

INSPECTION REPORT

HORN'S MILL PRIMARY SCHOOL

Helsby

LEA area: Cheshire

Unique reference number: 111129

Headteacher: Mrs A Doughton

Reporting inspector: Mr B H Cooper
10182

Dates of inspection: 4th – 7th November 2002

Inspection number: 247084

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

© Crown copyright 2002

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Denbigh Close
Helsby
Frodsham

Postcode: WA6 0ED

Telephone number: 01928 722935

Fax number: 01928 722242

Appropriate authority: Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr V Burgess

Date of previous inspection: 5th – 8th June 2000

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
10182	Mr B Cooper	Registered inspector	Mathematics Equal opportunities	The school's results and pupils' achievements. How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What could the school do to improve further?
31729	Mr B Harrington	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school work with parents?
19263	Mrs J Oliver	Team inspector	Science Religious Education Art Physical Education Special Educational Needs	How well does the school care for its pupils?
31807	Mr D Carpenter	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Information and communication technology Design and Technology Music	
3227	Mr D Hughes	Team inspector	English Geography History	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

The inspection contractor was:

Lynrose Marketing
Bungalow Farmhouse
Six Mile Bottom
Newmarket
Suffolk CB8 0TU

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Complaints Manager
Inspection Quality Division
The Office for Standards in Education
Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	11
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	13
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	16
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	19
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS	21
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	21
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	24
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	26
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	31

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Horn's Mill Primary School is a small school with 172 pupils aged 4 to 11. It is situated in the village of Helsby near Chester. The school takes pupils from both Helsby and the surrounding villages. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is well below the national average. There are 23 pupils (14%) on the special educational needs register, of whom one has a statement of special educational needs. This is lower than average. No pupils have English as an additional language. The headteacher has been in post since April 2001 and the deputy headteacher since April 2002. During the inspection, a teacher from a local school taught Year 2 to cover the long-term sickness of a member of staff. The attainment of pupils joining the school is average overall but spans the full ability range.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Horn's Mill is a satisfactory school that is improving. Standards in every subject are always at least in line with the national average, and often above, but in some subjects the standards achieved by higher attaining pupils could be higher. Pupils throughout the school make satisfactory progress in all subjects. Teaching is satisfactory overall and there is also some good and very good teaching. The school is committed to the inclusion of all pupils in all aspects of school life. The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory but the current management system is too complex, and makes it more difficult to identify and review priorities. The Governing Body, headteacher and all staff are committed to continuing to improve the school and are working together to raise standards. The school is giving satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The Governing Body, headteacher, deputy headteacher and all staff are very hard working and share a strong commitment to continue to improve the school.
- Standards are good in speaking and listening, mathematics, science and art and design at the end of both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2
- Standards are good in information and communication technology and physical education at the end of Key Stage 2
- Pupils have good attitudes to learning; relationships in the school are good and behaviour is very good. Attendance is very good
- The provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development is good and for pupils' moral and social development it is very good.
- Pupils are well cared for.

What could be improved

- The achievement of the higher attaining pupils in some subjects
- Writing skills in English and across the curriculum and reading skills, particularly in Key Stage 1
- The behaviour management system
- The way information from the assessment of pupils' work is used to inform planning
- The management structure in the school
- Written reports to parents do not include a reference to attainment and progress in information and communication technology

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 made satisfactory improvement overall since it was last inspected in June 2000. There has been good improvement in the leadership and management of the school. Some progress has been made on most of the key issues since the last inspection. Whilst the leadership and management of the school are much better and the Governing Body is much more involved in the school, fully effective systems for monitoring and reviewing priorities for development are not yet in place. Good assessment procedures are now in place but they are not yet fully informing planning. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is now satisfactory. The standards achieved and the quality of teaching remain at similar levels to the last inspection although the school is now better placed to improve. Teaching staff have received a good range of professional development.

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				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	2000	2001	2002	2002	
English	B	A	C	E	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
mathematics	C	A	C	E	
science	C	B	C	D	

The table shows that on the basis of the 2002 standard assessment tests results, pupils achieved standards that were in line with the national average in English, mathematics and science but were below average in science and well below average in English and mathematics in comparison with schools with similar numbers of pupils eligible for free school meals. Standards have varied over time but were much higher in 2001. There are still too few pupils reaching standards that are higher than the national average, particularly in reading and writing. Inspection findings indicate that the standards in English of the current Year 6 group are in line with national expectations and that standards in mathematics and science are above national expectations. There are still gaps in the pupils' knowledge in mathematics but these are being identified. There is an overuse of worksheets in science. The school is beginning to set more challenging targets for pupils to achieve at the end of Year 6.

In the National Curriculum tests in 2002 for pupils the end of Year 2, pupils achieved standards that were below the national average in reading and writing and well above the national average in mathematics. Too few pupils reached the higher level 3 in reading and none reached it in writing. Inspection findings indicate that whilst standards in English are now in line with national expectations, standards are still not high enough in reading or writing. Standards in mathematics and science are above national expectations at the end of Year 2.

Pupils are very good communicators and standards in speaking and listening are high throughout the school. Standards are above national expectations in art and design throughout the school. They are also above national expectations in information and communication technology and physical education at the end of Year 6. Standards in all other subjects are in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages. Children in the

Reception class make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development and physical development and achieve good standards. In communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development they make satisfactory progress and reach the standards expected by the time they move to Year 1.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils are keen to learn and enjoy coming to school
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. The pupils behave very well in class and in and around the school. They are very well mannered.
Personal development and relationships	The relationships between children, and children and adults is good. Personal development is currently satisfactory, and more opportunities for pupils to take responsibilities are being introduced
Attendance	Attendance in the school is very good. Pupils arrive at school punctually.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching throughout the school is satisfactory with some good and occasionally very good teaching. On the two occasions when unsatisfactory teaching was observed during the inspection, this was as a result of pupils not being sufficiently challenged. Improvements in teachers' planning and assessment procedures are beginning to raise standards. The quality of teaching has begun to improve in the school and teachers are much more confident in providing work for pupils of different abilities. However, sometimes teachers do not have high enough expectations of the pupils, particularly in reading in Key Stage 1, in the pupils' use of literacy skills across the curriculum and for pupils of higher ability in some subjects. This is slowing progress and resulting in too few pupils reaching very high standards.

In the Foundation Stage, teaching is satisfactory overall, but better in the areas of personal, social and emotional development and physical development. The teaching gives pupils a wide range of learning experiences and enables the pupils to make satisfactory progress. The teaching of English is satisfactory overall, but the teaching of speaking and listening skills is good, resulting in pupils learning to use these skills well. The national literacy strategy is being used effectively to teach basic skills, but teachers are giving pupils too few opportunities to extend their writing in English and across the curriculum, or to read widely enough. The teaching of mathematics is satisfactory. In Key Stage 1, the pupils successfully learn about numbers and shape. In lower Key Stage 2, teachers do not always build enough on pupils' knowledge. There are also some gaps in pupils' knowledge but teachers are successfully identifying these as the national numeracy strategy is being used more effectively. Generally, teachers have good relationships with their classes and manage them well. They work closely with support assistants and voluntary helpers and offer sufficient support to pupils with special educational needs.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. The school is providing an appropriate range of learning opportunities for the pupils. There is a very good range of extra-curricular activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs are identified at an early stage of their education. Appropriate support is given in school.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. The school makes very good provision for the moral and social development of pupils, and good provision for their spiritual and cultural development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. There are good procedures for ensuring the pupils' health, safety and welfare. Assessment procedures are good but are not yet fully informing the planning of future work to provide sufficient challenge in order to raise standards in the school.

There are effective links between the school and parents. Parents make a significant contribution to their children's learning, both through the support offered at home, and their help in school. The quality of information provided for parents is good.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory. The headteacher, deputy headteacher and all other staff are committed to improving the school. The role of the subject leader is now better developed and is beginning to have a positive impact on standards. The management structure is too complex and the system for agreeing and reviewing priorities for development is not yet fully effective.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The Governing Body is effective and has worked hard to develop its role in the school. It is very supportive of the school. Some governors regularly help in class and gain useful first hand experience of the daily activities of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school is beginning to monitor its performance and areas requiring improvement have been clearly identified. However, this has not yet had enough impact on raising standards in the school. There is no system yet in place to monitor the impact of spending decisions.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The school has limited finances but spending is carefully linked to the current development plan. The school fully understands the principles of best value and great care is taken when spending money.

There are sufficient teachers. There are too few learning support assistants. Accommodation is satisfactory, although the headteacher's office and library area are both too small. The new outside play area for the Reception class is very beneficial for these children and broadens their experiences. Learning resources are good in Foundation Stage, art and design and

physical education. Library resources are unsatisfactory, but the school has firm plans to improve this situation.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like coming to school • Behaviour in the school is good • The school expects their child to work hard • The teaching is good • The leadership and management of the school • The school has begun to improve and is now much more focused 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homework is inconsistent • Information about how their child is getting on • How closely the school works with parents • The range of extra-curricular activities • Reading, particularly in Key Stage 1 • Some parents are concerned about Year 1 and 2 moving into mixed age classes in the afternoon

The inspection team agrees with the positive points made by parents, but do not agree with all of the negative comments. The inspection team feels that homework is satisfactory and that parents are well informed about how their child is getting on. The team believes that the school welcomes parents' interest, but would benefit from taking more account of their views as they develop the school. The range of extra-curricular activities is good. Standards in reading are not high enough, particularly in Key Stage 1. This is a key issue and will form part of the school's action plan. Teachers are planning carefully for the mixed age classes, and the situation will require close monitoring by the headteacher and subject leaders to make sure that it is working effectively.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The children's attainment when they join the reception class is average overall but spans the full range of ability. The satisfactory teaching they receive enables them to make satisfactory progress in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development and reach the Early Learning Goals in these areas by the time they reach Year 1. As a result of the emphasis placed on their personal, social and emotional development and physical development, the children make better progress and exceed the Early Learning Goals in these areas of the curriculum.
2. The National Curriculum test results at the end of Year 2 for the three years up to 2002 indicate a gradual improvement in reading standards, high standards in writing and consistently good standards in mathematics. However, in 2002, standards in reading and writing fell to below the national average and well below the average in comparison with schools with a similar number of pupils eligible for free school meals. Only 14% of pupils reached the higher level 3 in reading and no pupils reached level 3 in writing. Standards in mathematics improved and standards were well above the national average and above the average in comparison with similar schools. Nearly half the pupils reached the higher level 3 in mathematics. Teacher assessments in science indicated that standards were above the national average and in line with the average for similar schools. In 2002, there was some disruption to the teaching of Year 2 in the summer term as a teacher was on long-term sick leave. Nevertheless, the reading and writing results were too low in 2002 and indicated that, at that time, these pupils had not made enough progress.
3. Inspection findings indicate that there has been improvement in the attainment of pupils at the end of Year 2. Standards in speaking and listening are well above expectations and standards in reading and writing are in line with national expectations. Although pupils learn the skills required to read, they are given too few opportunities to read to adults in school, which is resulting in standards that are too low and not all pupils are making enough progress. In writing, standards are also too low and there are too few opportunities for pupils to write widely either in English or in other subjects. In mathematics, pupils continue to perform above national expectations. They have a good understanding of all aspects of the subject and are progressing well. In science, pupils demonstrate good levels of scientific enquiry and understanding.
4. The national test results at the end of Year 6, for the three years prior to 2002, indicate that standards were above or well above average in English, and mainly in line with the national average in mathematics, apart from in 2001, when they were well above average. In science standards have usually been above average. In 2002, however, pupils achieved standards in all three subjects that were in line with the national average. In comparison with similar schools, pupils achieved standards that were well below average in English and mathematics and were below average in science. The school is able to offer some explanation for this, in that the group of 33 pupils who took the test included 15% of pupils with special educational needs and one pupil from a travelling family. In addition, a number of pupils had joined the class during Key Stage 2. Nevertheless, too few pupils reached the higher level 5 in all three subjects and this would indicate some under achievement by higher attaining pupils in these core subjects last year. The year group failed to reach the school's targets in English by 7%,

but reached the target in mathematics. However, inspection findings indicate that the situation is improving and that standards in mathematics and science are now above the national average.

5. Inspection findings indicate that standards in English at the end of Key Stage 2 are in line with the national expectations. Standards in speaking and listening are high. There is beginning to be a greater emphasis on reading and the use of information books at the end of Key Stage 2, and standards are improving although they are still not high enough. In writing, pupils have too few opportunities to write at length and for a variety of purposes. The use of worksheets in other subjects is lowering standards in writing and not enabling pupils to use their literacy skills across the curriculum. Pupils are making good progress in some classes. In mathematics, increasing numbers of pupils show sufficient understanding of all aspects of the curriculum to reach national averages. However some gaps in their knowledge are preventing enough of them reaching the higher level 5. Pupils are making good progress in some classes but progress throughout Key Stage 2 could be better. The use of numeracy skills across the curriculum is satisfactory with opportunities to use graphs to illustrate data collection as well as measuring and working to scale. In science, standards are above national expectations at the end of Year 6. Whilst pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of all aspects of the subject, the overuse of worksheets is limiting the style of their work in some classes.
6. Pupils with special educational needs make mostly satisfactory progress towards their individual educational plan targets. Teachers and the two classroom assistants provide good quality support, but the level of staffing is such that extra support for pupils with special educational needs is limited particularly in Years 2 to 6. Pupils usually work within their classrooms and good use is made of information technology to support individual needs. Pupils feel valued by staff and as a result they are confident to ask for extra help to improve their knowledge and understanding. In all subjects, pupils with special educational needs make progress that is similar to their classmates. The school places much emphasis on the development of personal and social skills and the school's good inclusive policy ensures that pupils with a variety of special needs are fully involved in all school activities.
7. Standards in art and design are above national expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, and pupils make good progress in this subject. Standards in information and communication technology and physical education are also above national expectations at the end of Year 6 following good progress in Key Stage 2. They are in line with national expectations at the end of Year 2. In design and technology, geography, history, music, progress is satisfactory and standards are in line with national expectations at the end of Years 2 and 6 and standards in religious education are in line with what is expected in the local syllabus.
8. The school is setting increasingly challenging targets for the numbers of pupils to reach national averages in the standard attainment test results at the end of Year 6.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. Pupils have good attitudes to the school and to their work. Throughout the school, pupils have a high level of interest in activities and generally are enthusiastic learners. Children in the Foundation Stage have settled into the routines of the school. Most have already learned to share and can play well with other children. Many pupils arrive early and read quietly until registration. In discussions with adults they take a pride in the school and their work and most can speak at length about the topics being studied. Parents agree that their children like school.
10. Pupils are very well behaved in and around the school. They are polite and courteous. Many have helped to generate their class rules and know that these are necessary in a civilised society. Most pupils require only the minimum of bidding to come to order and, during lessons they demonstrate a high level of commitment to the work in hand. From an early age, pupils learn that putting their hands up is the acceptable way to gain the teacher's attention. This very good behaviour promotes the very good quality of life in school. There have been no exclusions. Parents agree that behaviour in school is good.
11. Relationships amongst pupils and between adults and pupils are good. During lessons pupils share equipment and ideas freely and co-operate very well when working in pairs and groups. During the inspection, older pupils were observed working conscientiously on laptop computers in a quiet bay with the minimum of supervision. Relationships are promoted by the examples of all adults in school and are exemplified in the respect shown by pupils to non-teaching staff. Discussions with pupils of all ages provided confirmation that they are polite and confident in conversation and have a very good understanding of social protocols.
12. The personal development of pupils is good. Pupils enjoy taking responsibility in the school. The recently formed school's council is giving older pupils the experience of elections and the opportunity to debate issues.
13. Attendance is very good. During the last reporting year, the rate of attendance was 95.6%, which is well above the national average, and this rate of attendance has been maintained during the current year. Unauthorised absence is broadly in line with the national average.
14. The school takes a firm stand in rejecting parents' requests for the authorisation of absence of their children for non-essential activities such as birthday treats and shopping events. Some unauthorised absence, however, reflects seasonal patterns for travelling families.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

15. During the week of the inspection, teaching was very good in 12% of the 34 lessons observed, good in 41%, satisfactory in 41% and there were only two unsatisfactory lessons. Most of the best teaching was observed in Years 2, 5 and 6. Teaching throughout the school is satisfactory overall, and this is enabling pupils to make satisfactory progress. This is similar to the last inspection, although there has been improvement in aspects of the teaching. Teachers are now much better at giving different tasks to pupils of different ability and planning work for groups. Better use is being made of both the national literacy and the national numeracy strategy. This was observed in lessons and was clear when scrutinising pupils' work.

16. However, there are still occasions when too little is expected of the pupils, particularly the higher attainers, and when this is the case, these pupils do not achieve as well as they could. For example, pupils in Key Stage 1 are not expected to read at a high enough standard. In Key Stage 2, some teachers use too many worksheets in science, geography and history rather than expecting pupils to write down the information themselves. In mathematics, pupils who have a good understanding of a calculation, are still expected to show their working out in far too much detail rather than move on to more challenging work. This is slowing their learning in these subjects and lowering standards.
17. The quality of teaching and learning seen in the Foundation Stage during the course of the inspection was satisfactory overall and sometimes good. Where it was satisfactory, the teacher and support assistant were constantly being distracted from the task of teaching by a minority of children in the Reception Class. In such circumstances the behaviour management procedures available to the staff were inappropriate for the needs of the children concerned. In the good lessons, the teacher made effective use of the daily experiences of the children to improve their levels of knowledge and understanding. There are very good relationships between children and adults. When the children arrive in the morning they settle quickly and happily into the routines of the day and are secure in the care of the adults in the class. Each day begins with shared time and the teacher takes advantage of the time to encourage the speaking and listening skills of the children. Even at this early stage in the year, the children are becoming confident and effective communicators. Resources are good and generally are well used, especially the outdoor play area which is a magnet to the children, who welcome every opportunity of access to it. Within the classroom, resources are accessible to the children, who take on the responsibility of getting things out and putting them away again. The area allocated to imaginative play and role-play is well used and during the course of the inspection the children were very engaged in providing medical services to the class through their 'hospital and surgery'. The materials and opportunities provided for the children are sufficiently inspirational for them to exercise regular choices in what they do and constructive play forms a major part of the school day.
18. In Key Stage 1 and 2, teachers have good relationships with their classes. Classes are well managed and organised. Pupils respond to this by nearly always behaving very well and being keen to learn. On the rare occasion when the behaviour of one or two pupils is unsatisfactory, the behaviour management approach used by the school is enforced. This is not usually effective with these pupils and both isolates and ostracises them. There is no evidence of the behaviour management system bringing about a permanent improvement in behaviour. Pupils who already behave well enjoy the privileges this brings, but the current system is not appropriate for Horn's Mill School. It is time consuming for teachers and is not effective. Where teaching is unsatisfactory, it is a result of lack of pace and low expectations. On these occasions, pupils become restless and do not stay on task. This takes the teachers' focus away from teaching and slows the learning of the pupils in the class.
19. Lessons are planned in sufficient detail. Teachers are good at sharing the learning objective with the class and good use is made of group targets to help the pupils focus on areas of improvement, so that the quality of learning in each lesson can be measured. Teachers have a sound knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach. In literacy and numeracy lessons, they have benefited from more support and training and are becoming more confident in teaching the literacy and numeracy strategies. In Year 1, the teacher is not receiving the classroom support needed to

ensure that pupils read more and make sufficient progress in all aspects of their English and mathematics during their morning lessons. Monitoring of pupils' progress during their afternoon lessons, to make sure they are receiving appropriate teaching when they are in mixed age classes, had not been started at the time of the inspection.

20. Owing to budgetary constraints, the school has only two learning support assistants. Despite the hard work and good quality of these assistants, this small number is not having enough impact on progress in some English and mathematics lessons as groups are not supported and do not always work as quickly as they could. These classroom assistants work very hard and offer good support to the teachers. They are well briefed about what is planned in lessons and give good feedback on pupils they have helped in the lesson including those with special educational needs. The school is very fortunate in also receiving good quality assistance from visiting governors and parents who regularly work in classes. They work successfully with small groups and individuals.
21. The quality of teaching and learning for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. Classroom assistants work closely with teachers to provide quality support in class, enabling pupils to make appropriate progress towards their individual learning targets. Targets are clear, detailed and appropriate, for example, to recognise particular letter sounds or to learn to spell a specific number of words for homework. Individual education plans are linked particularly well to English, mathematics and behavioural targets. Teachers are both aware of and sensitive to the needs of pupils and regularly record the progress they make. Effective liaison between the classroom assistants and teachers makes sure that pupils' progress towards targets is recorded and appropriate action is taken. However, the level of planned support is not extensive and, for most lessons, the class teachers have to provide the extra help to individual pupils themselves.
22. The quality of teaching and learning in English is satisfactory overall. Teachers are good at offering pupils the opportunity to take part in both planned speaking and listening activities and class discussion. Teachers cover the formal skills of writing but are not yet presenting pupils with a wide enough range of writing activities. Teachers, throughout the school, are also offering too few opportunities for pupils to write either in their English lessons or in other subjects or, in the case of older pupils, to sustain longer pieces of writing. The teaching of reading is being reviewed by the subject co-ordinator, but currently does not enable most pupils to make sufficient progress. Younger pupils are not heard to read enough and are not given a wide enough variety of books to read. They do not change their books frequently enough and too much reliance is placed on parents hearing them read at home. In Key Stage 2, pupils have a limited diet of reading, although this is beginning to change. Some are not reading the level and type of book of which they are capable. Teachers do not have high enough expectations in this area of the curriculum. This situation has been recognised by the new co-ordinator and the situation is beginning to improve.
23. The quality of teaching and learning in mathematics is satisfactory. Teachers understand the national numeracy approach and make good use of the scheme to plan the next stage of pupils' learning. This is beginning to ensure good coverage of the curriculum and remove the gaps in pupils' knowledge evident in the current Year 6. In lower Key Stage 2, the introductory session is not always pitched at high enough level to challenge and extend the pupils. This session is sometimes overlong and reduces the amount of time available for group activities. The final session in the lesson is used well to review what has been covered.

24. Teachers are becoming more confident in the use of information and communication technology although it is still not widely used in most subjects. Pupils' standards in the subject are high at Key Stage 2 but their skills are not being always used enough in other subjects throughout the key stage.
25. The teaching of art and design is good throughout the school, which is resulting in good progress. It focuses well on the development of skills and offers the pupils wide experience of the subject. In information and communication technology, teaching and progress is good in Key Stage 2, as pupils are presented with a wide range of learning opportunities. In physical education, teaching and learning is good in Key Stage 2 and pupils are taught well in small groups which helps them to develop their skills in all aspects of the subject.
26. All teachers mark work although this is more detailed in some classes. The best marking, in upper Key Stage 2, gives pupils a clear written indication of how they can improve their work in the future. This is beginning to have a positive impact on their learning. Assessments are widely used to check pupils' progress. These are recorded in detail and are beginning to be used to change planning, but the outcome of assessment is not yet having a great enough impact. This is slowing progress of some pupils.
27. Parents had concerns about the consistency and quality of homework. Pupils are given appropriate homework regularly and it does contribute to their progress in school. However, parents receive too little information about the amount of homework expected in each class.
28. Experienced teachers, who have joined the school recently, have brought valuable expertise to the school, which is beginning to be shared with all staff and is having a positive impact on the quality of teaching.

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

29. The quality and range of learning opportunities provided by the school are good in the Foundation Stage and satisfactory throughout Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Inspection findings are similar to those identified in the last inspection. The school meets the requirements of the National Curriculum in all subjects including religious education. The National Literacy Strategy has been implemented in an appropriate manner and is having a satisfactory impact on teaching and learning and the standards that pupils attain. Similarly the National Numeracy Strategy is beginning to impact in an appropriate manner on standards achieved by pupils in mathematics.
30. The curriculum for the children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. Planning is based on the six key areas of learning and promotes the nationally recommended Early Learning Goals in a satisfactory manner. The satisfactory quality of curriculum provision ensures that children are provided with opportunities to learn through investigative and practical activities as well as more structured and formal tasks. Teaching staff have a good understanding of how young children learn and manage the learning environment well.
31. Satisfactory planning is in place in all subjects in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 with appropriate long term, medium term and weekly plans in operation. The school uses the national guidance extensively and sometimes augments it when necessary to meet

the specific needs of staff and pupils. In religious education the school successfully follows the syllabus agreed by the local authority. Pupils in Year 1 to Year 6 are provided with a suitable range of activities, which ensure that they make satisfactory progress throughout the school. A particular strength in the curriculum provision is the wide and very interesting and relevant extra-curricular activities that are available for all the pupils.

32. The provision for pupils with special educational needs has improved since the last inspection. The school has worked hard to improve the weaknesses identified and the requirements of the new Code of Practice are fully met, although not all documentation has been adapted accordingly. Provision is now satisfactory with the new school policy ensuring that pupils' needs are identified at an early stage of their education. Teachers and learning support assistants work hard to provide appropriate support for all pupils who need additional help. However, the school has too few learning support assistants as a result of budgetary restraints. Pupils' learning is well planned and involves the close co-operation of both teachers and learning support assistants. All the provisions of the statement of special educational need are met and pupils with special educational needs have full and equal access to all areas of the curriculum and are fully integrated into the life of the school and this has a positive effect on learning. Teachers liaise with the co-ordinator to produce individual education plans of good quality that are used to guide lesson plans. The pupils' needs are recognised and the curriculum adapted if necessary.
33. The school's policy for equal opportunities is applied in all aspects of school life and is fully reflected in practice.
34. The school provides a good range of activities outside lessons from Monday to Thursday. These activities cover sport, music, art, religious education and gardening. Even so, many parents think that a more interesting range of activities could be provided, and that clubs could be made available to children of all ages. Educational visits and field trips are arranged by teachers to support subject topics in art, geography, religious education and history. Thirty-three pupils have represented the school at the Liverpool Festival of Sport. A Breakfast Club provides support for working parents and gives pupils from Horn's Mill and another local school opportunities to socialise. The school is a partner in the Children's Fitness Programme that is sponsored by the Round Table for schools in the area. This event encourages fitness and teamwork in pupils of all ages and provides opportunities for the school to compete with other schools worldwide.
35. The quality of personal, social, health and citizenship education is satisfactory. The school has recently appointed a co-ordinator to implement curriculum for this area in line with the government's guidelines. The subject is presented to all classes but, although there is a policy in place, there is as yet no programme of work to cover all topics and the co-ordinator has not received specific training in the subject. Circle time provides opportunities for pupils to share personal experiences and the feelings associated with those occasions. Older pupils engage in debating moral issues and discuss the strategies available for the resolution of relationship problems. Assemblies are devised to present personal, social, health and citizenship education themes to pupils whilst retaining their Christian message.
36. The class teacher, supported by the school nurse, formally presents sex education to Y6 pupils. Incidental questions asked by younger pupils are answered honestly and in as much detail as it is felt that the pupil can understand. Drugs education is covered in

the science syllabus, but pupils would benefit from opportunities to undertake surveys and extended writing tasks within this topic.

37. The school has good links with the community and with partner institutions. The programme of visits and visitors to school helps pupils to understand the wider community and enhances pupils' learning experiences. Local ministers of religion are regular visitors to school to present assemblies and make contributions to the teaching of religious education. A doctor has visited the Reception class as part of their study of 'people who help us'. Good use is made of the locality for topic study in a number of subjects such as the Year 5 visit to Delamere Forest to conduct a stream survey. The school has developed a strong correlation between the schemes of work and the work undertaken in design and technology to gain accreditation to the Construction Industries Training Board.
38. There are well-established links with the high school to which pupils transfer. Year 5 and Year 6 pupils are invited to the high school to sample lessons and workshops and to attend open days with their parents. These visits, coupled with the academic and pastoral liaison enjoyed by the school, ensure that transition arrangements are smooth and provide the pupils with an element of security in their new environment. The school undertakes sporting and musical events in conjunction with other primary schools, which enable pupils to share experiences with their peers and to establish further friendships.
39. Teachers in training are welcomed into school to undertake practical training. Similarly, the school values the contribution made by graduates and undergraduates seeking experience prior to embarking on a teaching course, administration students from a local college, and high school pupils on work experience projects.
40. The school makes very good provision for the moral and social development of pupils, and good provision for their spiritual and cultural development.
41. Assemblies are effectively used as vehicles for reflection, and occasions for contemplation. The spiritual element of assemblies is often discernable through the response of pupils to significant messages of faith and morality. All pupils display respect during prayers and are attentive to teachers and visiting speakers alike. Planning for assemblies ensures that the Christian message is conveyed harmoniously with the moral or social theme of the occasion. When moral tales are being analysed, pupils are regularly asked to describe how people in difficult situations feel about their condition. This level of empathy provides pupils with insights into emotional conflicts that they may not otherwise experience or understand. Music lessons are also well used to invoke pupils' emotional responses, which they have no embarrassment at expressing in public.
42. Pupils have a very good understanding of the moral demands of society, and teachers effectively use a range of subjects to illustrate these. Assemblies generally present pupils with a moral tale from which everyday lessons can be learned, such as the parable of the Good Samaritan. Class and school rules are observed in the classroom and the playground. Pupils are aware that some children are not as fortunate as themselves and, when considering playing safely, they recall that some children scavenge for a living in dangerous environments. Older pupils have studied modern moral concerns, such as Fair Trading, and can associate these ideas with their studies of villages in India and the extended meanings of Harvest Festival. Pupils and their parents have generously made Christmas gift boxes for less fortunate children, thereby demonstrating their moral concerns. By providing all pupils with the opportunity to

develop their team skills and to enjoy the company of others, games lessons make a significant contribution to pupils' social and moral development.

43. Year 6 pupils organise the school's council, with two members representing each class. To achieve these positions, candidates presented their manifestos to a whole school assembly after which, pupils voted for their preferred candidate. The school's council members have a very good understanding of their roles in representing others and show particular concern for fair play. All Year 6 pupils undertake shared reading activities with younger children and are happy to spend playtimes with them. They are encouraged by their class teacher to set a good example to the rest of the school, and are very successful in this. These pupils made the suggestion that a friendship bench be instigated so that pupils seeking company could be easily identified and befriended. All pupils are learning to behave in a sociable and socially responsible manner through the sharing of common experiences, such as school assemblies.
44. Pupils in all classes are presented with aspects of their own and other cultures through music, dance and theatre workshops, classroom resources and visitors to school. The infant art club has produced decorated fabrics based upon a variety of Indian designs. School assemblies provide further opportunities to celebrate cultural differences and similarities. For example, an assembly on November 5th presented through artistic, musical, scientific, geographical and historical aspects demonstrated the various ways in which fire and lights are used in celebrations as diverse as Diwali and Bastille Day.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

45. The school has good procedures in place for ensuring pupils' health, safety and welfare. The headteacher is nominated to deal with any issues of child protection that may arise and has received recent training for this role. A governor, with youth work experience, has been appointed as a 'Champion for Children' should they need support and counselling. Risk assessments have been carried out to identify, quantify and eliminate any potential hazards. A defects book enables members of staff to bring concerns to the prompt attention of the caretaker. Safety equipment is regularly checked and health and safety evaluations have been carried out. Three members of staff have qualified for full certificates in first aid and two others have first aid at work certificates. First aid boxes and accident books are available in each wing and in the staff room.
46. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are good overall. Baseline assessments are used within a few weeks of children starting school and reception age children are assessed in relation to the Early Learning Goals using the 'stepping stones' of progress. Throughout the school, individual assessments of progress and test results are recorded in pupils' folders and in the teachers' planning files. The records include detailed information about progress in English, mathematics and science and allow for comments on all other subjects, matters of behaviour and individual talents and weaknesses. Pupils have clear, detailed profiles, but the information is not yet being used sufficiently to help teachers plan work that builds on pupils' prior attainments.
47. The school uses a variety of standardised tests to supplement the results of the national assessment tests and the information gained is beginning to be used to track pupils' progress and set targets for individual pupils. Portfolios of work samples are kept with assessments, given National Curriculum levels and annotated to explain the judgement. This helps teachers to both monitor the progress pupils make and to be

secure in assessing pupils' attainment against national standards. Thorough analysis of external tests is carried out, including the attainment of different groups of pupils. Staff changes over the last few years have hampered the use of these accurate and informative records. The school recognises that pupils' assessments are not yet used consistently across the school to plan work that caters for individual needs, and thus ensure that maximum progress is made. The school has effective assessment procedures for pupils who have special educational needs, but higher attaining pupils are not always set work that builds upon prior achievement and provides the level of challenge needed to raise standards.

48. The school has effective systems in place for tracking the progress made by pupils with special educational needs, and for using this information to ensure that pupils of all abilities and backgrounds are provided with an appropriate and relevant curriculum that offers social and educational inclusion for all. The school has suitable links with outside agencies, such as educational psychology, but parents feel that processes are rather slow when action outside the school is needed. Procedures already comply with the recommendations of the new Code of Practice and the Disability Discrimination Act, although the school policy has not yet been fully updated. The prospectus has been amended to include the required information.
49. Care, support and guidance for pupils are good throughout the school. Pupils' targets and the sharing of lesson objectives, enable teachers and some pupils to assess their progress. Records of achievement are maintained for all pupils and these contain the results of significant tests, examples of good work, and progress reports.
50. There are very good routines in place for monitoring and improving attendance. Each day, class teachers report any absences to the administration staff who confirm that the absence is authorised or contact the pupil's parents to ascertain the reason for the absence. The Education Welfare Officer is a regular visitor who scrutinises the registers to help identify patterns of absence and to resolve concerns about regular absence.
51. The school's policy for promoting good behaviour has recently been reviewed and revised to provide clear rules and consistency of application throughout the school. The incident book is rarely used. Each week, pupils who have behaved well are rewarded with 'choosing time' during which they pursue an activity of their choice. Pupils who have lost time sit apart from the activities. These sanctions detract from the school's inclusion policy and discourage some pupils from attempting to improve their behaviour. The current behaviour management system is not appropriate for this school and does little to help teachers manage the behaviour of a small group of disruptive pupils.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

52. Parents generally have positive views of the school and think that teaching is good. Most parents believe that the school is helping their children to become mature and responsible, and that their children are expected to work hard and achieve their best. Some parents, however, do not agree that their children are making progress in school, and believe that their children are not getting the right amount of work to do at home. A small number of parents would not feel comfortable about approaching the school with concerns. A significant number of parents think that they are not kept sufficiently well informed about how their children are getting on, and would like to see the school work

more closely with parents. The inspection team feels that the school is open to parents but could take more account of their views when planning developments in the school.

53. There are effective links with parents, which provide them with good quality information about the school and day-to-day events. The school prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents provide general information about the school. There are curriculum maps which support these documents for each year, newsletters, homework diaries and general notices. Members of staff make themselves available to resolve any concerns which may arise, and formal parent-teacher consultations provide opportunities to discuss pupils' progress. Parents have signed the home-school agreement and are welcome to attend open assemblies. Progress reports for pupils in the Foundation Stage are very informative and of very good quality. Those for older pupils are equally informative, and have improved in recent years, but there is a statutory omission in that they do not report on progress made in information and communication technology.
54. There are good links with parents of pupils with special educational needs. The teachers inform parents at an early stage if there are concerns about a child's learning. Parents are invited into school and are kept well informed about their child's progress.
55. Parents and friends play an active part in the life of the school and make a very significant contribution to pupils' learning. Several parents and governors help in school each day. They are very well guided by the class teachers in managing groups of pupils at work. Their contribution provides additional teaching and learning opportunities for all pupils involved, in addition to the social and specialist skills, which they impart. The Friends Association raises significant funds to provide additional learning resources for the school. The outdoor area has recently been developed through this funding and in addition to practical learning opportunities, the area provides a pleasant view for all.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

56. There has been good improvement in the leadership and management of the school since the last inspection, when they were judged to be poor and a serious weakness. They are now satisfactory and have enabled the school to make satisfactory improvement overall since the last inspection. The headteacher has risen to the challenge and demonstrates a very real commitment to continuing to improve the school in the future. Recent teaching staff appointments are proving successful and are providing strong extra support for the existing hard-working staff.
57. The Governing Body, deputy headteacher, subject co-ordinators and all staff have worked very hard with the headteacher to improve the school. They are all committed to its continued improvement and to raising pupils' standards to the highest possible level. Management systems have been put in place to tackle the major key issue, relating to the leadership and management of the school, which was identified at the last inspection. The school has a performance management system. This is properly organised and all aspects are in place. A vision statement has been agreed with staff. This has had a positive impact on the educational direction of the school and is beginning to help raise standards.
58. A senior management team has been established, consisting of the headteacher and deputy headteacher. This is not as effective as it should be because the management structure is too complex for a small school and there are now too many different committees. Many of the usual functions of a senior management team or whole staff

meeting are delegated to these committees. This is beginning to slow up the pace of improvement and make it more difficult to agree and review priorities for future development. The decisions about Key Stage 1 class organisation, for the current school year, were made more difficult to communicate to parents by this management structure.

59. Teaching and learning have begun to be monitored both by staff in school and by local education authority advisers. Internal monitoring has reduced recently as the school has had limited finances and co-ordinators have not been given the time to carry this out. Whilst the headteacher has been very successful in identifying some of the areas for improvement through analysis of assessment data and monitoring information, this has not yet had sufficient impact on raising standards and improving the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school. The time used on setting up the behaviour management system in school has not been effective, as the vast majority of pupils are very well-behaved and well-motivated. The system impact has not had a sufficiently positive impact on the few pupils who do not behave so well.
60. School development planning is effective. The plan is well written with clear aims, plans of action and success criteria. The plan takes full account of the money available to spend and links well with this. Subject co-ordinators are gradually feeding into the plan as they prepare carefully worked out development timetables for their own subjects. There is not yet a straightforward method for enabling priorities to be reviewed regularly by staff and the Governing Body. Parents and pupils have no formal way in which to influence the future development of the school. Whilst there has been an improvement in communication, there are too few opportunities for the headteacher to make informal contact with all members of the school community in order to listen and take note of different opinions expressed. The 'suggestion box' in the school foyer and the formation of a school council are both the first signs of a more open approach.
61. The role of the subject co-ordinator is developing well in the school. This is being successfully overseen by the deputy headteacher who has a good knowledge of how this role should be undertaken. Co-ordinators are beginning to have a positive impact on many subject areas and are proving to be an effective aspect of the management and are beginning to raise standards. The role of the deputy headteacher is clearly established in the school and is allowing him to have a positive influence on many aspects of the school.
62. The special educational needs co-ordinator was absent through illness during the inspection. The management of special educational needs is satisfactory with good systems in place to ensure that pupils' progress is reviewed regularly. The co-ordinator offers sufficient support to teachers to enable them to plan appropriate work for the pupils in their class. The present policy is out of date and does not match the new code of practice. No firm plans have yet been put in place to cover the work of the special needs co-ordinator if she is absent from school for a long period.
63. There has been good improvement in the role of the Governing Body. Governors are effective and supportive of the school. They have become much more involved in the running of the school since the last inspection. Members of the Governing Body work regularly in school and are very supportive of staff and pupils. This enables them to gain first hand experience of what is happening in classrooms. The Governing Body has worked hard to increase its skills and to become a critical friend of the school. Governors have attended training courses and now have a greater understanding of the role they should be playing in school. They have a good committee system and successfully oversee aspects of the running of the school. The Governing Body has

arranged extra meetings during the critical period since the last inspection and this has helped governors to get to know one another better and to work together as a team. They have been fully involved in the appointment of the headteacher, deputy headteacher and other staff. They meet their statutory responsibilities.

64. The school has a very tight budget with a very high proportion of the income being spent on staffing. Nevertheless, the remaining money is carefully used and the finances are thoroughly monitored to make sure that there is no overspend. There is, as yet, no system in place to fully monitor the impact of spending on standards in the school. The decision to employ an extra part-time member of staff to keep pupils in their year groups in the morning has resulted in too little money being available to employ a larger number of support staff. The principles of best value are thoroughly understood and properly applied. Grants from various sources that come in to school are all spent on the designated purpose. The most recent audit, which was requested by the present headteacher, showed that many aspects of the financial control system required a complete review in order to bring them into line with the local authority's systems. The well-organised and hard working school administrator has now done this. However, the current local education authority system does not enable full use to be made of new technology when ordering books and stationery and this is continuing to cause some inefficiency.
65. Taking into account the standards achieved, the satisfactory quality of teaching and of leadership and management, the satisfactory improvement since the last inspection and the higher than average expenditure per pupil, the school is giving satisfactory value for money.
66. The school has sufficient suitably qualified and experienced teachers for the number of pupils on roll. The number of learning support assistants is unsatisfactory. Some of the budget that could be used for the employment of more learning support assistants, is currently being used to employ a part-time teacher for the Year 1 class during the morning sessions, as a consequence of falling pupils numbers. Teachers have been able to take part in a range of training, and the information obtained from courses is effectively shared among the staff as part of their continuing professional development. The headteacher currently has no teaching commitment. The deployment of the limited number of support staff is as effective as possible. The deputy headteacher has the responsibility for the induction of new members of staff into the school, and carries out his role effectively. The secretary, caretaker and other members of the ancillary staff make an important contribution to the work of the school and offer support to both pupils and teachers.
67. Overall, the accommodation in the school is satisfactory but there are some unsatisfactory elements. The headteacher's office is small and difficult to work in. The school has placed a high priority on extending the administration area in the school. The library is also unsatisfactory because it is too small and lacking in facilities suitable for individual research and study. It is also part of the entrance hall and subject to a good deal of through traffic. Classrooms are of adequate size and are well used. The classrooms for both key stages open on to work areas and these provide a useful additional resource. They are particularly well used to support work in information and communication technology now that the school has invested in a number of portable computers. The hall is well used for dining, physical education, drama and assemblies. The children in the Foundation Stage have access to a new, very attractive, purpose built play area provided with assistance from the Friends of the School. The outside play areas are in good condition and pupils also have access to an environmental area

containing a pond. The grassed area is an asset to the school and is attractively landscaped. Some parts of the perimeter fence are in a dilapidated condition.

68. Learning resources are good in the Foundation Stage, art and design and physical education and satisfactory in the other subject areas. With the purchase of new computers and the ongoing changes in the work areas, resources for information and communications technology are rapidly becoming good. Library resources are currently unsatisfactory because of the unsuitable size and location of the library area. Lack of suitable storage means that some of the larger musical instruments are kept along one side of the hall and restrict the space available when the hall is being used for physical education.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

69. In order to raise standards and continue to improve the school, the Governing Body, headteacher and staff should:

1) raise the achievement of higher attaining pupils by:

- increasing teachers' expectations of what pupils can do;
- making better use of assessment procedures to fully inform teachers' planning to help pupils to make the best possible progress;
- continuing to set challenging targets for the numbers of pupils to reach above average standards in standard assessment tests at the end of Year 2 and Year 6.

(paragraphs 8, 16, 47, 59, 94, 99, 104, 113, 117)

- 2) improve the quality of writing throughout the school by:**
- providing pupils with more opportunities to write for a variety of purposes;
 - giving pupils in Key Stage 2 time to write more extensively;
 - giving pupils more planned opportunities to use their writing skills in other subjects.
- (paragraphs 3, 5, 22, 94, 101, 165)*
- 3) increase standards in reading - particularly in Key Stage 1:**
- by hearing pupils read more in school;
 - monitoring their reading more closely and making sure that they read a variety of books;
 - placing a high priority on the development of the school library.
- (paragraphs 3, 22, 67, 96)*
- 4) reviewing the behaviour management policy**
- to make sure that it is fully inclusive;
 - to ensure that it is having a positive impact on the occasional poor behaviour in school;
 - to make it less complicated and the administration of it less time consuming.
- (paragraphs 17, 18, 51, 59)*
- 5) improving systems for monitoring and reviewing priorities for school development by:**
- streamlining the school's management structure;
 - involving participation by the whole school community in deciding on priorities for development;
 - carefully monitoring and reviewing the impact of management decisions.
- (paragraphs 58 - 61)*
- 6) amend the pupils' written report so that it includes details of attainment and progress in information and communication technology.**
- (paragraphs 53, 149)*

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	34
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	25

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number		4	14	14	2		
Percentage		12	41	41	6		

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 almost three percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR– Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)		167
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		3

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		23

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	7
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	9

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.4

National comparative data	5.4
---------------------------	-----

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)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2002	13	8	21

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	12	12
	Girls	7	8	8
	Total	18	20	20
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	86 (100)	95 (100)	95 (100)
	National	84 (84)	86(86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	12	12
	Girls	8	6	8
	Total	19	18	20
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	90 (85)	86 (88)	95 (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)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2002	20	13	33

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	15	17
	Girls	12	12	13
	Total	24	27	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	73 (90)	82 (90)	91 (100)
	National	75 (75)	73(71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	16	17	18
	Girls	13	12	13
	Total	29	29	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	88 (90)	88 (90)	94 (90)
	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	136		
White – Irish			
White – any other White background			
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean			
Mixed – White and Black African			
Mixed – White and Asian			
Mixed – any other mixed background			
Asian or Asian British - Indian			
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani			
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi			
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	1		
Black or Black British – Caribbean			
Black or Black British – African			
Black or Black British – any other Black background			
Chinese	1		
Any other ethnic group	1		
No ethnic group recorded			

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)	7.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	28
Average class size	28

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	65

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2
----------------	--------

	£
Total income	368,837
Total expenditure	378,828
Expenditure per pupil	2,113
Balance brought forward from previous year	6,380
Balance carried forward to next year	-3,065

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	7
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3.5

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.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	167
Number of questionnaires returned	85

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	58	36	5	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	32	52	6	5	5
Behaviour in the school is good.	41	49	6	1	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	28	48	15	6	3
The teaching is good.	35	53	5	0	7
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	21	40	22	13	4
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	55	26	11	6	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	48	38	5	4	4
The school works closely with parents.	27	44	23	2	4
The school is well led and managed.	41	40	6	6	7
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	39	48	8	0	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	27	33	24	6	10

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

70. The school makes satisfactory provision for the children in the Foundation Stage. Assessment procedures are good and there is thorough planning, which is fully in line with the Early Learning Goals for children in the Foundation Stage. Children are admitted to the reception class in September and there are currently twenty one children on the register. The Foundation Stage children are taught in a good sized classroom with access to a secure outside play area and a work area, which is shared with the classes in Key Stage 1. A fully qualified teacher, who is ably supported by an experienced learning support assistant, teaches the children. Since September of this year the six pupils from Year 1 combine with the Reception Class for the afternoon session. The teacher's planning takes full account of this arrangement and work is differentiated in a manner appropriate to the mixed age group. Parents are also supportive and assist in hearing their children read and also in specific activities in and out of school. The recently opened secure outdoor play area has been provided with generous assistance from the Friends of the School and is an asset much enjoyed by the children.
71. When they enter school the majority of children have average skills for their age group. The baseline assessment figures show that the attainment of pupils joining the school represents the full ability range. The children receive satisfactory teaching overall and make satisfactory progress towards the Early Learning Goals. Progress and standards are better in their personal, social and emotional and their physical development. Assessments carried out at the end of the Reception Year indicate that the vast majority of children achieve the Early Learning Goals in most of the areas of their development and beyond them in personal, social and emotional development and physical development.
72. The Reception class teacher, who is also the co-ordinator for the Foundation Stage, provides good quality leadership and management for the stage. She has a good overview of the Early Learning Goals and has recently taken part in the Effective Early Learning Project. Participation in the project has provided opportunities to combine the planning for the Foundation Stage with an evaluation of the teaching and learning in Key Stage 1.

Personal, social and emotional development

73. Good teaching ensures that the children make very good progress in this area of their development and are likely to attain beyond the level expected for their age group by the time they enter Year 1. The children settle rapidly into the daily routines of the school and already play a confident part in the whole school assemblies. Through the association with their reading buddies in Year 6, they have early contact with older pupils. Most of the children can share their toys and activities and they interact very sensibly in their role-play scenarios. During the course of the inspection children were observed acting out the roles of doctors and nurses. They were happy for boys and girls to occupy either role and, during the game, the breadth of their vocabularies indicated the good quality teaching they have received in language development. Staff encourage collaboration in all areas of the curriculum and also allow the children to develop autonomy in their choices. The children respond very positively to this encouragement, especially when there is competition for the wheeled toys in the outdoor play area.

74. When the children arrive in school at the beginning of the day they take responsibility for 'signing in' for lunch. They are already capable of finding and distributing materials and apparatus and co-operate in putting things away and in keeping the classroom tidy. Each child recognises a responsibility for caring for their own possessions and those of others. They know that they have their own special pegs and places for their work. When getting ready for physical education lessons, they already show a level of independence and ask for help only if they really need it. They understand the need for personal hygiene and, when in the hall, they are fully aware of the need for safety.
75. Reception Class children play a full part in whole school assemblies and respond willingly when asked to assist or answer questions. They observe and learn from the good behaviour of the older pupils, who care for their younger peers as they help them become part of the school family.

Communication, language and literacy

76. Pupils come into school with average levels of competence in this area of their development. Teaching is satisfactory and the children make satisfactory progress and achieve the Early Learning Goals by the time they reach Year 1. Children are given a good range of activities to promote their early reading and writing skills and their spoken language is very good, even at this early point in the school year.
77. The level of communication between adults and children is very good. During the course of the inspection, children were observed engaging in mature discussion with both the teacher and the very skilled learning support assistant. Both adults provide good role models for the children and they are effective in promoting dialogue between children in their role-play activities. A number of parents and governors also assist in the Reception class during the week and are an asset in helping the children in their language development. When actively engaged in playing with sand and water, the children maintain a dialogue that enhances their knowledge and understanding of the world, which they are encouraged to share with others during their carpet sessions.
78. Teachers are successfully introducing the children to books and encouraging their skills in early reading. The range of materials available caters for the differences in ability in reading at the beginning of the school year. The higher attaining pupils are already confident in using picture clues to construct their stories and are happy to engage with simple words in the text. Others have yet to come to terms with the printed word but already have an infectious enthusiasm for books and stories. Most have favourites, which they can recall with varying degrees of accuracy and enthusiasm. Children also have access to an audio book corner and find this an area for quiet withdrawal from more strenuous activities at points throughout the day. Children have access to a good range of books and are able to take them home to share with their parents and carers.
79. As they sign the white board to indicate if they are to have a school lunch, the children are beginning their early efforts at writing. Even those who make only marks realise that writing is a way of communicating and they now show a satisfactory control of felt tip markers and paintbrushes and pencils. Most can now recognise their own names on labels or pieces of work on display.

Mathematical development

80. By the time they reach Year 1, the vast majority of children achieve the Early Learning Goals in this area. Satisfactory teaching ensures that the children make satisfactory

progress overall and that the lower attaining pupils make good progress. A good range of resources and equipment is available for the children to use, both in the classroom and in the outdoor area.

81. Number activities form a prominent feature of the daily routine of the classroom. The children are able to take part in formal and informal opportunities for reciting number rhymes and to take part in basic counting activities. Each day they sing the days of the week and count up to ten and beyond with confidence. During the inspection, children were observed asking for number problems to solve, such as counting in fives. When playing with bricks and construction toys, counting is often spontaneous and the children realise that there is some merit in having used the most bricks in building a tower.
82. Teaching encourages the use of correct number vocabulary and good use is made of incidental opportunities for counting and calculating. In sand and water play, the children can express their analysis of quantity and capacity in terms such as larger/smaller, more/less. The vast majority have an idea of the number of years in their age and they know that children in Key Stages 1 and 2 have bigger numbers in their ages.
83. Throughout the day children are able to sort, count and match objects by size, colour and shape and they use construction and other apparatus to solve number problems. In their artwork they use objects such as beads and colours to develop an idea of pattern and sequence. The classroom provides a number of mathematical stimuli and the children are especially fond of the number ladybirds and their Velcro attachments.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

84. By the time they reach Year 1 the children attain the Early Learning Goals in this area. Satisfactory teaching ensures that the vast majority of children make satisfactory progress.
85. Knowledge and understanding of their immediate environment provides the children with a huge range of experiences that feed their development in this area. From the classroom they can observe the very attractive environmental exploration area with its trees, bird boxes and pond. Also, they can see and gain immediate access to their new outdoor play area with its enticing range of possibilities, including a chalet-style play house and a 'bicycle repair shop'. Interest in the natural world is further stimulated by the living plants in the classroom and by the collection of found materials, such as the leaves of autumn colours that are on the observation table. Through direct experience, the children appreciate that living things are to be cherished and cared for. As they are introduced to religious education the children also come to an awareness of the Christian idea of God's World and begin also to appreciate that there are other faiths and beliefs. In their games they can use jigsaw puzzles that build into pictures of people in other faiths and cultures as they undertake the routines of their family life.
86. Most of the children can give a description of their daily journeys to and from school and discuss the differing views of the world to be found from a car or as a pedestrian. They know that being safe is important and that they must be especially careful when walking to school and crossing the road. In describing their journeys the children show a good understanding of the caring role of the adults around them. They also know that the adults in their families are of different ages and that age is an important way of identifying people. Most can describe the relationships in their immediate families but still find the intricacies of the wider family group very puzzling. In their participation in

assemblies, and other routines of the school day, the children are building a view of an ordered and structured world and find security in the regular occurrence of break times and the arrival of the lunch break.

87. In the classroom, the children have access to computer technology and some are already confident in using a mouse and in recognising icons on the screen. Some, whose parents or older siblings use a computer on a regular basis, are able to see them as tools for learning even though their own skills are not yet at such a level. Teaching ensures that the computer holds no fears for the children and they look forward to using them as frequently as their older peers.

Physical development

88. Teaching in this area is good and the children make good progress, exceeding the Early Learning Goals by the time they reach Year 1.
89. In the classroom, children move with a good sense of balance and confidence and are aware of the needs of others. The design of the classroom means that some of the passageways are relatively narrow and the children navigate these with no problems. Outside they play with robust energy, but are well supervised by the teachers and support staff, and their energy is channelled in creative directions. In the school hall, they use the space very effectively, showing a good sense of balance when using apparatus or when moving in random directions. In their physical education lessons, they change into appropriate clothing and follow instructions with quiet efficiency. The vast majority of them have the physical co-ordination to dress and undress themselves effectively, if slowly at times. In following musical accompaniments, the children show a good sense of rhythm and have good control over their own bodies as they stretch, curl and dance to the music.
90. In creative activities and in the use of construction toys, the children show a good control of tools. They can use pencils, paintbrushes, scissors and glue sticks with a degree of accuracy, and they use the medical apparatus in their role-play surgery with considerable aplomb.

Creative development

91. By the time they reach Year 1, satisfactory teaching ensures that the vast majority of children make satisfactory progress and attain the Early Learning Goals for this area. From the time they enter the Reception class, the creative efforts of the children are highly valued and form part of the decoration of the classroom. Most children can recognise and identify their own work and they clearly take pride of ownership in the displays. At this early stage in the school year, a number of children already show a sense of line and direction in their drawings and have produced some very good quality representations of the school buildings.
92. In the wider context of creative activity, the children have access to paints, clay, sand, water and construction and modelling materials. They already have an early confidence in combining and mixing materials and know that, for example, thick paint will produce a greater density on paper than thin paint. Some children have an appreciation of contrast that they can demonstrate by putting objects of a different colour into collages on black backgrounds. During carpet sessions and through incidental opportunities, the staff encourage the children in discussing and evaluating their work. In this context the children are also able to increase their general as well as creative vocabularies, and they enjoy the sharing of artistic criticism and evaluation.

93. During the course of the inspection some of the most genuinely creative experiences came from the role-play area and from the activities in the outdoor play zone. In the role-play, the acting out of medical roles brought out some excellent vocabulary, especially when the children debated the reluctance of their visitor to undergo their version of dental treatment. In the outdoor play zone, the use of the chalet as a bicycle repair business provided the children with a range of creative opportunities, such as in the use of the necessary tools.

ENGLISH

94. In the National Curriculum tests in 2002 the standards achieved by pupils in reading and writing at the end of Key Stage 1 were below the national average and well below the average for similar schools. At the end of Key Stage 2, standards were in line with the national average but well below the average for similar schools. Inspection evidence indicates that the efficiency and dedication of the new co-ordinator has had a positive impact on the standards attained by pupils at the end of both key stages. Standards in all aspects of English are currently in line with national expectations and well above expectations in speaking and listening. Although the overall progress made by pupils is judged to be satisfactory, standards in reading in Key Stage 1 and writing in both key stages could be higher. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress towards their agreed targets.
95. Satisfactory improvement has been made overall in English since the last inspection. The school has made significant improvement in speaking and listening since the last inspection. This has been achieved because most teachers carefully ensure that all pupils are included in classroom discussions, encouraging them to participate fully. Most pupils, in both key stages, listen well to their teachers and each other and ask sensible and well-structured questions to clarify their understanding. Many of the youngest pupils in Key Stage 1 speak confidently and those who are a bit hesitant are encouraged by the sympathetic and understanding approach of the teachers to participate with more confidence. By the end of Year 2, most pupils have learned to organise their speech into full sentences and to use more precise and imaginative vocabulary. They continue to make good progress throughout Key Stage 2, so that by Year 6, most are speaking and listening confidently in a range of situations. They respond well to questions and ideas using descriptive and precise vocabulary that has been broadened through the knowledge of technical vocabulary from other subjects. All pupils throughout the school are provided with many opportunities to participate in various performances, which often include speaking in public. These activities help to improve the clarity of pupils' speech.
96. Although standards overall in reading are in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages, standards could be higher in Key Stage 1. Pupils in Key Stage 1 do not have a significant number of opportunities to read individually to adults, usually less than twice a week in both year groups. However, pupils in both the year groups do participate in one guided 'read' session per week. The teaching of reading in Key Stage 1 is not good enough to raise standards above their current satisfactory level. Teachers are not building on what the pupils have already learned in the Foundation Stage. Most pupils have an appropriate knowledge of letter sounds and many use a range of suitable strategies that they have been taught to help them with unfamiliar words or to gain a deeper understanding of the text. Most pupils enjoy reading and the more able pupils make satisfactory progress in their awareness of punctuation to improve their

reading. Few pupils in Key Stage 1 say that they read regularly to adults or have favourite books and authors.

97. By the end of Year 6, standards are in line with national expectations and improving, but could be higher. They reflect the high priority, which the English co-ordinator has given to reading. Most pupils know how to use contents and index pages to locate information in a book. Pupils read with a secure degree of accuracy and fluency and have a satisfactory knowledge of authors and some are able to read beyond the literal level in text to work out what the author is implying in a story. By Year 6, the majority of pupils use a range of reading skills to help them to decode unfamiliar words. The pupils' ability to use dictionaries and reference materials improves during Key Stage 2 and many pupils have acquired appropriate research skills.
98. Standards in writing are in line with national expectations overall by the end of both key stages. However, pupils' skills are weaker than would be expected in creative and extended writing throughout the school. Literacy skills are not used extensively across the curriculum. Many pupils do not have enough opportunities to write at length, in depth and in a sufficiently wide range of styles. Some classes use too many worksheets that sometimes restrict the development of pupils' extended writing skills. There are, however, some pupils in both key stages who write extended pieces of work that contain a good range of vocabulary and retain the attention of the reader from start to finish. By the end of Year 6, pupils present their work in a satisfactory manner and use correct grammar appropriately. Some pupils make confident use of connectives and accurate punctuation and have a reasonable understanding of the meaning of dialogue and use of speech marks. The co-ordinator is giving priority to the raising of standards in writing and these new strategies are already beginning to have a positive impact on the quality of writing in all subjects. Standards in handwriting are highly variable throughout the school. The best work in all year groups is very neat and tidy, and, as pupils progress through the school, they show more pride in the presentation of their written work, but some pupils could do better. Pupils are making good use of information and communication technology to draft, amend and write their stories and poems.
99. The quality of teaching in English over time is satisfactory throughout the school. There were examples of very good teaching in Key Stage 2 and good teaching in Key Stage 1 during the inspection. Teachers usually have satisfactory expectations of the pupils, but do not always expect them to read at a high enough level or write sufficiently. The approach used in teaching reading in Key Stage 1 does not enable pupils to make enough progress. The pupils do not read enough in school and do not change their reading books regularly enough.
100. Teachers display good management skills in their teaching. The teachers' knowledge and understanding of English is satisfactory and this is reflected in the appropriateness of their planning. On the occasions when the teaching is most effective, teachers offer clear explanations, insist on good behaviour, offer plenty of praise and encouragement to bolster pupils' confidence and self-image, and present the work in an interesting way. In class, most teachers show enthusiasm for the tasks set and are keen to motivate the pupils to do their best. Support staff, when available, provide good levels of help, support and guidance for pupils, including those with special educational needs.
101. The quality of learning in English is satisfactory. Most pupils are responsive and are keen to take an active part in lessons. Some teachers provide additional opportunities for pupils to extend their speaking and listening skills, such as in physical education lessons, where pupils observe and make critical appraisals about the performance of

others. However, there are too few opportunities for pupils in classes to practise and extend their writing skills across the curriculum. The quality and use of ongoing assessment is satisfactory as is the quality of marking which often includes comments that lead pupils to improved levels of attainment.

102. The literacy hour is firmly in place and makes a significant contribution to the standards attained. The leadership and management of the subject are improving rapidly. The new co-ordinator provides very high levels of inspiration to colleagues and has a very good overview of the strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning. The co-ordinator has monitored and evaluated in the past, the quality of teaching and learning through classroom observation and the scrutiny of pupils' work. He intends to develop this practice further. The subject makes a satisfactory contribution to the pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development. Overall, the resources are judged to be satisfactory.

MATHEMATICS

103. The end of Key Stage 2 2002 National Curriculum test results indicate that pupils' attainment is in line with the national average. In comparison with similar schools, pupils' attainment is well below average. Pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 on the basis of the 2002 national test results is well above the national average, and above average in comparison with similar schools. The inspection findings indicate that pupils' attainment is above national expectations at the end of both key stages. Differences between the test results and the inspection findings are attributable to natural differences in the ability of the different groups of pupils. Standards have satisfactorily improved since the last inspection and the school now makes better use of assessment to highlight strengths and weaknesses in pupils' learning.
104. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. However, higher attaining pupils are not sufficiently challenged in every class. Pupils with special educational needs receive little extra support because of the shortage of learning support assistants. However, they do receive appropriate work planned by their teachers and some good quality assistance from voluntary classroom helpers. The progress made by all pupils is not consistent. In Key Stage 1, less progress is made in Year 1. In Key Stage 2, the greatest progress is made in Year 5 and Year 6 when pupils receive more challenge and move more quickly through the curriculum. In Year 3 and Year 4, there is too much consolidation of earlier work and sometimes too little challenge for pupils of higher ability.
105. Improvements in the use of the National Numeracy Strategy have begun to raise standards throughout the school. The extra staff development, the support and monitoring from the local education authority and from the subject co-ordinator have been effective.
106. Good use is made of a published mathematics scheme throughout the school and it is well supplemented by teachers' worksheets and other activities. There are still some gaps in pupils' knowledge, particularly at the end of Key Stage 2, and this is lowering the standards achieved by the current Year 6 pupils. Better use of the National Numeracy Strategy has improved coverage of the subject in Key Stage 2 and this is beginning to have a positive impact and is raising standards.
107. By the end of Year 2, pupils are able to count up to and down from 100 in twos, fours, fives and tens. Most can add and subtract confidently with numbers up to 20. They are

familiar with coins and these are used well as an aid to addition and subtraction. Most can recognise numbers with hundreds, tens and units and a few are already confident in identifying numbers over one thousand. They can recognise odd and even numbers and higher attaining pupils know the result of adding odd to odd, even to even and odd to even numbers.

108. By the end of Year 6, most pupils can recall their tables quickly. They understand the principle of how to multiply and divide by tens, hundreds and thousands. They demonstrate an understanding of the four rules of number, but still make errors when working mentally. They are secure in their understanding of number and most can recognise large numbers including millions. Most understand the concept of minus numbers. Their knowledge of fractions, decimals and percentages is much less secure. They are not yet able confidently to change simple fractions to decimals or match these to percentages. They have limited understanding of decimals and are only just beginning to use them in calculations. Teachers often give pupils opportunities, at the end of mathematics activities, to use their mathematical knowledge to investigate problems. These include identifying number patterns or predicting which numbers will be divisible by others.
109. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a good knowledge of different two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes and can recognise not only the most common shapes but also pentagons and octagons. Some can also identify a right angle. Pupils are more confident about using standard units of measurement, such as centimetres and grams, rather than non-standard measures, such as hand spans and beads. A small number of pupils can explain what a line of symmetry means. Pupils are able to explain how a bar graph works and can fill one in accurately.
110. By the end of Year 6, pupils have a sound understanding of metric measurement and can pick out the best unit to use to measure a distance. They show some understanding of metric weight but are not able to link that to imperial measures. During the week of the inspection, nearly all the pupils acquired the skills to successfully measure an angle in degrees using a protractor. They have a good knowledge of appropriate vocabulary and can name different types of angles and triangles. About half the class are confident at estimating the size of an angle whilst others can recognise whether an angle is smaller or larger than a right angle. They realise that the sum of the angles of a triangle add up to 180° and most can use this to work out the size of the third angle. Higher attaining pupils enjoyed calculating the size of the reflex angles outside the triangle and seeing whether they could find a formula for the total of these. Pupils have some basic understanding of area and a few know how to calculate the area of a rectangle. They are not confident about terms such as symmetry and perimeter. Pupils can explain the term tally and know how a traffic count can be transferred to a graph. Some can recognise pie charts and most can explain how a line graph would be drawn to record weather. They do not yet have a thorough understanding of probability.
111. Pupils make satisfactory use of mathematics in other subjects such as science and design and technology. In science, this is usually data collection represented on graphs and has not usually extended beyond this. Measuring skills are used when planning in design and technology and in mapping in geography. Use of information and communication technology is not consistent across the school and relates to the confidence and skills of the class teacher. During the inspection, pupils in Year 6 used a program to help them learn how to measure angles and an appropriate sorting game was used in Year 3.

112. Most pupils really enjoy mathematics and are at their most enthusiastic when they receive challenging questions and are expected to perform at a high level by their teacher. Occasional lapses of concentration were observed when the pace of lessons dropped and pupils did not stay on task, often finding the work repetitive and easy. Most pupils present their work neatly, although some pupils in Year 2 find it difficult to make accurate use of squared paper.
113. The quality of teaching throughout the school is satisfactory with some stronger elements in some classes. Teachers are good at sharing the learning objective of the lesson with the pupils and returning to it at the end of the lesson. Good use is made of appropriate group targets in each class and these are reviewed when necessary and shared with the pupils. Teachers are good at providing suitable work for the range of abilities in the class but in lower Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, the work provided for the higher attaining group is not always challenging enough to enable these pupils to learn at a high enough level. Teachers' expectations in these classes are not always high enough and too much time is spent revising work that is already known and understood. This is slowing progress at the beginning of each key stage. The quality of marking is satisfactory throughout the school, but is especially good in Year 5 and Year 6 as pupils are given a clear indication of how they can improve.
114. Very detailed assessments are made of pupils' understanding of mathematics and good analysis of these is helping to identify pupils who are not making enough progress. This is beginning to help raise standards but the information gained is only now beginning to be used to help plan the next stage of learning.
115. The subject is well led by an experienced subject co-ordinator who has had some non-contact time last year to help her work in classrooms and effectively monitor teaching and learning. Currently this is not happening as a result of budgetary restraints. She is working hard to develop the subject and has ensured that resources are at a satisfactory level to enable the full curriculum to be taught.

SCIENCE

116. Standards have risen since the last inspection. There are two main reasons for this. The analysis of test results has led to better coverage of the National Curriculum programmes of study and teachers have increased opportunities for pupils to participate in experimental science activities. The results of the 2002 National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6 indicate that standards are in line with the national average. However, the results are below average in comparison with other schools in similar contexts. At the end of Year 2, the pupils' performance in teacher assessments is above the national average and in line with that of schools in similar contexts. Inspection evidence indicates that standards are above expectations at the end of both key stages and there are no significant differences in the attainment of any groups. The difference between the 2002 end of Key Stage 2 test results and inspection findings are due to differences in the natural ability of the groups of pupils. All pupils, including those who have special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1 and good progress in Key Stage 2 as they move through the school but pupils produce too little of their own written work and record too much on worksheets.
117. Pupils of all ages demonstrate above average skills of scientific enquiry and make good use of scientific vocabulary. For example, Year 2 pupils use balloons and a variety of materials such as salt and coffee to thoroughly investigate friction and static electricity.

Year 3 pupils make good use of their own hypotheses prior to experimenting with bar and horseshoe magnets and paperclips. Most pupils create accurately labelled diagrams of experiments about liquids, solids and gases. Year 4 pupils understand the concepts of evaporation, melting and boiling and can use thermometers accurately in their water experiments. In Year 5 pupils make good use of numeracy and information and communication technology and produce good quality tables, bar charts and line graphs and use the results of experiments to make comparisons and draw their own conclusions. A group of Year 6 pupils clearly explain the factors involved in devising a fair test and make knowledgeable observations about the soil samples they are investigating and comparing. The school identified scientific enquiry as an area for improvement and satisfactory progress has been made in providing pupils with more opportunities for experimental work but the many higher attaining pupils are capable of pursuing more advanced scientific enquiries and planning their own investigations.

118. In their study of life processes, pupils have a good understanding of how living organisms differ from non-living things and even the youngest pupils can describe the needs of plants and animals. Year 2 pupils are knowledgeable about seeds and the functions of parts of flowers and use vocabulary such as habitat and minibeasts. Pupils in Year 6 explain food chains and pupils in Year 5 describe a variety of methods of seed dispersal, using words such as explosion and germination. Nearly all pupils understand the importance of healthy foods and the effect exercise has on the body. Year 2 pupils discuss healthy drinks, for example, one pupil said "I know that water makes you healthy and milk makes you strong but coke does nothing for you!" Key Stage 2 pupils have a good understanding of the functions of the skeleton and major body organs and explain the harmful effects of tobacco. Year 6 pupils show good knowledge and understanding of absorption processes as they discuss the use of vitamins and nutrients to plants and humans.
119. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of materials and their properties are good. By the end of Year 2, pupils can identify a range of materials and discuss their uses in relation to their properties. They talk about waterproof clothing and the changes that occur with substances such as chocolate, jelly, coffee and sand when hot water is applied. They understand and explain dissolving procedures and know that sometimes changes can be reversed and sometimes they cannot. Pupils in Year 3 list the results of their investigations about materials that can exist as solids and liquids and which sort of paper soaks up the most liquid. By the end of Year 6 pupils can identify types of soil, such as clay, peat and sand, and are confident in the use of words, such as condensation and precipitation, and apparatus, such as test-tubes, hand lenses and filter paper.
120. Appropriate attention is given to the pupils' study of physical processes and standards are above national expectations. Younger pupils know about forces, such as pushes and pulls, and can name several sources of light and sound. Year 1 pupils make observations of sounds they hear around the school and record them both pictorially, using 'zigzag' books and by using a tape recorder. Older pupils know that applying a force can produce movement and that gravity is such a force. Pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 can construct simple electrical circuits from a range of materials and produce clear and accurate diagrams of broken and unbroken circuits. They know that rotational movement of the earth relative to the sun causes day and night and how shadows are formed. The school curriculum provides good coverage of the National Curriculum programmes of study and is well balanced to extend the pupils' knowledge and understanding and to develop good scientific principles.

121. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2. Although most of the teaching observed during the inspection was good, the scrutiny of work showed a heavy dependence on worksheet tasks, which served to limit the written response and lower attainment, particularly in Key Stage 1. Skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology are used to a satisfactory extent in science but there is scope for pupils to use these skills in a more challenging way. Teaching is based on good subject knowledge that enables teachers to ask probing questions to make pupils think, but pupils are capable of using a wider range of enquiry skills and looking at wider applications of science. The subject is effectively led and the planning cycle that the school uses provides equality of opportunity for all pupils in the mixed age classes.
122. The pupils' learning is assessed at regular intervals and teachers are diligent in recording levels of attainment and the progress that their pupils make. The school has also worked very hard to analyse test results and uses them to design planning and assessment systems that are starting to have a positive impact upon learning. Teachers make lessons interesting for their pupils who respond by behaving well and by participating enthusiastically in the activities that are planned for them. In the best lessons, such as those observed in Year 2 and Year 6, the very good level of planning and lively presentations by the teachers motivates the pupils and enables them to make very good progress in the understanding of scientific ideas.
123. Improvement since the last inspection has been good. Teachers plan well for cross-curricular opportunities and the subject makes a good contribution to pupils' social, moral and cultural development. All staff encourage pupils to work co-operatively and to show respect for people, living things, property and the environment. Pupils of all ages relate well to other people and work successfully as a member of a group or a team. Behaviour in lessons is always good and pupils enjoy the scientific activities. Resources are satisfactory and teachers make good use of them and homework is well used to extend the work done in school.

ART AND DESIGN

124. At the end of Year 2 and Year 6, attainment is above national expectations and overall progress is good. The school has maintained the high standards identified in the last inspection report. All pupils, including those who have special educational needs, are making good progress. The skills pupils learn in art and design lessons are well used in other subjects, such as in observational drawing in science, in history topic work and when using computer design programmes and digital images. It was not possible to observe any lessons during the inspection, so judgements were made by talking to pupils, scrutinising planning and pupils' work and by observing the very good quality work displayed around the school. The teaching is good because it focuses on developing pupils' skills, and staff provide a wide range of opportunities for the pupils to use their skills imaginatively and creatively. A strong feature of the work is that descriptions of processes are displayed alongside the art and design work and this has a positive effect upon pupils' understanding of techniques and use of materials.
125. Pupils in Key Stage 1 learn about colours and how to mix paints to good effect and experiment with printing techniques, using hands, blocks and sponges. Throughout the key stage, pupils' line control steadily develops through using chalk, crayons, pastels and charcoal. Year 1 pupils produce good quality patterns and shape pictures made with straws. Year 2 pupils produce good quality work inspired by looking at a variety of buildings in their local area. They add texture to their designs by using rubbings and

make montages using multi-media. The pupils show good knowledge and understanding about design, shade and texture and can explain the difference between regular and irregular patterns. Printing, painting, drawing, cutting and sticking techniques are all well developed and the pupils are able to evaluate their work and that of others. The work reflects good use of investigation of techniques and materials and pupils are acquiring a sense of the relationship between art and the beauty of the world around them.

126. Throughout Key Stage 2, a clear progression in the development of ideas and skills can be seen in the pupils' work. Year 3 pupils show and describe the pictures inspired by the music of Mussorgsky, the poetry of Tennyson, the paintings of Lowry and the buildings of Gaudi. They explain their preliminary sketches of Gaudi's buildings and then how they transferred and "printed onto paper we had sponged and rolled." Older pupils had looked closely at butterflies on loan from a local museum and used a variety of media, such as emulsion and acrylic paints, glues, inks and pastels, to depict butterflies and design a suitable habitat for the background of their pictures. The pupils are able to make choices about the materials that are the most suitable to use when they produce interesting work, such as the intricate Rangoli designs.
127. The pupils' work indicates good progress in observational drawing and most pupils are able to record, plan and practise techniques and ideas that can be modified and refined for use at a later date. Year 5 and Year 6 pupils confidently discuss visual and tactile qualities in materials and understand the importance of line, shape and size when designing replica Greek pots or when making models of Victorian people, such as a chimney sweep. A strength of school policy is the strong links with other subjects. The investigating and making in art and design makes a valuable contribution to pupils' spiritual and cultural development. Pupils participate in a wide range of activities and talk enthusiastically about their involvement in workshops and exhibitions. For example, earlier this year some older pupils worked with a textile artist to produce a friendship tapestry for the Commonwealth Games.
128. Teachers make good use of first hand recordings, such as brass rubbings, digital photographs, and sketches completed in a visit to the local church as a basis for printing designs and patterns. The Greek columns that the Year 6 pupils design use the colours popular in Ancient Greece and follow the style of those times by depicting images based on the pupils' own activities. The pupils are proud of their good quality work and enjoyed making the layered representations of Greek pots using materials, such as acetate paper, ink and Brusho. Although no lessons were observed, it was evident from talking to pupils that they have good attitudes to art and design and enjoy their lessons. They are enthusiastic and show pride in the work they produce. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual and cultural development. The large number of artists studied and the appreciation of their paintings and sculptures and links to music have very positive impact on the pupils' learning. The subject is well managed and pupils work with good quality resources.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

129. Pupil's attainment is in line with national expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress as they move through the school. Standards have been maintained since the time of the previous inspection.

130. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have a satisfactory grasp of the essential skills of design and technology. They have experience of working with a variety of materials, tools and techniques. In their focused tasks they are able to make models and other artefacts, which also allow them to experiment with design concepts. In discussion the pupils in Year 2 are able to explain the difference between materials of differing resistance and some of the problems encountered in joining them together. They have also begun to understand that a design may be modified in the process of making and that suitability for purpose may be more important than sticking rigidly to a design. Pupils do not have the use of books that are specifically for recording design, which would allow them to more easily revisit their ideas and refresh their design memories. They do have good recall and know that they have acquired experience of the problems of incorporating movement into design projects. In discussion they are able to explain that movement may be achieved through such devices as axles, wheels, hinges and pneumatics.
131. Pupils in Key Stage 2 continue to make steady progress and their work is at the expected level by the end of the key stage. Experiences gained in Key Stage 1 are consolidated and pupils come to an appreciation that the apparently simple problems of joining and combining materials in the classroom are at the heart of many commercial design problems. In discussion they are able to show an understanding of the importance of form and function in the commercial world. In the recent past pupils have produced construction-based work that has gained accreditation with the Construction Industries Training Board. Some pupils in Year 4 were aware of the link between the moral elements of Fair Trade and the use of cheap labour to produce very high price designer goods. In discussion, pupils in Year 6 showed an understanding of the relationship between the fashion icon, such as the logo on trainers, and the processes of design and technology. During discussions many pupils in Key Stage 2 demonstrated the successful way in which teachers had used design and technology to promote elements of the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. As in Key Stage 1, not all the design efforts made by the pupils are available as matters of record, but the pupils demonstrate a good verbal recall of their work in areas such as food technology. A good link has been made between geography and design and technology for pupils in Key Stage 2 as they have studied Chembakoli in geography and made a Chembakoli special meal in food technology.
132. Although no lessons in design and technology were seen during the course of the inspection, the quality of the work available and discussions with pupils confirm that teaching is never less than satisfactory at either key stage. Teachers in both key stages ensure that pupils experience a variety of materials and are able to work with a range of tools. The lack of books specifically for recording design has a limiting effect on pupils' fuller understanding of the complexity of the design process and there is a tendency for them to think of design and technology as being 'about making things'. Attitudes towards the subject are positive and reflect the generally good attitudes and behaviour observed in the school.
133. At the time of reporting, the co-ordinator for design and technology had been in post for only a very short time, having been newly appointed to the staff in September 2002. She has not yet had sufficient time to have an impact on teaching and learning throughout the school. She has a good vision for the future development of the subject and is aware of the need for a whole school assessment policy for design and technology. The school is moving gradually towards fully adopting the guidelines from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority and should be able to develop its assessment scheme in parallel with this. Resources are satisfactory overall and

increasing use of information and communication technology is broadening the curriculum.

GEOGRAPHY

134. Standards of attainment are at the expected level at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. All pupils make satisfactory progress. Support for pupils with special educational needs ensures that they also make satisfactory progress. The school has made satisfactory progress in maintaining average standards since the previous inspection.
135. At the end of Year 2, pupils have a satisfactory understanding of the local area. Average attaining pupils are able to explain what sort of things they see in and around Helsby and to suggest various ways in which Helsby could be improved. This study is used effectively to promote discussion of moral and social values, such as what spoils the environment. Pupils also discuss the differences and similarities between their own area and other areas, such as their study of Llandudno. Linked to this study is their investigation of sea creatures, fossils and pebbles. The school has established useful links with Plymouth Grove School in Manchester and this enables the pupils to exchange relevant geographical information that enhances their understanding of the subject. The pupils have gained valuable geographical knowledge regarding the essential significance of roads, trees and people, for example, in their work on an island home.
136. By the end of Year 6, pupils have satisfactorily built on the skills they have acquired earlier. Pupils in Year 4 have a growing knowledge of other parts of the world, as seen in their study of the village of Chembakoli in India. In their study of the effects of 'Fair Trade', they understand that it is not about charity, but rather about guaranteeing a better deal for Third World producers. Pupils compare and contrast life in other areas with those in England and concentrate on, for example, climate and employment as seen in their work on the Isles of Scilly and Samson Island. In physical geography, pupils show a satisfactory understanding of river development, often using the correct and appropriate geographical terms. Older pupils use other sources of information satisfactorily to develop their research and investigative skills.
137. Pupils often help one another and readily take part in question and answer sessions, which take place at the beginning and end of lessons. Most pupils have good attitudes to work, and this impacts positively on the quality of learning. Many pupils take a pride in how they present their work and there are some good examples of the marking of pupils' work. The overuse of worksheets at times does restrict opportunities for some pupils to extend their literacy skills.
138. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. In lessons, time limits on activities ensure that most pupils remain on task and work at a brisk pace. Pupils are well managed and there is good class control, which enables teachers to concentrate on imparting knowledge. The marking of pupils' work is usually positive and often contains comments which pupils use to develop their future learning. The careful and effective use of questioning ensures that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress and are fully included in all the learning activities. Information and communication technology is used occasionally in the subject but this is sometimes limited and, as a result, in some classes it could be used more effectively to have a greater impact on the subject. Pupils respond well to the teaching and the good provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This has a positive effect on learning, allowing teachers to concentrate on imparting knowledge

and giving additional support where necessary. Pupils listen carefully in lessons and work well together in groups and pairs; they discuss environmental issues expressing their feelings. They are aware of conditions in other countries and this extends their cultural development.

139. Changes in staff have resulted in the subject co-ordinator being recently appointed to the subject. The co-ordinator ensures effective coverage of the National Curriculum programme of study. She provides guidance for teachers and supports them in their planning. Learning resources in the subject are satisfactory.

HISTORY

140. Standards of attainment in history are in line with national expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. The school has largely maintained the standards identified during the previous inspection. Pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of the past and all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in the subject. The history curriculum is enriched by educational visits to local museums, such as the Grosvenor Museum in Chester and the Liverpool Museum. There are examples of good displays around the school, featuring recently acquired artefacts and posters relating to the study of the Vikings. The impact of these displays is enhanced because they include pupils' work. Pupils are making increasing use of information and communication technology to find information about their history topics.
141. By the end of Year 2, pupils have developed a secure understanding of events in the past, show an appropriate awareness of how things have changed over the years and have a reasonable sense of chronology. Pupils have acquired this satisfactory understanding of chronology from their study of toys through the ages and houses long ago. By the end of the key stage, pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of events from the past, such as the Fire of London. Their written work is satisfactory overall but in some classes, the overuse of worksheets limits the development of the pupils' literacy skills particularly in the case of the more able pupils and this results, in some cases, in topics not always being covered in sufficient depth or breadth.
142. By the end of Year 6, pupils have increased their knowledge of history and key historical facts and have a satisfactory level of knowledge and understanding about the periods of time they have studied, such as the Greeks, Tudors, Vikings and the Victorian years. The pupils' level and range of knowledge are adequately developed so that they have the confidence to discuss and explore arguments about past events. Older pupils empathise with the plight of Victorian children and show an understanding of the conditions in which some of them lived. Where the teaching and learning are most effective, pupils are given opportunities to examine different historical perspectives and aspects of particular interest. These opportunities contribute positively to pupils' progress and attainment. For example, Year 5 pupils, when studying the Victorian period, were encouraged to use reference materials to locate information about the legacy of Dr Barnardo and his work. Most pupils have a satisfactory understanding of the difference between primary and secondary evidence, and understand the importance of artefacts as historical evidence. In some classes, good links are made between history and other subjects, such as art and design, as seen in the Year 6 study and construction of Greek pots. These links help to bring the subject to life for the pupils and motivate them in their learning.
143. Pupils are well behaved in lessons and show positive attitudes. Many pupils are inquisitive and want to find out things for themselves. They are eager and willing to talk

about the work that they have covered. Key Stage 2 pupils are ready to learn from their mistakes and, since the marking of pupils' work is usually of such a good standard, pupils take notice of the helpful comments to improve the quality of their work.

144. The quality of teaching and learning across the school is satisfactory overall. Teachers are interested in the subject and inspire pupils to want to know more about their history. Displays are often good and encourage pupils' motivation. Tasks are matched appropriately to pupils' interests and ability. Satisfactory use is made of questioning by the class teachers who are knowledgeable and enthusiastic about the subject, and this helps to keep pupils well motivated and focused on their work. Most teachers have good classroom management and organisation skills. The progress made by pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, is satisfactory throughout the school.
145. Changes in staffing have resulted in the subject co-ordinator being recently appointed to the subject and the monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning is beginning to have an impact on standards. Learning resources are satisfactory.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

146. Standards are in line with national expectations at the end of Year 2 and above national expectations at the end of Year 6. Standards in Key Stage 1 have been maintained since the time of the previous inspection and those in Key Stage 2 have shown an improvement. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1 and good progress in Key Stage 2. Information and communication technology is being used more widely across the curriculum to support pupils learning in literacy and numeracy, and also in the foundation subjects. Pupils in Key Stage 1 have access to computers in the classroom and can also now access the newly acquired portable computers that can be set up in the work areas outside the classrooms. Teachers effectively incorporate the use of new technology into their lessons and computers are being used to record information, as well as in the more common areas of drafting and writing in literacy. Pupils are also able to access information on the Internet and use material available in the form of CD-ROMs. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils have developed a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the use of the computer. In English, they are most familiar with its use as a drafting and amending tool and find that it helps improve the presentation of their work. They are also beginning to find computers useful in seeking information to support their work in other subjects, such as history.
147. In Key Stage 2, pupils make good progress in the subject and are increasingly confident in their use of information and communication technology as a tool for learning across the curriculum. By the time they reach Year 6, pupils can write, edit and save work easily and are confidently using computer technology to create simple publications, such as news sheets, for example. Pupils know how to vary text by using different colours, selecting different fonts and using tools, such as the spellchecker. In one Year 6 lesson pupils were observed making their early acquaintance with Excel Spreadsheets. The higher attaining pupils were clearly aware that the effective use of spreadsheets involved different ways of thinking about the nature and presentation of data. Pupils in most classes are competent at using the mouse and recognise the icons for a wide range of files and functions. In discussion, one pupil was very aware that the operating systems of PCs and Macintosh computers are different. Pupils in Key Stage 2 also use the computer to access a wide range of information on the Internet and are able to communicate through the use of Email. The purchase of a number of laptop computers has added to the freedom and confidence with which the pupils in Key Stage 2 approach the computer, and they also have access to desk top models in their classrooms.
148. The quality of teaching and learning in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory and good in Key Stage 2. Teachers make good use of the correct vocabulary to support pupils' learning in the subject and this was particularly noticeable in the Year 6 lesson on the introduction to spread sheets. The subject is making a good contribution to pupils' personal development, especially in the sense of responsibility for its use. The secretary to the School Council, a pupil in Year 6, is rightly proud of the way in which she is able to keep computer records of the meetings of the Council.
149. The recently appointed co-ordinator for the subject offers effective leadership and a very clear overview of the use of the technology throughout the school. She has been responsible for increasing access to computers through the reorganisation of the shared work areas and this is much appreciated by the pupils. Resources are good overall and renewal has been a recent priority of the school, which is on course to meet the target of one computer to eight pupils by the year 2004. As the co-ordinator moves the subject forward the school will be able to develop a system of assessment and

should also be able to report on information and communication technology in the annual report to parents which, at the moment, it is failing to do.

MUSIC

150. Standards are in line with national expectations at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6. This maintains the position described by the previous report. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress as they move through the school. All pupils have the opportunity for singing, listening to and appraising music and composing music of their own. In addition to the music lessons provided by the school, many pupils take advantage of the specialist music tuition that is available during the school day. Parents pay for these lessons and pupils have access to tuition in a range of instruments.
151. Pupils in Key Stage 1 receive satisfactory teaching. They have whole class music lessons and also join together for singing and hymn practice in the school hall. They sing, play and perform to a satisfactory standard using a range of tuned and untuned instruments and do so on a regular basis and perform confidently in public. They clearly enjoy singing and have many favourite songs. In class, they reproduce simple rhythms and, in discussion, Reception children and pupils in Year 1 recall how to play different percussion instruments and how they used them to create effects in their interpretation of stories and events. There is less opportunity to compose their own music or appraise the work of others. They look forward to the special occasion assemblies, such as Christmas, and also to the school concerts when they enjoy giving a real public performance.
152. The teaching in Key Stage 2 is also satisfactory. Pupils see themselves as music critics and are adept at commenting on the musical prowess of current favourites. In class, they listen to music in a variety of forms and are aware of the eclectic variety of world music now available in recorded form. The shared upper junior work area currently has a display featuring music from Africa and pupils are keenly interested in the ways in which different cultures have developed a range of ethnic instruments. Pupils in Key Stage 2 are also aware of the potential of electronic instruments and have access to a range of these in the school hall. During the course of the inspection, pupils in Year 4 took part in a classroom lesson that required that they sing with an instructional tape and they did this without any embarrassment, with boys and girls singing with equal enthusiasm. The maturity of the relationship between the class teacher and the pupils helped set the scene for this particular lesson and the expectations of the teacher were met in the responses of the pupils. In assemblies, the older pupils in Key Stage 2 set a fine example to their younger peers in the way in which they play their full part in the singing. In one assembly, the musical performance was of a very high standard. The Year 3 teacher is an accomplished musician who makes a significant contribution to the musical and spiritual life of the school.
153. The co-ordinator for music is not a specialist in the subject but offers effective leadership across the curriculum. Resources are satisfactory and there is a very good range of music available on CD. There is a limited range of instruments available and too few untuned instruments. Pupils do have access to a small range of ethnic instruments which enhances their cultural development. The co-ordinator acknowledges the lack of a whole system of assessment in music at the present time, but is currently investigating the purchase of a new commercial scheme that will have an assessment element built into it.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

154. By the end of Year 2, standards of attainment are in line with national expectations and pupils make satisfactory progress. By the end of Year 6, pupils make good progress and standards are above those expected. Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 have improved since the last inspection. The school provides a well-planned programme of physical activities, and pupils' skills in games are particularly good.
155. In Key Stage 1, pupils satisfactorily develop movement skills in dance, gymnastics and games lessons. In a Year 1 lesson, pupils stretch and move in a variety of ways as they hop, jump, skip and run backwards in the hall. They show average levels of co-ordination and skill as they use small apparatus, such as balls and beanbags. Year 2 pupils move around the hall sensitively in a dance lesson and make good use of gesture as they respond to the sound of the teachers' range of percussion instruments. The pupils make good use of different parts of the body, such as elbows and hips, as they swerve and sway to the theme of autumn leaves. Nearly all pupils move creatively and appropriately to the given tasks. For example, they make interesting leaf shapes as they fall to the ground.
156. By the end of Year 6, pupils demonstrate above average physical skills. Pupils can plan and perform gymnastics sequences and show appropriate body and spatial awareness skills. A particularly strong feature of the school's work is the very well organised games activities in which Key Stage 2 pupils participate. Opportunities are planned for pupils to explore and understand common skills and principles in a range of striking, net and target games. With the support of teachers, students and voluntary helpers, the pupils are able to practise in small groups and this helps them to make good progress in developing skills of sending, receiving, striking and travelling in a variety of games, such as basketball, hockey, netball and football. Pupils also have the chance to attend a good range of extra-curricular sports and athletics activities.
157. The arrangements for swimming and adventurous activities are satisfactory. Swimming lessons start in Year 4 and continue at different times throughout Key Stage 2. The organisation for swimming is appropriate with pupils attending lessons at a local pool. Discussions with pupils and teachers confirm that nearly all pupils exceed the minimum expectations of the National Curriculum and can swim unaided for 25 metres. The good use of photographs provides evidence that pupils have enjoyed residential visits to centres where they pursued a full programme of adventurous activities. Pupils are knowledgeable about orienteering, athletics and games and all pupils understand the importance of fitness and health. The school offers a well-balanced programme of activities which provides pupils with opportunities to practise and evaluate movement sequences on apparatus, in maypole dancing or in response to music, and this enables pupils to make good progress overall at Key Stage 2.
158. In all lessons observed, the pupils behaved well and responded with energy and enthusiasm to all aspects of their lessons. Most pupils follow instructions well and try to develop and improve their skills. The school has a good inclusive policy with equal opportunities for all. Boys and girls participate in all games and the pupils and parents appreciate this. The activities make a very good contribution to social and moral development as pupils learn to share equipment and engage in co-operative tasks that test their ability to make fair decisions. Pupils make effective responses in a variety of changing situations and nearly all of them take account of their own and others' levels of skill in shared competitive tasks.

159. The quality of teaching is satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2, with good management of pupils' behaviour being a particular strength of teaching. The co-ordinator provides clear leadership and a high level of organisation, and this has a positive effect upon standards, particularly at Key Stage 2. There are well-established links with a variety of local sports clubs and organisations and the contribution that voluntary helpers make ensures that pupils follow a suitable and enriched programme of activities. Resources are satisfactory in terms of quantity and quality, and school accommodation is good.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

160. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, standards are in line with the expectations of the syllabus followed by most schools in Cheshire. The school has made satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. Pupils have increased their knowledge and understanding about worship and spiritual values since the last inspection and the school has successfully remedied the weaknesses identified in the previous report. Pupils of all ages and abilities make satisfactory progress as they move through the school and the subject makes a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development.
161. Key Stage 1 pupils visit a local church and study baptism. They extend their understanding of family life, linking it to belonging to God's family. Pupils talk about the christening robes displayed in school and understand the importance of celebrations in different religions. Year 2 pupils gain knowledge and encounter new learning about religious traditions when studying a Sikh naming ceremony. They talk about different places of worship, such as a chapel, a temple and a gurdwara.
162. By the end of Year 6, pupils have a good understanding of Christianity and other world faiths. They discuss a variety of religious beliefs and practices as well as recalling many biblical stories. They point to the Qur'an, displayed in a classroom, and know the importance of Mohammed and prayer mats to Muslims. Year 3 pupils correspond with pupils in an inner city school in Manchester and explore the different faith mix of the children there, gaining knowledge about the Muslim and Hindu religions. They write invitations to a Diwali party and draw important Hindu signs and symbols. Year 4 pupils talk about Hindu gods and understand the importance of shrines as they plan to set up a shrine in their classroom. Pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 study a 'Bible Explorer' programme with a visiting teacher in which they 'sign' their way through the old and new testaments. The school also benefits from regular visits from the local clergy and a Muslim friend of the school.
163. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory at both key stages. The subject is well planned and teachers make lessons interesting by using a variety of artefacts, such as Sikh bracelets and sacred texts. In a good lesson in Year 2, the teacher elicited a good response when producing home-made Sikh cakes for the pupils to sample. Lessons, teachers' plans, the work displayed and pupils' books show that teachers provide a balanced religious education programme based on good subject knowledge. In most lessons teachers' expectations of pupils' behaviour are explicit and the pupils respond with good behaviour and positive attitudes. Teachers give lively presentations and make good use of probing questions. Good links with art are made, for example, Leonardo da Vinci's painting of the Last Supper provides a stimulus for a lesson on the Jewish Passover festival. Satisfactory use is made of literacy skills, but this is a weaker area of school provision, with pupils capable of more extensive writing. There is a tendency for some teachers to give worksheet tasks that do not challenge the pupils sufficiently and

there are few opportunities for pupils to undertake personal research. There is only limited use of information and communication technology to support learning. Displays in most classes are of good quality and have a positive effect on learning.

164. Pupils see religious education as an interesting and important subject. The good attitudes of pupils allow the teachers to concentrate on imparting knowledge and giving help to pupils who need it. Pupils eagerly recall stories from many years before and talk enthusiastically about their involvement in activities, such as Harvest Festivals, charity collections, Chester Cathedral choir and school Christmas plays. Pupils also have the opportunity to attend an after school club 'Eureka' that has a religious and spiritual theme.
165. The subject is well led by an enthusiastic co-ordinator who supports teachers both in their planning and by providing links with visiting speakers and organisations. The good quality scheme of work and good use of resources ensure that the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus are met and there is step-by-step development of knowledge and understanding as pupils move through the school. This good oral knowledge displayed by the pupils is not always reflected in the written work that they produce.