils enjoy the challenges that investigational science affords. For example, pupils in Year 6 were testing the elasticity of rubber bands. The complexity of measuring this in two ways stimulated their interest and promoted good discussion with their partners as to what the two sets of results showed. They worked well in pairs and sustained interest well without the direct guidance of the teacher. Presented with the task in its entirety, lower-attaining pupils found it difficult, but sensitive support from the teacher and learning support assistant enabled them to complete the work.

105. A good feature of many lessons is the additional challenge for higher attaining pupils. This was seen clearly in teachers' planning where the main task was for all pupils and extension tasks or questions were planned for higher attaining pupils. This is extended into the marking of pupils' work where comments in pupils' books prompt a written dialogue between teachers and pupils. Challenging pupils in this way promotes thinking and is geared to improving pupil attainment as well as the quality of presentation. Pupils show pride in the quality of their work and this is a strong feature throughout the school.
106. The unsatisfactory quality of teaching and learning at the time of the previous inspection has been addressed successfully and there is now no unsatisfactory teaching. Teaching is good overall and two of the lessons seen were very good. As a result, the quality of pupils' learning is now good or very good also.
107. The co-ordinator is currently on leave of absence. The headteacher is covering science co-ordination during her absence. Both are providing excellent leadership. The high standards currently achieved are a direct result of employing the latest national subject guidance effectively, monitoring the subject regularly, ensuring that pupils' achievements are rigorously assessed and recorded and improving the quality of teaching. The school is well aware of subject strengths and weaknesses through thorough evaluation of pupil data and this information is used very well to plan the next steps in pupils' learning. School targets in science are high and regularly exceeded. Pupils are set individual targets and teachers and pupils monitor progress towards these. The school is aware of the need to improve computer support for learning in science across the school. There has been a marked improvement in the volume and quality of resources since the previous inspection and this has served to encourage teachers to deliver science through investigational methods and made the subject more exciting for pupils.
108. Hard work over the last two years, particularly by the subject leader in promoting practical and experimental work, has had a profound impact on the quality of subject provision and on the standards that pupils achieve. In two years, attainment in science by the time pupils leave the school has improved from being well below the national average to being comparable with the top five per cent of schools in the country.

ART AND DESIGN

109. Pupils' standards, by the end of Year 2, are similar to those of most seven-year-olds. By the end of Year 6, pupils achieve above average standards and this is an improvement since the previous inspection when pupils' standards met the expectations for most 11-year-olds. A significant contribution to the improvement in standards has been made by the knowledge and enthusiasm of the subject leader. This ensures that the planning for work is consistent and gives clear guidelines for the development of skills and knowledge. Teachers receive a good level of support from the subject leader and are confident in their teaching and planning. This has had a positive effect on standards. The procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are clear and consistent across the school. However, there is no provision for an overview of the development of pupils' skills and techniques across the school. The construction of an assessment tracker to give a clear picture of progress forms part of the current action plan for art and design and is intended to address this omission.
110. No direct teaching in art was seen in Years 1 and 2. The analysis of pupils' work in sketchbooks, of planning and of work displayed around the school forms the basis for judgements. It is evident that the pupils make good progress in learning how to use paint to create watercolour landscapes. They apply their skills satisfactorily to decorating masks and achieve sound improvements in their ability to sketch objects using pencils as they get older. The use of a range of materials increases pupils' awareness of how to create three-dimensional work and to develop their knowledge of the properties of different materials. All pupils apply their skills in information and communication technology satisfactorily to compose pictures and patterns. The range of work and the quality of planning and comments in sketchbooks suggests that the teaching is good. This ensures that pupils take care over their work and make sure it is finished. They build well on

their skills as they progress from the Reception class to Year 2.

111. As they progress from Year 2 to Year 6, pupils build on and develop their artistic skills and techniques well. This is particularly noticeable in the watercolours in Year 4 where pupils built on their previously learned skills impressively. The systematic teaching of drawing skills and techniques increases pupils' skills and, by Year 5, they use an increasingly wide range of media. These pupils have quickly learned how to contrast and compare pictures by the same artist, for example, 'The Clown', 'Red Interior' and 'The Lady in Blue' by Matisse. Further careful teaching ensures that pupils develop and amend their ideas as they work. The use of the Internet for research into Matisse's work has increased pupils' ability to use information and communication technology to support their work. This good rate of progress in learning continues through into Year 6 where pupils develop and refine their use of sketchbooks and pay increasing attention to detail in their drawings. By Year 6, standards are above those normally found with pupils of this age.
112. Pupils are very interested in their work and learn new skills well. This is evident from the amount and quality of work around the school. Examples of work indicate the careful teaching of skills and techniques. Pupils who have special educational needs work alongside their classmates and receive sensitive and effective support. This ensures they make good progress in their learning. Pupils who speak English as an additional language make progress at the same rate as other pupils. Their teachers explain the meaning of all art-associated vocabulary carefully so that all pupils understand what to do. Teachers' planning for the subject is clear. The scheme of work that has been adopted provides for systematic teaching about artists and their work. The work on poppies stimulated by Georgia O'Keefe's paintings is particularly impressive. Teachers make effective links with information and communication technology and these enable pupils to develop their skills in producing computer-generated art and in carrying out research. There has been a noticeable improvement in art since the previous inspection and the school is in a good position to go on to improve further.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

113. Pupils in Years 2 and 6 achieve standards that meet the expectations for their age. These standards have been maintained since the school's previous inspection. There have been several improvements to the provision for design and technology. All pupils now have clear planning sheets to focus their thinking and ideas. This ensures that they know how to tackle problems, how to put forward ideas clearly and logically and how to look critically at their finished products. The teachers are more confident and enthusiastic about teaching skills and techniques and, as a result, give pupils interesting and demanding work. The subject leader checks pupils' planning sheets each term to assess the level of progress and achievement. This and the monitoring of teachers' planning, ensures that there is full coverage of all areas of the National Curriculum for design and technology. The school records pupils' progress through the use of a digital camera but there is not enough use of information and communication technology to support learning. For example, pupils have limited opportunities to control simple mechanisms and this restricts their understanding of the different uses of information and communication technology.
114. Pupils attain soundly in lessons and make satisfactory progress in developing their skills, techniques and understanding. In a Year 2 lesson, for example, pupils used a design plan to write step by step instructions for making a puppet. The teacher used questions well to improve their thinking and learning; for example, 'How are you going to...?' and 'What will you be using...for?' This ensured that the pupils concentrated and worked hard and with enjoyment.
115. In another example, in Year 4, pupils had a good grasp of how to join fabric together by using different stitches. The careful explanation by the teacher ensured that pupils learned how to use correct techniques and to use needles and scissors safely. In this lesson all pupils, including those with special educational needs, were well motivated to develop new skills and worked hard. Teachers' confidence and secure subject knowledge interest and motivate pupils, help them to behave well and push their learning forward at a brisk pace. By the end of Year 6, for example, all pupils have a secure understanding of the properties of materials used in domestic buildings.

They were making satisfactory use of this knowledge to plan designs for shelters.

116. The quality of teaching and learning is consistently satisfactory. This reflects the findings of the previous inspection. Teachers' confidence is improving and this is having a positive effect on pupils' progress and attitudes to their work. Teachers use time at the end of each lesson for pupils to evaluate their achievements and say how they could improve them. This helps pupils to understand what they have learned and what they need to do next. It is a marked improvement from the previous inspection. Teachers explain the vocabulary used in design and technology carefully and ensure that all pupils understand what it means. This helps those pupils who speak English as an additional language to achieve standards similar to their classmates. All teachers use the available resources well to support pupils' learning and the subject leader has already identified areas for improvement. There has been a significant improvement to the tracking of progress and attainment across the school. Teachers are beginning to use this well to build on pupils' previous knowledge and skills. Given these improvements in procedures, the school is in a good position to improve attainment and progress.

GEOGRAPHY

117. In the previous inspection report, standards were judged to be satisfactory and pupils' attainment by the end of Years 2 and 6 still matches the level expected nationally. The volume of work seen during the inspection was also as expected at this stage of the school year. All pupils, however, appear to do the same work and no adaptation is made for those with special educational needs. This inhibits learning for some pupils.
118. Progress in learning is satisfactory throughout the school. This is the result of good teaching and a well planned, but only satisfactorily resourced, curriculum. The quality of the teaching seen during the inspection was good or very good. Lessons were delivered at a good pace, questions were used effectively to help pupils think their ideas through and support staff were used well to ensure that lower attaining pupils were able to complete tasks. A new geography resources room has made resources easily available and, they are now used well. There are plans to develop these further so that each unit of work will have its own resource box. Most pupils take a pride in their work, presenting it neatly and using good handwriting.
119. Pupils in the infant years first develop an understanding of where they live and then extend their focus to the whole world by looking at the places visited by Barnaby Bear'. They compare different locations satisfactorily including a seaside resort as a means of comparison. In a well-planned lesson, Year 2 pupils made good progress, especially in the development of subject specific vocabulary, as they discussed the differences between the seaside and inland towns. The teacher's questions were an effective tool to discover what pupils knew and to develop their ideas sequentially.
120. The work in geography in Years 3 to 6 is well planned to dovetail with that in history. For example, pupils in Year 3 are studying the importance of the Nile to Egypt whilst studying Ancient Egypt in history. 'Focus weeks' help to promote an understanding of other parts of the world. In a recent multi-cultural week for example, each class chose a different country and then shared their learning with the rest of the school. A record of this week has been kept in a portfolio of work. No such portfolio of work yet exists for other work done in this subject throughout the school. As in Years 1 and 2, there is a good focus in teaching on promoting subject specific vocabulary. For example, in a good Year 5 lesson, the teacher was building upon pupils' understanding of continents and countries to identify a specific continent on a world map and identify countries within it. Pupils made good use of atlases to research this.
121. Subject leadership and management are satisfactory. The co-ordinator has good subject knowledge and is aware of the areas for development. New long-term plans are to be implemented by all staff with an assessment sheet for each class to be completed at the end of each topic. The impact of this initiative on attainment and progress are to be reported to the senior management team and the governing body. At this stage, the use of information and communication technology to support learning is unsatisfactory.

122. Most pupils find the subject interesting as a result of the quality of teaching they receive. However, this good teaching is not currently supported by an adequate level of resources and computer materials and this is adversely affecting progress.

HISTORY

123. As at the time of the previous inspection, standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are satisfactory. Pupils reach the level expected for their ages and make satisfactory progress in their acquisition of knowledge and understanding about the passage of time.
124. An examination of pupils' books shows a similar volume of work to that found in most schools. However, the same tasks are set for all pupils with no adaptation for those with special educational needs and this is a weakness. Pupils generally present their work well and take pride in what they do. Marking is also generally good. Class teachers' comments are usually encouraging and sometimes challenge pupils' thinking or add guidance as to how the work could be improved.
125. In the lessons seen, pupils made at least satisfactory progress and satisfactory or good teaching helped them to find out about the past. The Year 1 teacher's collection of enlarged digital photographs taken on a recent visit to the Prescot Museum was, for example, a successful strategy to gain pupils' interest, stimulate their memories and promote discussion about what they had seen. Challenging but sensibly pitched questions enabled most pupils to play an active part in the lesson. Artefacts were used well to promote pupils' thinking, for example, when pupils were asked to work out the use of a pair of bellows.
126. The lack of resources for the new units of work that have recently been included in the history curriculum is proving a handicap, however. Year 3 pupils were asked to research an aspect of Egyptian life, but despite evident enthusiasm on the part of the pupils, because insufficient books and no artefacts or video material were available, good teaching resulted in only satisfactory learning. Budgetary constraints mean that this problem will not be resolved quickly.
127. Curricular planning is sound and dovetails well with units of work in geography. National guidelines have been used to organise learning for each year group and these have helped to ensure that all required elements are covered. The management of the subject is currently satisfactory.
128. The newly appointed subject leader is keen to improve standards in the subject and already has a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. A development plan for the current year has been initiated with an appropriate focus on improving resources and increasing the number of visits and visitors. The school is, however, very sensitive to cost implications, particularly for parents. The subject leader monitors teachers' planning and scrutinises pupils' books. As she was appointed only at the beginning of this school year, she has not yet begun to build a portfolio of pupils' work or to put end-of-unit assessment procedures in place.
129. Resources are unsatisfactory in quality and insufficient in quantity to meet the requirements of the curriculum fully and computers are not used sufficiently to support pupils' learning. Indeed, computers were not used in any of the history lessons seen. The school is aware of the deficiencies in resources and appreciates the need to address these as quickly as possible.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

130. The school is currently undergoing a significant change in provision. A mini-suite of five computers has been removed and the area is being totally remodelled as a networked 18-computer suite with Internet link. This is scheduled to be available for use early in the new year. As a result, teaching and lessons seen were not representative of previous or future work in the subject. Despite this, work seen showed that Year 2 and Year 6 pupils are still working at an appropriate level for their age. This maintains the standards which were being attained when the school was inspected previously.

131. The work of pupils in Year 6 indicates that they are on target to reach the required standards in all areas by the end of the school year, apart from aspects of control technology. As a result, pupils do not learn how to control simple systems, for example, a set of traffic lights. This deficiency is to be addressed through contact with neighbouring schools in an effort to enlist support and access to specialist control technology facilities.
132. Many pupils have computers at home. The school realises this and pupils are paired so that each pupil with a computer at home is paired with a pupil without. This maximises the opportunities of all pupils to make progress. Pupils have good word processing skills and this is evident in pupils' books that included printouts of work done. Most Year 6 pupils type with index fingers only and this slows their work rate. They have a good subject vocabulary and level of knowledge and understanding from previous learning and this is reflected in the way in which they talk about the work they have done. Pupils throughout school have a book in which they collect evidence of skills that they have mastered. This is carried through from year to year as an ongoing record of what they have done and achieved. However, the current lack of a suite has reduced opportunities for pupils to access computers and so is inhibiting their rate of progress. Year 4 pupils highlighted this, saying that, instead of having weekly access to computers, access is now fortnightly. Classroom computers, however, are not effectively used to support learning across the curriculum. During the inspection week, less than a quarter of computers were in active use at any given time. This is an under use of equipment and is a weakness which is adversely affecting attainment and progress.
133. Year 2 pupils are competent in the basic skills. They know how to click onto different icons in order to select and to change tools as they create pictures on screen. However, not all are sure how to retrieve or save their work. They use control technology in the form of a Roamer', a programmable toy, to give directional instructions. Junior pupils are learning about different functions, such as how to create and interpret simple spreadsheets and how to change font size and type.
134. Only three lessons were seen during the inspection and all teaching was satisfactory. Teachers have good subject knowledge as a result of a recent programme of nationally funded training. However, with only one computer in the majority of classes, teaching styles were restricted and tasks set were often theoretical activities involving designs for future practical work on computers. Even so pupils responded positively to the tasks set and were enthusiastic about the subject.
135. Pupils made most progress when the teachers limited the amount of new work being introduced and ensured that it built on previous learning, in particular, the basic routines of saving and retrieving work. Effective demonstrations of the skills and processes that pupils were to learn and good use of support assistants' expertise enhanced learning. Teachers were careful to monitor the time that pupils spent on computers so that all pupils had equality of access.
136. There has been satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection. The former small suite of computers permitted only part-class use. The new suite, with a large teaching screen, will enable whole-class teaching to be available for the first time. This will be a significant improvement in provision. Good assessment and recording procedures are already in place to track pupils' progress. In a Year 2 class, the teacher was working with an individual to determine what the pupil could and could not do independently. This is a good feature of teaching as it enables the teacher to plan what the pupil will learn next.
137. As at the time of the previous inspection, the subject co-ordinator is providing good leadership. Programmes of work are based on the latest national guidance and an effective action plan identifies areas for development and how these are to be achieved. Although there is no portfolio of pupils' work to show the progression of skills throughout the school, the co-ordinator has developed good assessment procedures to track pupils' progress. However, the previous concern about using computers to support learning in other subjects still remains.
138. The co-ordinator monitors teachers' planning and examines examples of pupils' work regularly.

However, she has little opportunity to observe the quality of teaching and learning and to share good practice especially in pupils' use of classroom computers and other equipment, including the digital camera and tape recorders. She runs the school's computer club, which is temporarily suspended whilst the suite is being refurbished and this contributes well to information and communication technology provision. Up to 20 pupils throughout the school were involved in the club and all look forward to its return. The co-ordinator is very aware of the limitations of present provision and is anxious to promote good and fair use of the new suite as a means of raising pupils' attainment in the subject significantly.

MUSIC

139. At the time of the previous inspection, attainment in music was judged to be satisfactory for pupils in Years 2 and 6 and these satisfactory standards have been maintained. Pupils make sound progress overall and pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Whole-school singing in assemblies is good. Singing is tuneful and musical and supports pupils' spiritual development well by supporting the atmosphere of reverence. Pupils have a good awareness of the words that they are singing and respond accordingly. They responded with considerable enthusiasm to a local clergyman in one assembly who accompanied the song 'Fit for Jesus' on his guitar.
140. During the inspection, for timetabling reasons, it was only possible to observe two lessons in music. Year 1 pupils are adept at recognising and repeating patterns of beats, for example, three claps followed by three silent beats. They also successfully repeat a pattern of beats on untuned percussion instruments such as tambourines and triangles. Their singing was tuneful and rhythmic. In a Year 3 lesson, the teacher was taking the opportunity to link learning in music to dance work being undertaken in physical education. Pupils recognised the music for the lion and the tortoise from Saint Saëns' 'Carnival of the Animals'. They successfully adapted their movements to slow and quicker passages of music and reflected the emotions that the music evoked, for example, developing proud and haughty movements for the lion and slow, ponderous movements for the tortoise.
141. Pupils' opportunities to participate in musical activities are being increased. A choir of over 30 pupils recently participated with pupils from two other schools in a musical evening in a local theatre. Some 20 pupils are learning to play the recorder and about 10 pupils are learning to play other instruments including keyboards, violin and clarinet. These opportunities are improving pupils' understanding that, if it is to be successful, musical performance requires effort and self discipline. The new subject leader is aware that opportunities for music making have been limited in the past. She is planning to increase these opportunities and is actively exploring possibilities for visits outside the school to hear different kinds of music as well as possibilities for musicians to visit the school.
142. In the lessons observed, pupils had good attitudes to music. They participated with a good level of interest and concentration. They are co-operative and courteous and the pupils in Year 3 showed some good initiative in creating movements which reflected the music being played. These good attitudes have a positive effect on attainment and progress. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, made good progress in their learning in these lessons.
143. The quality of teaching was good in the lessons observed. Lessons are planned effectively and have stimulating learning activities which engage pupils' interest. Lessons are well organised with activities to build up pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding systematically. Very good management of pupils meant that lessons moved at a good pace so that concentration was maintained. Good questioning tested and extended pupils' understanding.
144. The subject leader took over this responsibility at the beginning of this term, but had exercised some responsibility for music during the previous school year. Nationally recommended schemes of work now underpin teaching and learning and are supplemented well by other learning resources and materials. These enhance teaching and learning. The subject leader monitors teachers' planning to ensure that the National Curriculum is covered. She has begun an assessment sheet

to track pupils' progress and plans to update and rewrite the subject policy for January 2003. There is a good supply of tuned and untuned percussion instruments and other resources are satisfactory overall and being built gradually. These resources are sufficient to enable music to be taught satisfactorily. Some CD's are available to illustrate music from other cultures along with a few percussion instruments. Keyboards and CD players are available to support teaching and learning in music, but the use of information and communication technology is underdeveloped.

145. The subject leader accepts that music has had a low profile in the school and is seeking to improve this. For example, music is played as pupils enter and leave assembly but no reference is made to it to raise pupils' spiritual and cultural awareness. The school does not use music from other cultures during assemblies to improve pupils' awareness of the musical traditions of other cultures. Music makes an unsatisfactory contribution to pupils' spiritual and cultural development. The school is in a good position with a new and effective subject leader, to improve the role of music in the school and its contribution to pupils' learning.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

146. Attainment is at the level normally found for pupils aged seven and 11 and all pupils, including those with special educational needs make sound progress overall. The satisfactory standards found when the school was inspected previously have been maintained. However, in spite of the good arrangements for swimming, less than half of Year 6 pupils could swim the expected 50 metres when they left the school at the end of the last school year. This is unsatisfactory and is a deterioration in attainment since the previous inspection.
147. Throughout the school, pupils understand the importance of warming up before physical activity and cooling down afterwards. In Year 2, pupils have a good understanding that other pupils need space if physical activities are to be safe. In a dance lesson based on cats, they developed low and high movements and used prompts in the music to 'pounce' and to observe times of stillness. In a Year 3 dance lesson based on 'the circus', pupils were developing tightrope movements with partners. They successfully created a range of balances and discussed how they might pass each other on a tightrope. Higher attaining pupils created good starting positions. The support of a visiting dance specialist resulted in an above average level of attainment in both these lessons.
148. Pupils' in Year 5 revised the rules for rounders in class before going out to play a game. Some pupils strike the ball successfully and some throw quickly and accurately. A few have good skills in catching the ball, but pupils' understanding of the tactics of the game are very variable. Overall, attainment in this lesson was at the level normally found. In Year 6, pupils have average skills in stopping and striking a puck with a plastic hockey stick. In this lesson, a few pupils failed to concentrate well so that a well-planned lesson did not have its full impact on attainment and progress which were satisfactory.
149. Pupils attitudes to physical education cover a wide range. In the lessons supported by the visiting dance specialist, pupils responded with a very good level of interest and concentration and so made very good progress. In the Year 2 lesson, pupils were mature in commenting on each other's work and making suggestions for improvement. In the Year 5 rounders lesson, pupils were co-operative and interested and supported each other good-humouredly. This resulted in good progress. However, in swimming some pupils did not use floats in order to concentrate on their leg kicks and so made unsatisfactory progress towards the lesson objective. Similarly, lack of concentration for some pupils in the Year 6 lesson resulted in unsatisfactory progress for them. Overall, pupils across the school, including those with special educational needs, made satisfactory progress in their learning.
150. The quality of teaching ranges from very good to unsatisfactory. In the dance lessons in Years 2 and 3 supported by the visiting dance specialist, the quality of teaching was very good. Pupils were set challenging tasks with very good suggestions for how to improve. Lessons had very good pace and a sense of purpose and urgency. In the Year 5 rounders lesson, the quality of teaching was good and very effective lesson organisation and management of pupils resulted in good progress. The quality of teaching was unsatisfactory in the swimming lesson because the lesson

objective was not achieved. In the Year 6 lesson, teaching was satisfactory overall, but insecure control of pupils adversely affected progress.

151. The subject is now led by an enthusiastic member of staff who has clear ideas for improving attainment and for developing the subject. She has sensibly created a 'research action plan' to determine what is being taught and how successfully skills are developing in the different areas of the subject. She analyses teachers' planning in order to ensure that the National Curriculum is being covered fully. Pupils benefit from some external coaching, for example in dance, rugby and soccer and this improves their skills well. They have competitive experience in netball, soccer and athletics. The school uses other local facilities to supplement its own hall and hard play area because it does not have its own playing field.
152. The subject leader has written a good new policy which incorporates assessment of pupils' attainment and progress. With this as a basis, the school has the capacity to improve attainment in physical education.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

153. Since this is a church school, religious education has not been covered during this inspection.