

INSPECTION REPORT

DODLESTON CE VC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Dodleston, Chester

LEA area: Cheshire

Unique reference number: 111272

Head Teacher: Mrs H Bushnell

Reporting inspector: Stephen Dennett
13712

Dates of inspection: 10th – 13th March 2003

Inspection number: 247101

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Church Road Dodleston Chester Cheshire
Postcode:	CH4 9NG
Telephone number:	01244 660369
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Clifford James
Date of previous inspection:	1 st December 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
13712	Mr Stephen Dennett	Registered inspector	Educational Inclusion Mathematics Science Art and Design Design and Technology Information and Communication Technology Religious Education	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What must the school do to improve further?
9103	Mrs Anita Strong	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
27324	Mrs Daphne Crow	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Special Educational Needs English as an additional language English Geography History Music Physical Education	How good are curricular and other opportunities? Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Dodleston Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School provides full time education for 74 pupils aged four to eleven. The majority of pupils are from a white United Kingdom background and all pupils speak English as their mother tongue. A very small minority of pupils are of British Asian origin. The social and economic circumstances of pupils attending the school are neither significantly advantaged nor are they disadvantaged. Only six per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is below average. Children enter the school in the September before their fifth birthday and their attainment on entry, although varied, is broadly average. At the time of the inspection, there were ten Reception children in a mixed age class of 30 infants. Twenty-one per cent of pupils have been identified as having special educational needs, including dyslexia, moderate learning difficulties and attention disorders. One per cent of pupils have statements of special educational needs. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is broadly average, but rising. In some years the proportion of pupils with special educational needs is high and this has adversely affected national test results. The school has experienced some significant pupil mobility, with 15 per cent of pupils either leaving or joining in the last academic year. This, too, has had an adverse effect on pupils' test results.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The effectiveness of the school is satisfactory overall, and its strengths outweigh the weaknesses identified in this report. Standards are good in mathematics and are rising in English and science. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall, with some very good teaching being seen during the inspection. Pupils have a positive attitude to their work and behave well. The school successfully provides a happy, safe and caring environment for all its pupils. There is good provision for pupils' personal development. The school is well led and effectively managed. Overall, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards are above average in mathematics throughout the school and standards of reading are good in the infants.
- Pupils have a positive attitude to school and behaviour is good.
- The quality of teaching and learning in English, mathematics and science is good overall.
- Teachers manage pupils well.
- There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- The school has very good links with the community and partner institutions.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good.
- The school makes good provision for pupils' health, care and safety.
- There are good assessment procedures in English, mathematics and science.
- The leadership and management of the school by the head teacher are good.

What could be improved

- Standards in art and design, design and technology, geography and information and communication technology are below those expected at the end of Year 6.
- There are some imbalances in the curriculum provided for art and design, design and technology, geography and information and communication technology.
- Assessment procedures in subjects other than English, mathematics and science require further development to be fully effective.

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 since it was last inspected in December 1997. At that time, the school management was required to complete schemes of work for all subjects of the National Curriculum. This has been done and there is a rolling programme to review schemes on a regular basis. However, at present the scheme of work for art and design is incomplete and needs urgent revision. The

school was also required to improve assessment procedures and make more effective use of the information gained to set targets for improvement and to adjust planning where necessary. In English, mathematics and science, the school has been successful in setting up effective systems for assessment and good use is made of the information obtained. However, insufficient progress has been made in developing assessment procedures in other subjects and teachers currently have insufficient information to be able to set focussed targets for improvement. Finally, the school was required to increase the amount of time that children under five spent being taught separately. This has been addressed effectively and provision for the Foundation Stage is now satisfactory overall. In addition to these specific issues raised by the last inspection, the school has been successful in raising standards in mathematics and investigative science throughout the school. There has also been an improvement in the provision for pupils with special educational needs. Progress towards targets for improvement has been hampered by high staff turnover and staffing problems in the past. This has particularly affected the progress of older pupils in the juniors.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	B	D	B	B
mathematics	B	E	C	C
science	C	D	D	D

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

The above table shows that in the 2002 national tests at the end of Year 6, standards in English were above the national average. In comparison with schools with a similar number of pupils eligible for free school meals, standards were also above average. In mathematics, standards were average compared nationally and against similar schools. Standards in science were below the national average and in comparison with similar schools. Care should be taken when analysing results of small year groups in small schools, as each pupil represents a considerable percentage of the total result. The number of pupils taking national tests at the end of Year 2 was below the legal limit for reporting results. Although results in tests are very variable, the general indication is that standards are improving year-on-year. The school did not meet its targets for English and mathematics in 2002 due to a number of pupils with special educational needs joining the school after the targets had been set. These pupils did not achieve the level expected of pupils of this age. Observed standards are above average in mathematics throughout the school and pupils achieve well. Standards in English are average throughout the school and standards of reading are above average in the infants. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. In science, standards are satisfactory throughout the school and pupils generally achieve well, especially in investigative science. In the infants, standards in art and design, design and technology, geography, history and information and communication technology are at the expected level by the end of Year 2. Pupils' achievements in these subjects are generally satisfactory. In religious education, standards are at the levels expected by the locally agreed syllabus by the end of Year 2 and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. In the juniors, standards are at the expected level in history and physical education by the end of Year 6. Pupils' achievement in these subjects is satisfactory. Standards in religious education are at levels expected by the locally agreed syllabus by the end of Year 6 and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. In art and design, design and technology, geography and information and communication technology, standards are below the expected level by the end of Year 6 and pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory. It was not possible to come to a judgement about standards in physical education at the end of Year 2 or in music at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This was largely due to the lack of inspection time and the constraints of the timetable.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have positive attitudes to school. They work hard and pay attention in lessons.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is good in lessons and around the school. There have been no exclusions in the last two years.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' personal development is good. They have good relationships with each other and with adults in the school.
Attendance	Attendance is good. Pupils arrive to school on time and lessons start promptly.

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.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. In English, mathematics and science, teaching is good and pupils learn well. The quality of teaching in art and design, design and technology, geography and information and communications technology is unsatisfactory overall and pupils' learning in these subjects is unsatisfactory. The impact of teaching has been adversely affected by staff absences and poor teaching in the past. However, the quality of teaching seen during the inspection was good overall and pupils are now making better progress. Where teaching is good, teachers have secure subject knowledge, which they use well to ensure that pupils make good progress in their acquisition of skills, knowledge and understanding. Teachers' planning is detailed and explains clearly what pupils have to learn. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' achievement and behaviour. Good use is made of time, support staff and resources. Where teaching is unsatisfactory, planning does not ensure even coverage of aspects of some subjects. Throughout the school, teachers' management of pupils is good and lessons are well organised. The ongoing assessment of pupils' work is generally satisfactory and appropriate use is made of homework. Where teaching is good, pupils are making good progress and put considerable effort into their work. Pupils concentrate well and have a good understanding of what they need to do to improve. The progress made by pupils with special educational needs is at least satisfactory. Where teaching is unsatisfactory, pupils are making insufficient progress in acquiring basic skills, especially in aspects of design technology and information and communications technology.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The quality and range of the curriculum are satisfactory overall, although there are weaknesses in the provision for art and design, design and technology, geography and information and communication technology.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. They are well supported by teaching assistants. Individual education plans provide clearly focused, achievable targets. Pupils' progress is monitored carefully and effectively and ensures pupils are making satisfactory progress towards the targets set.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for pupils' personal development is good overall. Provision for their spiritual, moral and social development is good. Provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory overall.
How well the school cares	The school cares for its pupils well. The school provides a secure and safe

for its pupils	environment for pupils' learning.
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The local community makes a very positive contribution to pupils' learning and there are very good links with partner institutions. The school's partnership with parents is satisfactory overall. The impact of parents' involvement in the work of the school is good.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the head teacher and other key staff	The head teacher provides good leadership for the school. The school's aims and objectives are reflected well in its work. Responsibilities are delegated effectively and all staff make a valuable contribution to the management of the school. However, in some subjects the role of the co-ordinator needs further development.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The effectiveness of the governing body in fulfilling its statutory responsibilities is satisfactory. However, governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and participate effectively in developmental planning.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school is good at evaluating its performance and effective action has been taken in meeting most of its targets. There are very good procedures for appraisal and performance management.
The strategic use of resources	Good use is made of strategic resources, including finances. The principles of best value are applied well.

The staffing, accommodation and learning resources are satisfactory overall. However, provision for children in Reception is adversely affected by a lack of a separate work space and an outdoor play area. In addition, standards in physical education are adversely affected by the lack of a suitable hall for gymnastics on the school premises.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents feel they can approach the school with questions or problems. • The school expects children to work hard and do their best. • Children are helped to become mature and responsible. • Teaching is good. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some parents do not think the school keeps them well informed. • Parents do not think the school works closely with parents. • Parents would like more after school activities, especially sport. • Some parents think their children get too much homework and others think they do not get enough. • A few parents think that behaviour at the school needs to be improved.

The inspection team agrees that teachers expect pupils to work hard and do their best. Inspectors also agree that the school helps pupils to become mature and responsible. Although the impact of teaching is satisfactory overall, inspectors agree that some good teaching is taking place in the school. Some parents spoken to during the inspection felt that the school was approachable and that problems were dealt with well. However, inspectors do feel that the school has not kept parents as well informed about their children's progress as it could and that formal meetings with staff have not taken place as regularly as they could. A significant group of parents support the school well through the parents' and teachers' association (PTA) and on the whole the inspection team think that the school works closely with parents. The PTA is working with the school to provide more sporting activities and inspectors are of the opinion that extra-curricular activities are satisfactory overall. Homework is satisfactory and meets government guidelines. The inspection team judge the behaviour at the school to be good. Overall, a significant minority of parents have high expectations of the school, which they felt were not met. The team agrees that there

are a number of weaknesses in the school's provision, but that some of the parents' complaints were based on events which are now past and that the school is making good progress in addressing outstanding issues.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Children enter the school with levels of attainment which are very varied, but broadly average. This is confirmed by assessments carried out by staff when children join the school. One of the significant features of this school is the significant variation in the numbers of pupils with special educational needs in each year group. This means that results from national tests vary considerably, especially as some year groups are quite small and each pupil represents a significant percentage of the results. In addition, some unsatisfactory teaching in the past has resulted in some year groups not making as much progress as could be expected.
2. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall in Reception (the Foundation Stage), although in their language, literacy and communication and mathematical development they make good progress. By the time children enter Year 1, they exceed the early learning goals in these areas of learning. Progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world, their creative development, physical development and personal, social and emotional development is satisfactory overall. In these areas, pupils achieve the early learning goals by the time they enter Year 1.
3. In the infants, as the number of pupils taking the 2002 national tests at the end of Year 2 was below ten, these results are omitted from the report. However, generally pupils have done well in reading, writing and mathematics in these tests year-on-year. Observed standards at the end of Year 2 in English are average overall and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. However, standards in reading are above average. Standards at the end of Year 2 in mathematics are above average and pupils' achievement is good. In science, standards are average at the end of Year 2, but pupils make good progress in their learning and achievement is good overall. Standards in art and design, design and technology, geography, history and information and communication technology are at the level expected by the end of Year 2. In these subjects pupils' achievements are satisfactory. In religious education, standards meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus by the end of Year 2 and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. It was not possible to come to a judgement about standards in music or physical education, due to timetable limitations and time restraints.
4. In the juniors in 2002 national tests at the end of Year 6, standards in English were above average when compared nationally. In comparison with schools with a similar number of pupils eligible for free school meals, standards were also above average. In mathematics, standards were average both compared nationally and in comparison to similar schools. Standards in science were below average, both compared nationally and in comparison with similar schools. Overall, in all three core subjects, standards were average, both compared nationally and in comparison to similar schools. It is difficult to draw any firm conclusions from trends in national test results, as year groups are small and some contain significant numbers of pupils with special educational needs. The school set challenging targets in English and mathematics, which were not met. This was largely due to a number of pupils with special educational needs joining the year group after the targets were set. None of these pupils achieved the level expected of pupils of this age.
5. Observed standards at the end of Year 6 in English are average and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. In mathematics, standards are above average by the end of Year 6 and pupils achieve well. Standards in science are average at the end of Year 6, but elsewhere in the juniors, standards in science are good. Overall, pupils achieve well and are making good progress in their learning. Standards are at the expected level in history and physical education by the end of Year 6. Pupils' achievement in these subjects is satisfactory. In religious education, standards meet the

requirements of the locally agreed syllabus by the end of Year 6, and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Standards in art and design, design and technology, geography and information and communication technology are below expectations overall and pupils are making unsatisfactory progress in aspects of these subjects. Their achievements are generally unsatisfactory. It was not possible to come to a judgement about standards in music, due to lack of inspection time and timetable constraints.

6. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress towards the targets in their individual education plan. Teachers set work at a suitable level and teaching assistants have good knowledge of pupils' individual needs and support pupils effectively in lessons. This ensures that they achieve well. Pupils with special educational needs have good attitudes to work and this has a positive impact on their learning. Teachers ensure they are fully included in lessons at all times.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

7. Pupils have good attitudes to school. This is a similar position to that found at the time of the last inspection. Pupils are eager to learn, especially when stimulated by the content of the lesson, and most readily settle to work. Carefully planned preschool sessions ensure children have a smooth induction to school. They settle in well and quickly develop enthusiastic attitudes. These good attitudes are generally sustained throughout the school. Overall, pupils give of their best in lessons. Most pupils enjoy in helping with the smooth running of the school by undertaking simple jobs, such as clearing up after activities, and many are involved in activities outside formal lessons.
8. Behaviour in classrooms and around the school is good, as it was at the time of the last inspection. A few pupils find self-control difficult but effective intervention strategies from staff ensure that there is minimal interruption to the class' learning. Pupils are generally courteous to each other and to teachers and other adults who work in the school. They take care of their possessions and treat the school's equipment and resources with respect. An anti-bullying culture is actively promoted within school and there have been no exclusions.
9. The good relationships that exist between pupils themselves, and between pupils and adults, make an important contribution to pupils' achievement. Pupils collaborate and co-operate well with each other in their learning and play activities, happily taking turns and willingly sharing the learning resources. Pupils care about each other and those with special educational needs within the school. Pupils' relationships with pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds are harmonious. Older pupils take responsibility for their learning and behaviour and they are expected to act as role models and support the youngest children in the school. Pupils volunteer readily for activities, tasks and jobs and are keen to be 'school buddies'.
10. The level of attendance has been maintained above the national average since the last inspection and is good. Pupils are keen to come to school, are punctual and lessons begin on time.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

11. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. This is not as good a position as found by the last inspection. However, there has been some variation in the quality of teaching over the past few years, as well as some significant staff illness, which has adversely affected the quality of teaching over time. In 25 lessons seen during the inspection, the quality of teaching was very good in four, good in 12 and satisfactory in nine. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen.
12. The teaching of children in Reception (the Foundation Stage) is satisfactory overall, which leads to children making at least satisfactory progress in learning in all areas. Teaching in the areas of communication, language and literacy and mathematics is good and children make good progress in these areas. The teaching assistant provides very good support, which makes a positive

contribution to the children's learning. Although teachers plan work that takes appropriate account of national guidance, in some areas children do not necessarily receive their full entitlement because of the difficulties that ensue when planning across three year groups. Informal assessments of children's learning are undertaken regularly so that teachers have a clear idea of individual children's needs.

13. The quality of teaching and learning in the infants is satisfactory overall, although the teaching of the core subjects of English, mathematics and science is good. Teachers have satisfactory subject knowledge, which is used effectively to extend pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. In the core subjects, pupils learn well and are making good progress in their acquisition of skills. The teaching of basic skills in other subjects is satisfactory. Planning is satisfactory and teachers provide pupils with work which is generally appropriate to their needs. It should be noted that planning is particularly challenging for teachers because of the wide age and ability range of pupils. In addition, until recently the whole infant class was taught by two part-time teachers, one of whom is now on long term sick leave. The other teacher has taken over at short notice and is taking the class full-time. It is understandable in these circumstances that there has been some inevitable disruption of pupils' learning. Lessons are interesting and provide pupils with good opportunities to develop independent learning skills. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and classroom management is good. Good use is made of teaching assistants, especially to support the youngest pupils. Pupils generally put satisfactory effort into their work and older pupils in Year 2 work hard. However, some younger pupils have poorly developed listening and social skills and this has an adverse effect on their levels of concentration. Teachers make good use of assessment information in the core subjects to ensure that planning is adjusted to meet the needs of pupils and to set targets for improvement. However assessment in other subjects is underdeveloped and does not yet provide teachers with sufficient information to set targets for improvement. Satisfactory use is made of homework to support pupils' learning in school.
14. In the juniors, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. As in the infants, the teaching of English, mathematics and science is good and pupils are making good progress in their learning. It should be noted that the older pupils in the juniors have suffered from unsatisfactory teaching in the past and last year had a succession of supply teachers. This has had an adverse effect on their progress in the past. Where teaching is good in the juniors, teachers have good subject knowledge, which is used well to develop pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. Teachers are particularly good at using questions to probe pupils' understanding of concepts. Most pupils concentrate well in lessons and work well on their own, in pairs and in small groups. Teachers are good at planning for several age groups in core subjects, although the wide ability range in some classes presents teachers with a significant challenge. Good use is made of support teachers, teaching assistants and parent volunteers to support pupils' learning in English and mathematics. Teachers make effective use of national strategies to ensure that pupils with low prior attainment are supported well. Where teaching is unsatisfactory, as it is in art and design, design and technology, geography and information and technology, planning does not ensure even coverage of aspects of these subjects. As a consequence, pupils have made unsatisfactory progress in their acquisition of skill, knowledge and understanding in these aspects. Day-to-day assessment is good in the core subjects and teachers use the information gained effectively to adjust planning and set pupils targets for improvement. Assessment in other subjects is variable and generally underdeveloped, which means that teachers do not have sufficient information to ensure continuity in learning as pupils move through the school. Satisfactory use is made of homework to support pupils' learning and to prepare them for the next phase of their education.
15. Pupils with special educational needs are identified at an early stage and appropriate action is taken. Individual education plans are good and have clear and manageable targets. Teachers and teaching assistants are fully aware of the needs of pupils and support them well. This ensures that pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress.

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

16. The quality and range of the curriculum is satisfactory overall, but there are weaknesses in the provision for art and design, design and technology, geography and information and communication technology. The curriculum meets statutory requirements. Religious education is taught in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus. However, although the curriculum is broad, it is not sufficiently balanced in some of the foundation subjects in the juniors. Pupils do not receive sufficient teaching in art and design, design and technology, information and communication technology and in particular geography. Insufficient time is allocated to these subjects and some aspects are not covered in sufficient depth. There are long periods of time in Years 5 and 6 when pupils do not receive any teaching of geography. This leads to a lack of continuity in learning of the subject and standards achieved by pupils are below national expectations. The school has addressed the issue raised in the last inspection regarding the time spent on science and this is now satisfactory.
17. The school has made effective provision for teaching the basic skills of literacy and numeracy and the school has successfully implemented the national literacy and numeracy strategies. Small groups of pupils throughout the school are provided with additional literacy support. The school's strategies have had a positive impact on their learning.
18. Satisfactory long and medium term plans for individual subjects are in place and take appropriate account of national guidance. However, the monitoring of the curriculum has not sufficiently identified issues of curriculum imbalance. The curriculum is suitably enriched by visits to places of interest and visitors to school also enrich the curriculum. During the time of the inspection, two musicians from the Manchester Camarata gave a musical performance and workshop to pupils in the juniors. Pupils thoroughly enjoyed the experience and it provided a very effective means of developing their understanding of music.
19. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall. The work planned takes appropriate account of national guidance, although in some areas children do not receive their full entitlement because of the difficulties that ensue when planning across three year groups. As well as this, the lack of a secure and suitably equipped outside play area to some extent inhibits the development of children's gross motor skills.
20. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. They have full access to the curriculum and are fully included in all aspects of school life. This has a positive effect on the progress they make.
21. The provision for pupils' personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) is good. It has improved since the last inspection. There is a suitable policy and scheme of work in place. Regular discussion sessions, called 'circle time', gives pupils good opportunities to explore a variety of issues, including personal and emotional concerns, in a sensitive and secure context. The school takes advantage of local and national initiatives which include 'Learning for Life' and the 'Healthy Eating Project'. The school places suitable emphasis on drugs awareness and anti bullying. Pupils are made aware of these issues through the PSHCE programme and also through science and in school assemblies. Suitable provision is made for sex education.
22. Provision for extra-curricular activities is satisfactory despite a significant number of parents' questionnaires showing concern. Although not free, the pupils have had the opportunity to learn French, now replaced by Spanish, to play the piano and join the dance club. The pupils from the dance club will perform around the maypole during the 'Village Week-end'. The school is aware of the concern of parents and with the support of the Parents Teacher Association (PTA), is looking for ways for providing more sporting opportunities. Members of the PTA run the Saturday

morning football club. The school makes good use of the local field and the village hall in the absence of a school hall. Pupils' learning also benefits from residential visits and other visits and activities, such as the 'Doddleston Dawdle', out into the community. The school choir sings in Chester Cathedral. These activities have a positive effect on pupils' personal development and their learning in general.

23. The community makes a very effective contribution to pupils' learning. Links have been strengthened since the last report and are now very good. The school remains firmly at the heart of the village, enjoying strong links with the church. Everyone in the community is welcome to join with the school, in the church, for the Christmas Carol Service, Harvest Festival, Christingle and Easter. The rector is a member of the governing body. This summer, the school is joining with the village players to put on a show. Class teachers decide on visits to such places as Liverpool Museum and Anglesey and the older pupils have the benefit of a residential visit to Kingswood Residential Centre, over a two-year cycle. The school makes good use of educational professionals when required and there are visits from poets, authors and theatre players. The choir joins with a thousand other children to sing in Christmas at Chester Cathedral. Pupils show care for others by raising money for charities such as 'Red Nose Day', 'Jeans for Genes' (a medical research charity) and UNICEF. On alternate years, the oldest pupils take on their own project and find ways to raise money towards it. The very active PTA held a Christmas Craft Fayre at the village hall, with other groups such as the Women's Institute involved and renting tables. Local businesses provide prizes for the competitions run by the association. The very popular 'Village Day', which actually takes place over the week end is a joint fundraising for the school, village foundation and the church, but also a very successful social event for the village and a wider area of the local community.
24. Relationships with partner institutions are very good and are a further strength of the school. The school is a member of a 'small schools group', which consists of seven schools. The head teacher attends meetings of the Cheshire Association of Primary Heads and the school is in the partnership group with Queens Park High School. Church school meetings are held with Bishops High School, whose head of lower school visits annually. Other members of staff from the high school visit pupils in Year 6, who in return spend a day at the high school to familiarise themselves with their future environment and ensure a smooth transition to their education. Summer schools are held at the high school for talented and gifted children or those pupils who have special educational needs. Items such as spotlights are available for the smaller schools to borrow. However, there are no links with schools that have greater numbers of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, which hinders pupils' knowledge and understanding of their place when living in a diverse community. There is a very good induction programme for children coming into the school from the preschool group. The youngest reception pupils spend regular Wednesday afternoons with the playgroup at the village hall. After Easter this reverses to allow the preschool children to experience being in class in school. There is strong liaison between the staff in the Foundation Stage and the leaders of the preschool group in planning and assessment. Pupils, often ex pupils, return to the school for work experience and the school is in partnership with Newi College in Wrexham for mentoring and training students. The head teacher evening lectures on religious education and literacy at Newi. Students come from Chester College and the school provides placements for NVQ childcare. 'Primary Live', a local education authority initiative, brings musicians into the school. All these links help raise the profile of the school in the wider community, as well as offering pupils a continuous well-supported transition through all their stages of education.
25. Overall, the provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and makes a good contribution to the quality of pupils' learning.
26. Provision for spiritual development is good. The school has close links with the church and the local rector is a familiar person to all the pupils. This adds to their sense of spiritual awareness. The school's assemblies provide opportunities for engendering a sense of community and give

pupils time for quiet reflection. During the inspection, a very good assembly on the theme 'Who is my Neighbour' gave pupils time to reflect on the need to help others when they are in difficulties. The school plans effectively for 'Memory Moments', such as a visit to Chester Cathedral, which assists pupils in developing a sense of spirituality. Through religious education lessons, pupils develop awareness and understanding of their own and others' beliefs. Opportunities in lessons are well used to engender a sense of awe and wonder in pupils. For example, during a literacy lesson based on the poem 'The Lady of Shalott', the teacher read extracts with very good expression, which left pupils with a sense of wonderment. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to examine their feelings and emotions through the school's programme of personal, social and health education.

27. The provision for pupils' moral development is good. Teachers generally have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and pupils respond accordingly. The school has a clear set of values that teach the principles of right and wrong. These are implicit throughout the daily life of the school and spelt out clearly to all pupils. Consequently, pupils' attitudes to each other are good and they are usually well behaved. Sometimes there is appropriate consideration given to the wider aspects of morality.
28. There is good provision for pupils' social development. Teachers and all staff throughout the school provide pupils with good role models, which encourage the development of positive attitudes and generally good social behaviour. During the time of the inspection, there were many examples of pupils working and playing well together. In lessons, they share equipment sensibly, co-operate in pairs and collaborate well in group tasks. Games lessons are used well to engender a sense of team spirit and pupils in the juniors respond well to this. Relationships within the school between staff and pupils are good which gives pupils the confidence to discuss and voice their opinions on a variety of matters and concerns. There are an appropriate number of extra-curricular activities where pupils can work and play together in a more relaxed way. Older pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for tasks around the school and have an opportunity to act as group leaders to the youngest children on some of their Wednesday afternoon sessions in the Village Hall.
29. The school makes satisfactory provision for pupils' cultural development. Music, art, religious education, history and literacy lessons, all make a suitable contribution towards pupils' cultural development. For example, in religious education pupils study other religions and in history they learn about their own and others' past. Pupils are given appropriate opportunities to visit places of cultural interest such as Chester and Tatton Hall. Sometimes, visitors to school also make an effective contribution towards pupils' cultural development, for example, the recent visit of two musicians from the Manchester Camarata. However, opportunities for pupils to develop a real understanding of what it is like to live in a multi-cultural society are not sufficiently planned for or systematically monitored.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

30. The good behaviour, courtesy, confidence and friendliness of pupils, found at the last inspection, continue to be a strength of the school. The positive relationships between staff and pupils have also been maintained. The school provides a caring, secure and safe environment and parents are happy with the ethos of the school and have no concerns about their children's welfare. Child protection procedures are good and the staff are aware of the need to be vigilant. Health and safety procedures are good and all safety checks and inspections meet legal requirements. The school, supported by the local education authority is about to review the premises for access of pupils with disabilities. Several members of staff, including the school secretary, are trained in first aid and any accident is dealt with immediately and recorded in the accident book. The school has a detailed and comprehensive policy for the administration and storage of medicines. Fire drills are carried out regularly, with a change of exit to allow for the location of a fire.

31. The importance of attendance is a main item of the home/school agreement and the procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance are very good. Attendance has remained above the national average since the last inspection. The school positively discourages holidays taken in term time and certificates are given for good attendance.
32. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are good, with a recently implemented code of practice intending to enhance the house point system with badges and privileges given for continual good behaviour. Pupils are aware of the standards of behaviour expected of them and almost all respond accordingly, which generally creates a harmonious atmosphere conducive to learning. Procedures for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour are good and any incident of anti-social behaviour is addressed immediately. Although no incidents of bullying were witnessed during the inspection, the team was made aware that there have been some recent incidents, which have been addressed, positively by the school. There have been no exclusions from the school for five years.
33. Procedures for assessing and monitoring pupils' academic performance, including children in the Foundation Stage, are satisfactory. The school has made satisfactory progress in developing assessment procedures since the last inspection. There are good procedures in place for monitoring pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science and these are used well to guide teachers' planning. However, procedures in all of the foundation subjects are unsatisfactory and do not provide sufficient guidance for teachers in planning. The way the school analyses and reflects on data received from national tests and assessments undertaken is good. These results are used effectively to identify areas for development, set targets for development and to track individual pupils' progress. In the Foundation Stage, children's attainment on entry to the school is assessed using the local authority's guidance and the information is used well to develop children's learning towards the nationally recommended goals for learning particularly in communication, language and literacy and mathematics. This assessment is repeated at a later stage to evaluate the progress pupils have made.
34. Procedures for identifying pupils with special educational needs are good. The procedures for assessing their needs are also good and are used effectively to address them. Individual educational plans are updated regularly and targets for learning modified accordingly. Pupils with statements of special educational needs are well supported by teaching assistants and they make sufficient progress towards the targets set.
35. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are good. Staff know their pupils well and provide good personal support and guidance. The positive relationships between pupils and staff encourage good attitudes to each other and visitors to the school. Older pupils look after the younger ones and take responsibilities when there is an opportunity. Year 6 pupils prepare the village hall for the pre-school play group and take on the roles of play leaders, once national testing is finished. Boys and girls play together in the playground. The pupils confidently make use of the head teacher's letter-box and their concerns are dealt with accordingly. 'Circle time' (the time when pupils consider each other's comments and feelings) is often used to address these concerns. Attendance and good behaviour are rewarded and personal development is shown on annual reports. The house point system promotes a responsibility to others. Individual prize-winners, good manners cup holders, house trophies and other cup winners are all recorded into an 'Achievements Book'. Although a significant number of parents' questionnaires showed that they did not think their child was happy to come to school, the team found very little evidence of this amongst the children interviewed.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

36. Parents' views of the school are satisfactory. A large majority of parents in the playground said they were very satisfied with all aspects of the school, whereas many of the parents' questionnaires returned indicated that parents were not kept well informed about the progress of their children and that the school does not work closely with parents. The school has an open door policy, and staff are available to discuss any concerns. The present arrangement means that if parents miss the July parents' meeting, they will go for sixteen months between meetings. The infrequency of these parent meetings does give the parents' concerns some validity. All parents agree that they are invited to discuss any problems they may have on receipt of their child's annual report.
37. The quality of the written information is satisfactory. The regular newsletters are good and contain information on all aspects of school life. Pupils' annual reports are very good, detailed, personal and informative, and meet all legal requirements. The governors' annual report to parents and the prospectus are useful documents and are well-produced. However, both contained minor omissions, which were brought to the attention of the school management.
38. Class teachers meet with parents in September, to give a presentation of the curriculum for the school year. Parents are welcome to the celebration assemblies and services such as Easter and the Harvest Festival.
39. The impact of the parents' involvement in the school is good. A significant number of parents help in school, with craft and bread making and on school trips. The PTA is very active and raises valuable funds for the school. Activities such as discos and an Easter Egg hunt and visits to the pantomime are arranged for pupils. The PTA pays for visiting artists and a committee has been formed to find ways to provide more sports facilities. Other activities include a Christmas Craft Fayre, adult discos, and the 'Village Day'. A member of the association produces the 'Snippets' magazine, an excellent paper, which contains diverse items from the school and community and a message board to carry pupils' greetings.
40. Parents make a satisfactory contribution to their children's learning at school and at home. The majority of parents support the home/school agreement, with emphasis on attendance. This reflects in the level of attendance, which is good. Many parents hear their children read at home and support them with homework. Just under a third of the questionnaires returned had concerns over the amount of homework and most felt that they would like more feedback on ways in which they can be more supportive. Parents have responded positively to questionnaires sent out previously from the school and the school has welcomed their suggestions. As found in the previous inspection, the PTA continues to be the strength of the partnership.
41. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are fully informed and involved at all stages. The teachers inform parents at an early stage if there are concerns about a child's learning. Where possible parents are encouraged to help their children to work towards the targets set. They are kept well informed about their child's progress. Parents of pupils with statements of special needs are appropriately invited to attend the annual reviews.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

42. The leadership provided by the head teacher gives a clear educational direction to the work of the school. The quality of leadership and management of the school is good overall, and this represents a very similar position to that found by the last inspection. The school management has been faced with some significant challenges with respect to staff turnover and illness. This has resulted in some well-conceived targets not being met and has also had an adverse effect on standards of teaching over the past few years. Despite these challenges, the school has made progress in addressing issues raised by its self-evaluation processes, which are good.

43. The school aims of providing 'a caring environment and fostering pupils' development' are met well in practice. There is, however, still a need to further raise standards in some subjects, notably geography and information and communication technology. Standards of teaching and learning are improving and the aim of providing 'exciting learning' is beginning to be worked out well in classroom practice. All staff work together well as a team and take their management responsibilities seriously. As is often the case in a small school, each member of staff has a number of responsibilities, and at the time of the inspection, one teacher was off on long-term sick leave. This has placed an extra burden on the school in managing some aspects of the curriculum. Overall, the contribution of staff with management responsibilities is good, but there are weaknesses in co-ordination of art and design, design and technology, geography and information and communication technology.
44. The effectiveness of the governing body in fulfilling its responsibilities is good overall. However, there is a need to give more support to the head teacher in ensuring that all statutory requirements are met. Governors are committed to the school and provide practical support by visiting classes and acting as volunteers. There is an appropriate range of committees to oversee the work of the school and individual governors oversee specific aspects, as required by law. Overall, governors have an effective role in shaping the direction of the school, taking an active part in generating and monitoring the school's development plan. They have a good grasp of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and are kept well informed by the head teacher's reports and their visits to the school. The chair of governors is very supportive of the head teacher and keeps in regular contact. The vice chair's professional knowledge is a valuable asset, particularly in the development of investigative science, which has improved recently.
45. The school has good systems for the monitoring, evaluation and development of teaching. The head teacher regularly observes lessons and keeps detailed notes on her observations. These are used to set targets for further development. As a result of very good systems for performance management, there has been improvement in teaching throughout the school and this is now beginning to have a positive impact, especially in the lower juniors. Individual targets for professional development are linked effectively to the school's development plan and to raising standards in core subjects. The school's development plan is well focused and has already identified issues that have also been raised by the inspection. The school has targeted raising standards in investigative science, with considerable successes, especially in the lower juniors. The school also identified mathematics as an area for improvement after the 2002 national test results and has been successful in raising standards to above the national average. Some other areas for development have been less successful due to staff concerned being off on sick leave. The school has a firm commitment to improvement and, with the current staff team, a good capacity for success. There are effective systems for induction of new staff and the head teacher acts as mentor to newly qualified teachers if and when they are appointed to the school.
46. The management of the provision for special educational needs is very good. The special needs co-ordinator performs his role effectively and ensures that all pupils with special educational needs receive the support they need. He regularly monitors and reviews the teaching and learning of pupils with special educational needs which has a positive impact on the progress they make. He ensures teaching assistants are fully informed and involved at all stages. The school policy takes account of the 'Code of Practice' and its recommendations are being implemented. The school makes suitable use of the funds available to support pupils with statements of special educational needs. The resources for teaching pupils with special educational needs are satisfactory and are used appropriately to support learning.
47. The school's educational priorities are well supported by effective financial management and planning. The budget is closely monitored by the head teacher and governing body. The school is given effective support by the local educational authority's finance services and day-to-day financial management is carried out efficiently by the school secretary. The school is still developing its use of technology to support management, although satisfactory use is made of data management systems. The school has also recently introduced a programme to manage pupils'

assessment information. However, the school was not satisfied with the quality of computer training staff received from its designated trainer and, as a result, staff confidence in using technology to support learning is weak. All grants are used effectively to support pupils' learning and the governing body has decided to use its high carry-forward to keep staffing levels as high as possible. This decision is well founded, as the good pupil to teacher ratio is beginning to have a positive impact on standards. The school has good systems for ensuring best value and works with the local education authority to ensure the best price for resources and services.

48. As indicated above, the school is well staffed by well qualified and effective teachers and teaching assistants. Especially good support is provided for children under five by the learning assistant responsible for some of their learning. The accommodation is satisfactory overall. The extension and refurbishment that have been carried out have addressed some of the concerns found during the last inspection. They provide a well kept, pleasant working environment, which continues to be used to maximum advantage. Plans are available for further improvements at the Foundation Stage area of the school and playground, but there is still a lack of large toys. Toys are available for Reception children on the Wednesday afternoons, which they spend with the playgroup at the village hall. The playground is small but used well. There is no suitable school hall and this has an adverse effect on standards in physical education. However, teachers make good use of the room available and satisfactory use is made of the well equipped village field and hall. The pupils make good use of the refurbished library. Learning resources are satisfactory to meet the needs of the curriculum. However, there are insufficient resources for children in Reception, as they have no separate space for their activities or outdoor play area. Although resources are satisfactory overall in religious education, there are insufficient religious artefacts. In information and communication technology there is no hardware for monitoring, data logging or control technology, which also adversely affects resources for design and technology.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

49. In order to raise standards and improve the quality of education provided by the school, the governing body, head teacher and staff should:
- a. Raise standards in art and design, design and technology, geography and information and communication technology in the juniors by:
 - i. Improving staff subject knowledge, expertise and confidence by providing appropriate training where necessary;
 - ii. Ensuring that curriculum planning allows sufficient time for even coverage of all the programmes of study;
 - iii. Ensuring there are sufficient resources for the coverage of all aspects of the programmes of study, especially in design and technology and information and communication technology.

[Paragraphs: 16, 73-76, 77-80, 81-84, 89-92]

- b. Improve systems for assessment in all foundation subjects so that teachers have sufficient information to effectively adjust planning where necessary and set individual and group targets for the improvement of standards.

[Paragraphs: 33, 76, 80, 84, 92, 99]

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

25

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

36

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	4	12	9	0	0	0
Percentage	0	16	48	36	0	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents four 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)	0	74
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	1

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	18

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	5

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.6
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.5
National comparative data	0.5

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

The Key Stage 1 national test results have been omitted as the number of pupils taking the test was less than ten.

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			17

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	13	11	14
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	76(82)	65(55)	82(91)
	National	75(75)	73(71)	86(87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	15	15	14
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	88(82)	88(64)	82(82)
	National	73(72)	74(74)	82(82)

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

The individual numbers of girls and boys taking the 2002 national tests have been omitted as they were less than ten.

*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	60	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	2	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded.	3	0	0

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

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18.5
Average class size	24.6

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	50

Financial information

Financial year	2001/02
	£
Total income	224,693
Total expenditure	226,259
Expenditure per pupil	2,458
Balance brought forward from previous year	45,643
Balance carried forward to next year	42,491

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0.4
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	112
Number of questionnaires returned	49

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	33	55	10	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	20	61	10	5	4
Behaviour in the school is good.	20	63	14	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	16	51	18	12	3
The teaching is good.	29	55	8	4	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	14	33	37	12	4
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	33	57	6	4	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	35	53	6	2	4
The school works closely with parents.	14	37	37	12	0
The school is well led and managed.	16	60	12	12	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	27	57	4	8	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	6	37	27	20	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

Introduction

50. During the time of the inspection, the Foundation Stage co-ordinator was absent on long term sick leave. The teacher, who substituted for her at short notice, has only been teaching at the school since the beginning of the academic year. Consequently, she is not yet fully effective in the role. Children enter the school in the September before their fifth birthday and their attainment on entry, although varied, is broadly average. At the time of the inspection, there were ten Reception children in a mixed age class of 30 infants.

Personal, social and emotional development

51. Teaching is satisfactory and most children are likely to reach the early learning goals by the time they enter Year 1. Staff encourage children to take responsibility for tasks such as tidying up after activities and the children respond appropriately to this. Most children's confidence and self-respect are developing well and staff help children to develop a sense of what is right and what is wrong. Generally children's behaviour is satisfactory and they play and work well together. They learn how to take turns when sharing resources and they handle books and equipment with care and respect. They show interest and most children concentrate well when working in a group with an adult or when working at a task independently. However, in whole class sessions a minority of children on occasions show inappropriate behaviour which is not sufficiently controlled and can disrupt the flow of lessons and slow the pace of learning for the well-behaved majority. Children are provided with satisfactory opportunities to develop and express a range of feelings. Relationships between the staff and the children are good and the children enjoy coming to school and enthusiastically participate in the activities provided.

Communication, language and literacy

52. Teaching is good overall and nearly all children are likely to achieve the early learning goals in this area by the time they enter Year 1 and some children are likely to achieve beyond them. Staff provide a good range of opportunities for children to develop their speaking and listening skills and they are encouraged to use the correct language and to extend their vocabulary through all activities. Children participate well in role-play and their communication skills are developing well. Most children speak clearly and confidently in sentences. Virtually all the children enjoy stories. They listen well and respond enthusiastically to questions used effectively by the teacher to get them to think about what has happened in the story and what is likely to happen next. Staff provide children with regular opportunities to 'read' and enjoy books together. Children know that words and pictures carry meaning and how to handle books correctly. Many children are developing good strategies to read unfamiliar words such as picture clues and letter sounds and make good attempts at reading simple repetitive books. Higher attaining children are able to read a variety of simple books with confidence. Through the shared reading of big books such as 'The Three Little Pigs', children learn to understand terms such as 'author', 'title' and 'front cover'. Good opportunities are provided for children to begin to develop their writing skills. They know how to hold their pencil correctly and are developing increasing pencil control. Many children know how to form letters correctly and most children know a good number of letter sounds. Most children can write their name with appropriate use of upper and lower case letters and some can spell and write a good number of simple words independently by using the sounds of the letters. Children are taught a range of songs and rhymes and this assists them in associating sounds with patterns in rhymes and letters in words. The teaching of language and literacy skills is good which results in good learning taking place.

Mathematical Development

53. The quality of teaching for children's mathematical development is good and most children are likely to attain the early learning goals in this area by the time they enter Year 1 and some pupils

are likely to exceed them. Children of all abilities make good progress. Suitable emphasis is placed on the teaching of number skills through a range of practical activities, songs and games. Through these activities children begin to develop an early understanding of terms like 'more' and 'less' and to tackle simple problem solving activities. Routine activities are used appropriately to support counting skills. Overall, children concentrate well and make good progress. Most children count accurately to ten and some children can count beyond this. Some have a good understanding of how to add numbers together by combining two groups of things together and they are able to record their findings as a mathematical sum. Opportunities provided for sand and water play activities, enable children to develop an early understanding of capacity and to use and understand terms such as 'full' and 'empty'. Regular opportunities are provided for children to sort, match and order objects and to recreate simple patterns. Many children recognise and know the names of simple two-dimensional shapes such as circle, triangle and square. Through the purposeful play activities provided children make good progress in all aspects of mathematics.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

54. The quality of teaching is satisfactory and children develop their knowledge and understanding of the world appropriately throughout the reception year. The majority of children achieve the early learning goals by the time they enter Year 1. Children's experience is broadened by visits out around the local area and sometimes further afield. There is a suitable range of construction kits, tools and materials and children learn appropriate techniques to enable them to develop their designing and making skills. Children have on-going opportunities to develop their understanding of information and communication technology. Their computer skills, such as controlling the mouse, are developing well. Children enjoy talking about past and present events in their lives and through this are beginning to develop an understanding of the passage of time. By following the journeys of 'Barnaby Bear', children begin to understand what life is like in other countries and to develop an early understanding of the use of maps. Suitable opportunities are provided for children to undertake simple investigations. For example, investigating the properties of a range of materials and describing them in simple terms. Children begin to develop a satisfactory understanding of their own culture and beliefs. However, they have only limited opportunities to understand the culture and beliefs of others. Staff provide children with an environment with a satisfactory range of activities both inside and outside that attract their curiosity and interest. They make appropriate use of questioning to encourage children to think about how and why things happen and provide them with suitable first hand experiences.

Physical development

55. Most children are likely to attain the early learning goals for physical development by the time they start Year 1. Good use is made of weekly visits to the village hall, to give children the opportunity to explore and play with large equipment to assist in developing physical skills. However, they lack a safe and suitably equipped outside area in order to develop their physical skills, to their fullest extent. On the school playground they move about with satisfactory control and without bumping into each other. They have regular opportunities to use a range of small equipment to develop skills such as throwing and catching. Although there wasn't an opportunity to observe a physical education lesson, teacher's planning shows there are weekly lessons of either gymnastics or dance, in which the reception children participate alongside the rest of the class. Staff provide good opportunities for children to develop their manipulative skills and children use scissors, pencils, crayons and paintbrushes and small construction equipment with increasing precision and control. Overall the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory.

Creative development

56. Children are given suitable opportunities to use a variety of equipment and materials to develop their creative skills and attain the early learning goals by the time they enter Year 1. The teaching of this area of learning is satisfactory and the children make satisfactory progress. The children enjoy drawing and painting and like exploring the effects of colour on paper. Children have regular opportunities to develop their musical ability. They enjoy singing and know a number of songs and rhymes by heart. They sing tunefully for their age. Staff ensure that children have suitable

opportunities to take part in creative and structured play that develops their imagination. For example, related to their study in language and literacy of the story of 'The Three Pigs', children role-play in an imaginary builder's yard pretending to build houses.

ENGLISH

57. The inspection findings indicate that pupils' overall attainment is average at the end Year 2 and Year 6. It is difficult to make accurate judgements about the performance of pupils in relation to the last inspection because cohorts are small and variable but attainment is broadly similar. A range of successful initiatives has been introduced since the last inspection, which is having a positive effect on teaching and learning. For example, there are now good procedures in place to assess pupils' attainment and progress and these are used effectively by teachers to guide their planning for the next stage of learning. However, the improvements made by the school have not yet been in place for a sufficiently long time to have a significant impact on the quality of learning of the oldest pupils.
58. Throughout the school, pupils listen appropriately to their teachers and their classmates and enjoy participating in class discussions. Although a minority of pupils have a good vocabulary, overall speaking and listening skills are average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Teachers give pupils regular opportunities to participate in class discussions. These discussions are particularly successful when all the pupils, even the more reluctant speakers are encouraged to participate and where the pupils' interest is captivated. This was illustrated in a very good literacy lesson observed in Year 6 where pupils were enthusiastically discussing an alternative ending to the poem 'The Lady of Shalott'. At the end of the lesson, they confidently read aloud their own versions. In other subjects, teachers stress the importance of using the appropriate language and, as a result, pupils make good progress in becoming familiar with and use a wider range of vocabulary. This helps them to express their ideas and has a positive effect on their learning in these subjects.
59. Pupils' attainment in reading is above average at the end of Year 2. The whole class shared reading of 'Big Books' is helping to develop pupils' confidence in reading. They become familiar with the conventions of reading and begin to use strategies such as picture, phonic and contextual clues to work out the meaning of unfamiliar words. They start to put expression in their reading from the good examples set by their teacher. Pupils enjoy these sessions and respond well to the teacher's questions about the content and meaning of the text. Higher attaining pupils employ the reading strategies they have learned well to read and understand a variety of books both fiction and non-fiction and read above the expected standard for their age. Lower attaining pupils receive good support, through projects such as the Early Literacy Strategy and this is helping to ensure an overall improvement in reading standards. By the end of Year 6, pupils become familiar with a good range of literature and they discuss with interest the style of the author or poet and the way in which they set the scene. As they move through the juniors, many pupils develop a real interest and enthusiasm for literacy, subsequently standards are rising. However, the majority of the current cohort of Year 6 pupils read at a level in line with the national average overall, although a minority read above the expected standard. Pupils are taught an appropriate range of reading strategies, although lower attaining pupils don't always employ them when reading independently and need to be reminded. Many pupils read with appropriate expression related to punctuation, but some pupils read hesitantly and lack confidence. The school has correctly identified these pupils and is providing them with additional support.
60. At the end of Year 2 and Year 6, pupils' attainment in writing is in line with the national average. In Year 2, the majority of pupils are working at the expected level. Higher attaining pupils are working above the national average. Most pupils make satisfactory attempts at writing in a story format, which has a clear beginning, middle and ending, and are able to spell commonly occurring words. They make plausible attempts at spelling more difficult words. Their sentences are sometimes punctuated with capital letters and full stops and higher attaining pupils make sound

attempts at using other forms of punctuation such as speech marks. Handwriting is mainly well formed and consistent in size and most pupils take care with their work and the overall presentation of work is good. In Year 6, pupils produce pieces of work in a good range of different styles and purposes such as, book reviews, poems, stories, instructions and reports. The basic grammatical structure of sentences is generally correct. Higher attaining pupils use a good variety of punctuation and spelling is usually accurate. However, many pupils do not employ the strategies they know when writing independently. For example, pupils are able to differentiate between homonyms and write the correct one in a teacher led session, but do not employ their knowledge in their own writing such as using 'where' instead of 'wear'. Lower attaining pupils are not writing at the expected standard for their age and need a lot of adult support and encouragement. Teachers and teaching assistants work hard at motivating pupils and giving them the confidence they need to succeed and there is evidence that standards in the juniors are improving. Generally, younger pupils are more confident writers as a result of the increased focus on writing. Presentation of work throughout the juniors is variable. Although most pupils take pride in their work, this is not always the case and a significant minority of pupils do not take enough care with handwriting or the presentation of their work.

61. Teaching and learning are good overall. Basic skills are taught well. Teachers provide pupils with good opportunities to participate in class discussions. They encourage pupils to listen carefully and promote pupils' speaking skills effectively, which helps to increase their vocabulary and develop grammatical correctness. In the best lessons, teachers make very good use of open-ended questions targeted effectively at the differing ability levels of the pupils, which ensures all pupils are fully included in the lesson. They have very high expectations of the pupils and the lessons are well paced. Pupils respond very well to this and are highly motivated in their learning and keen to give of their best. Teachers use the end of the session appropriately to assess and evaluate the learning that has taken place, which gives pupils a clear idea of the progress they have made. Other subject areas are used effectively as a means of developing work in literacy. For example, related to their work in history on the Aztecs, pupils in Years 3 and 4 developed their note taking skills and in a religious education lesson, pupils read the Bible well, clearly and with good expression. But, overall, pupils have insufficient opportunities to undertake extended pieces of writing. Most teachers know and manage their classes very well, which helps pupils to behave well and enjoy learning. Teaching assistants are appropriately deployed to support the learning of pupils with special educational needs and less able pupils and this enables them to make progress in line with that of their classmates. Teachers plan lessons well. The quality of marking is good overall. The best marking relates specifically to the progress pupils have made and gives them a clear understanding of what they need to do next in order to improve. However, this is not always the case and sometimes marking is just a series of ticks with very few constructive comments. Information and communication technology is now being used satisfactorily to support pupils' learning and teachers use homework regularly to extend pupils' learning. Additional activities, such as Book Week and Character Costume Day, help to boost pupils' interest in literacy.
62. The subject is led well by an enthusiastic co-ordinator. She has clearly identified what needs to be done in order to raise standards through effectively monitoring the teaching and learning. She has taken the lead in implementing appropriate action plans and a number of good initiatives to help to raise standards in English. There are clearly focused long and medium term plans for the subject in line with the aims and objectives of the National Curriculum and National Literacy Strategy and these are related appropriately to short term planning in the classes. Assessment of pupils' progress is undertaken regularly and used effectively to support pupils' learning. Appropriate targets are set for pupils. Overall, the school has shown satisfactory improvement in English since the last inspection.

MATHEMATICS

63. Standards are above average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This represents an improvement since the last inspection, where standards were broadly in line with the national average of that time. Pupils' results are very variable in national tests due to the small numbers and significant variations in the proportion of pupils with special educational needs in each year group. However, there was a significant improvement in standards between 2001 and 2002.
64. Achievement in the infants is good. Pupils try a number of different approaches to tackle mathematical problems and find ways of overcoming difficulties as they arise. They discuss their work with each other using the correct mathematical language. For example, when working out the time from a series of clocks, pupils discussed ways in which they could calculate the time and talked about '*a quarter to*' and '*a quarter past*' the hour. Higher attaining pupils discuss their mathematical work with enthusiasm and are able to explain their working out accurately. Most pupils use common mathematical symbols in solving problems. Standards of numeracy are above average. Nearly all pupils have a good grasp of place value up to 1,000. They understand decimal notation up to two places in the context of money and correctly write such sums as £1.45 and £0.35. Higher attaining pupils can use all four number operations with two digit numbers. Average attaining pupils can add 10 to numbers as well as multiply by 10. Lower attaining pupils can use their understanding of place value to accurately place numbers in order up to 100. Many pupils know that fractions are part of a whole and work out such sums as ' $\frac{1}{2}$ of 12 is 6'. Pupils are developing a good grasp of their multiplication tables and use this knowledge effectively when working out such calculations as ' 24×4 '. Pupils have a good grasp of common two-dimensional shapes and can correctly name, for example, 'square', 'circles' and 'rectangles'. They also know some common three-dimensional shapes, such as 'spheres', 'cuboids' and 'cylinders'. Younger pupils are able to tell the time to the half hour, whilst most pupils in Year 2 can accurately tell the time to the quarter hour. For example, in one lesson, pupils were given a series of clock faces with various times depicted on them. They accurately wrote the times underneath as ' $\frac{1}{4}$ past 7' or ' $\frac{1}{4}$ to 10'. Higher attaining pupils can extract information from a simple bar graph and explain what it means. They can also construct their own pictographs from data they have collected. Lower attaining pupils can sort objects accurately, using one or more criterion.
65. In the juniors, achievement is good overall. Pupils identify and obtain the necessary information to solve mathematical problems. They check their results for accuracy and consider whether they are sensible. Good use is made of estimation to check the validity of solutions to problems. For example, in a lesson in Year 6, pupils were constructing line graphs from data they had gathered. They checked their results to see if they were consistent with the example given in a book. When discussing their work, they were able to explain their working out well, using the correct mathematical language. Pupils understand that they need to be accurate when gathering information and can interpret data from both line graphs and pie charts. Lower attaining pupils can interpret bar charts. For example, in the same lesson as observed above, a group of pupils were using computers to enter data about pets into a graph creation program. They were able to explain that the longer the 'bar' on the chart, the more children had voted for that pet. Standards of numeracy are good throughout the juniors. In the lower juniors, for example, pupils know their multiplication tables up to 10×10 well and can recite them accurately forwards and backwards. They can apply this knowledge well to solving problems up to three digits, such as ' 225×5 '. Pupils also know the factors of various numbers. For example in a lesson in Year 4, pupils correctly identified '7 and 9' as factors of 63 and '7 and 8' as factors of 56. They also realised that the same number may have different factors, for instance, 24 has the factors '3 and 8' and '4 and 6'. Higher attaining pupils divide two digit numbers by a single digit number with remainders. In the upper juniors, standards of numeracy are also above average. Pupils use all four operations to two places of decimals, including division with remainders. They have a good grasp of place value up to 1,000,000. Most pupils can multiply and divide by 10 and 100. Higher attaining pupils do long multiplication involving three digit numbers multiplied by two digit numbers, such as 623×12 . The majority of pupils have a good grasp of fractions and can convert them into equivalent terms, for example, converting $\frac{8}{10}$ to $\frac{4}{5}$. They also know that $\frac{1}{4}$ is equivalent to 0.25 and 25%. Higher attaining pupils can identify co-ordinates in all four quadrants. All pupils have a good understanding

of common two and three-dimensional shapes. They also know that the sum of a triangle is 180 degrees. Pupils make appropriate use of common metric measurements and understand most of the common imperial equivalents. Higher attaining pupils use a formula to calculate the area of rectangles, for example.

66. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. All pupils are making good progress in their learning, including those with special educational needs, who receive good support from teaching assistants. As a result, pupils have positive attitudes to the subject. Teachers have good class management skills and the work given to pupils is well matched to their needs. Pupils respond to this positively by behaving well and concentrating hard. Teachers provide pupils with many appropriate opportunities to work independently and, as a result, pupils' self-study skills are well developed. The teaching of basic skills is good, especially arithmetic. Teachers have good subject knowledge, which is used well to ensure that pupils have a good grasp of mathematical principles. Planning is detailed and makes good use of a commercial scheme, supplemented by teachers' own worksheets and relevant exercises. Expectations are high and pupils respond well by working hard. Most lessons move at a good pace and pupils' rate of learning is rapid. Good use is made of teaching support staff and the head teacher provides valuable support for lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs. Teachers' use of assessment information to set targets for improvement is good. Marking is supportive and often clearly identifies what pupils need to do to improve. Good use is made of homework to support pupils' learning and prepare pupils for the next phase of their learning.
67. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator has carried out a thorough analysis of national test results and has provided teachers with clear targets for improvement. There is a good scheme of work, which is based on a commercial scheme, and which provides teachers with a good basis for their medium and short-term planning. The curriculum is broad and balanced and all pupils have good access to it. Good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs, through small group teaching and tasks which are well matched to their specific needs. There has been effective monitoring of standards, teaching and learning through detailed tracking sheets, which give teachers a good picture of pupils' progress. The co-ordinator has had some opportunities to observe lessons and she regularly reviews teachers' planning and pupils' books. Assessment information is used to adjust planning as necessary. Resources for the subject are adequate, although there is a need to expand the range of computer programs to support the use of information and communication technology in the subject.

SCIENCE

68. Standards are in line with national averages at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. There has been an improvement in the subject since the last inspection, especially in investigative science, which was found to be a weakness at that time. In national tests at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, standards have also improved over the last year, although the small size and variable composition of year groups, means that the statistical analysis of results is unreliable.
69. Standards in the infants are in line with the national average at the end of Year 2. When conducting investigations, pupils respond appropriately to suggestions put forward by the teacher and try to find things out. For example, in a lesson in Year 2, a pupil was testing materials for their magnetic properties. He was able to suggest ways of sorting the materials, first into metals and non-metals, then into metals that attracted a magnet and those which did not. Pupils use the equipment provided sensibly and make suitable observations related to the task in hand. In the lesson reported above, for example, the boy remarked '*This is magnetic because it is made of metal. Metal usually attracts magnets.*' Most pupils use appropriate scientific language when making observations or recording their findings. Pupils are also able to say whether what happened in their investigation was what they expected or not. Pupils have a satisfactory grasp of

life processes and living things. They use their knowledge of living things satisfactorily to describe the basic conditions that animals and plants need in order to survive. For example, they know that plants need light and that they will eventually die if left in the dark. Pupils choose healthy foods and describe the basic grouping of food according to a number of criteria, for example, cereals, meat and fish, dairy products, and fruit and vegetable. Good use is made of computers to record pupils' findings of their favourite food. Pupils also understand that the human body requires energy for exercise. Higher attaining pupils correctly identify ways in which an animal is suited to its environment. Overall, pupils have a satisfactory understanding of materials and their properties. They correctly identify a range of common materials, such as cloth, plastic and metal, and know about their properties. Pupils sort materials appropriately and describe their similarities and differences. For example, one boy knew that both plastic and metal were hard, but that plastic was not attracted to magnets. Higher attaining pupils can describe accurately some changes in materials and know that some changes, such as a candle burning, are irreversible, whereas others, such as chocolate melting, are reversible. Most pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of physical processes. Higher attaining pupils compare ways in which electricity is used around the home. Lower attaining pupils know that light can come from a variety of sources and can name, for instance, lamps, torches and car headlights as examples.

70. In the juniors, standards are in line with the national average by the end of Year 6. However, pupils are achieving well in relation to their prior attainment, especially in investigative science. When trying to identify an answer to a scientific question, pupils identify appropriate approaches. They select from a range of appropriate sources of information and use this intelligently to solve problems. Most pupils know how to select from a range of equipment those items which are most suited to their purpose. They make a series of accurate observations and measurements. For example, in a lesson in Year 6, pupils were measuring the angle of reflection in two mirrors. They made a series of observations and measurements to establish the angle at which the light was reflected. They made good use of their mathematical skills in completing this task. Pupils have a satisfactory understanding and knowledge of life processes and living things. They use the correct scientific names for parts of the human body and know where they are located. Pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of the parts of plants, including flowers. They use their knowledge appropriately to classify plants into different groups. Pupils' understanding of materials and their properties is satisfactory. In their investigations into gases, for example, pupils correctly identify that air has mass and that some gases, such as hydrogen, is lighter than air. Pupils are able to explain well the differences between different states, giving correct examples in their work of solids, liquids and gases. Pupils have experimented with changes of state and can explain in scientific terms the evaporation of water and the melting of ice, for example. Pupils have a satisfactory understanding of physical processes. They use their knowledge appropriately to explain various physical phenomena, such as sounds getting fainter as they get further away. Pupils have a good grasp of the reflection of light. They know that the light of the sun is reflected off of the moon. Pupils use their understanding of physical phenomena to make generalisations. For example, they have made graphs of the lengths of days throughout the year. They recorded that it is generally true that days are shorter in the winter, but longer in the summer. One higher attaining pupil also observed that when days in the southern hemisphere are long, in the northern hemisphere days are short.
71. Teaching is satisfactory in the infants and good in the juniors. Pupils make satisfactory progress in their learning in the infants, but good progress in the juniors. The progress made by pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. Pupils have positive attitudes to the subject and concentrate hard. Because of teachers' good classroom management and high expectations, pupils' behaviour in lessons is good. Teachers provide pupils with many opportunities to work independently and this has a positive impact on their personal development. The good relationships between pupils and teachers, and between pupils themselves, means that investigations are carried out effectively and safely. Teachers have at least satisfactory subject knowledge and in the juniors, subject knowledge is generally good. Effective use of questioning ensures that pupils understand scientific concepts and know what they need to do in investigations. Planning for

lessons is good throughout the school and tasks are generally well matched to the needs of pupils. In the juniors, pupils understand well what they have to do and can give good explanations of their processes. In the infants, a small number of younger pupils do not concentrate well and this has a detrimental effect on the progress these pupils make. Generally, good use is made of support staff, especially in the juniors to give pupils with special educational needs tasks which are well matched to their needs. Day-to-day assessment is good and is used effectively to adjust planning as necessary and to set targets for improvement. The use of homework is appropriate.

72. The subject is well led and managed by the co-ordinator. There is a good scheme of work, which makes intelligent use of some commercial material. It supports teachers effectively in their planning. As a consequence, the curriculum provided is broad, balanced and relevant to the needs of all pupils. The subject provides a good contribution to pupils' personal development by providing suitable opportunities for pupils to reflect on moral and social issues related to science. The co-ordinator has had some opportunity to monitor teaching and regularly reviews teachers' planning. Assessment systems are good and a thorough analysis of recent national tests revealed weaknesses in investigative science. This issue has now been addressed well, especially in the juniors. Resources are generally satisfactory, although there is no equipment for computer data logging and there is a lack of suitable computer programs to support the use of information and communications technology sufficiently.

ART AND DESIGN

73. Standards are in line with those expected at the end of Year 2. However, standards are below those expected at the end of Year 6. This represents a decline in standards since the last inspection, when they were found to be satisfactory overall.
74. In the infants, pupils explore an appropriate range of visual and tactile ideas. They investigate and use a variety of materials and processes, including painting, drawing, collage and modelling. For example, pupils produce satisfactory paintings of graduated colour in a range of 'warm' and 'cool' colours. They have also produced some interesting pastel paintings of a sphere, which show good three-dimensional effects. Pupils' portraits of their classmates are well drawn and painted. In the juniors, standards of drawing are satisfactory overall, but other aspects of the subject are underdeveloped. They have limited experience of comparing their work to others and are reluctant to comment on ideas. Many are satisfied with their first effort and have very limited critical skills when it comes to exploring design ideas. There is very little evidence that pupils adapt and improve their work to realise their original intentions. Younger junior pupils have made good watercolour paintings in the style of African artists. These show a good use of media and techniques. They have also made collages of the Aztec 'Feathered Snake' and satisfactory three-dimensional Aztec chest ornaments in mixed media. These both show that pupils have appropriate making skills. Older juniors have worked on Greek urns, which show a satisfactory understanding of the design conventions of this culture. Their pastel pictures to illustrate the story of the 'Lady of Shalott' show a very wide range of abilities. A few higher attaining pupils demonstrate great skills, whilst others are comparatively rudimentary. Pupils make satisfactory use of their drawing skills in other subjects, as for example their illustrations of the Islamic 'Hajj' in religious education. There is very little evidence of three-dimensional work and pupils' standards of achievement in this area are unsatisfactory.
75. Teaching is satisfactory overall in the infants, but unsatisfactory in the juniors. As a consequence, although pupils' progress in learning is satisfactory in the infants, it is unsatisfactory in the juniors. Overall, pupils' attitudes are satisfactory, although some older pupils complained that they did not get enough art. As it was not possible to observe any lessons, judgements about teaching, learning and pupils' attitudes have been drawn from the scrutiny of work and discussions with pupils and teachers. The main weakness in the subject is teachers' planning, which does not give enough time for pupils to develop their design and evaluation skills. Artwork is seen mainly as a support to

illustrate work in other subjects. There is some good practice, as for example, the work pupils are doing in Year 6 studying the paintings of Seurat. However, teachers admit that aspects of the subject have been neglected over the last few years.

76. The overall management of the subject is unsatisfactory. Although the school has plans to revise the scheme of work, this was not available for inspection and there is currently no co-ordinator. The programme of study followed by junior pupils is not balanced, as insufficient attention is given to developing pupils' design and evolution skills. In addition, insufficient time is spent on three-dimensional or large scale work. The school has identified the subject for review in its development plan, but currently the monitoring of standards, teaching and learning is unsatisfactory. There is not a system for assessment and teachers have no consistent information to ensure progression as pupils move through the school. Although resources are satisfactory, the use of information and communications technology to support learning is very limited and most of the work observed was not appropriate to the development of pupils' design skills. It consisted mainly of using 'painting' programs with a computer 'mouse'; an exercise that pupils could have done more effectively with traditional materials.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

77. Standards are in line with those expected at the end of Year 2. However, standards at the end of Year 6 are generally below those expected. This represents a decline since the last inspection, when standards were broadly in line with expectations.
78. In the infants, pupils generate a satisfactory range of ideas and plan what they should do next when making fabric collages of pigs, for example. They have a satisfactory understanding of materials and components. Pupils select suitable tools for the job in hand and assemble materials appropriately. For example, some pupils in Year 2 were observed sewing the edge of cardboard houses with a needle and wool. They had satisfactory manipulative skills and the finished work was quite well produced. Pupils recognise what they have done well and can suggest some appropriate ways in which their work can be improved. Pupils' making skills in the juniors are satisfactory, but their designing skills are limited. Although pupils generate ideas and recognise that their designs have met a range of needs, they rarely take users needs into consideration or produce clear 'step-by-step' plans. Pupils' ability to communicate ideas through detailed plans, which they have modified, is limited. Their work in designing and making slippers was satisfactory overall, but the evaluations were superficial and pupils were often satisfied with only one idea. Pupils' making skills are generally satisfactory. They work with an appropriate range of materials and tools. For example, in a lesson in Year 6, where pupils were making bread, they weighed, mixed and kneaded the dough in an effective way. The resulting product was good and greatly appreciated by the makers! However, pupils have had very limited experience in using mechanism, structures and components. Their skills in these areas are significantly underdeveloped. There are currently no resources for control technology and pupils have not had any recent opportunities to use electrical circuits to control models they have made.
79. The quality of teaching in the infants is satisfactory, but in the juniors it is unsatisfactory. Pupils are generally enthusiastic about making things and behaviour in lessons is generally good. However, pupils' learning is unsatisfactory overall, as they are not making sufficient progress in their design skills. Teachers have insufficient technical knowledge and understanding to ensure that the programme of study is covered effectively and inadequate use is made of information and communication technology in the subject. As a consequence, planning focuses mainly on the making aspects of the subject, although there are the occasional good 'design and make' projects in the upper juniors. In the lessons seen, teachers' management of pupils was good and good use was made of teaching assistants and volunteers to support pupils' learning. However, there is very little day-to-day assessment of pupils' work and teachers do not have sufficient information to ensure continuity in pupils' learning as they move through the school.

80. The management of the subject is unsatisfactory. The co-ordinator has not had any opportunities to monitor teaching and the current scheme of work is not being monitored rigorously enough to ensure that all aspects of the subject are covered effectively. Although there are sufficient resources for the subject overall, the lack of appropriate software and hardware to cover control technology has hindered pupils' progress in this area. At the moment, the subject does not receive sufficient curriculum time to ensure that all aspects are covered to a sufficient depth.

GEOGRAPHY

81. Pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations at the end of Year 2 but below the expected standard by the end of Year 6. This is because there are long gaps when pupils in the juniors do not receive any teaching in the subject. This lack of continuity in pupils' learning severely affects the progress they make and the standards they attain. Standards in the juniors have not been maintained since the last inspection.
82. Although no lessons were observed in the infants during the inspection, evidence from pupils' work, work on display and teacher's planning indicates that pupils make satisfactory progress in acquiring geographical knowledge and skills. By the end of Year 2, pupils begin to demonstrate an awareness of countries other than their own and to use maps and atlases to locate where they are. For example they follow the travels of Barnaby Bear to Australia and identify where Adelaide and Canberra are on a map. Linked to work in history on seaside holidays, pupils identify the features of a seaside environment. Overall, as they move through the juniors, pupils do not make sufficient progress in developing their geographical knowledge and skills. Analysis of the work of pupils in Year 3 and Year 4 show they only undertake a small amount of recorded work and do not cover the units of work in sufficient depth. In Years 5 and 6, pupils have only just begun work on a mountain environment and there has been a long gap since they received any teaching at all. Consequently pupils' knowledge and understanding is below that expected for pupils of their age. For example, there is confusion over the difference between countries and continents and only with a lot of prompting are they able to locate the North and South poles on a map of the world.
83. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory in the infants. Although the lesson observed in the juniors during the inspection was satisfactory, overall teaching and learning in the juniors is unsatisfactory. This is largely due to the fact that the subject is given insufficient time in the overall timetable. In addition, some aspects are not covered in sufficient depth in teachers' planning. In the lesson observed, the teacher managed and organised the pupils well, and provided good opportunities for them to work in pairs and small groups on joint tasks, which supports their social development. Pupils respond well to this and have positive attitudes to work and generally behave well. Questions are effectively targeted at pupils of different ability and pupils are encouraged to use the correct geographical terms related to their study of mountains such as 'folds', 'plates' and 'fault line'. Teaching assistants provide effective support for pupils with special educational needs and lower attaining pupils. This has a positive impact on their learning and allows them to make progress in line with their classmates. However, pupils' work is not always marked regularly and does not always show them how they can improve. Satisfactory opportunities are provided for promoting pupils' literacy and numeracy skills in geography. Information and communication technology is used appropriately to support pupils' work in this subject. Pupils are given suitable opportunities to undertake field studies such as to the seaside, to Chester and to the River Dee estuary, which supports their social and cultural development.
84. The leadership and management is unsatisfactory overall. Although the co-ordinator is keen to develop the subject, he is aware of the need to raise the profile of geography within the school and to increase teachers' subject knowledge and confidence. There is a suitable policy in place and the overall scheme of work takes account of national guidance. However, teaching and learning

have not been monitored to ensure that it is being effectively carried out and there are insufficient procedures in place for assessing pupils' attainment and progress in the subject.

HISTORY

85. Pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Standards are similar to those reported in the last inspection. However, there has been satisfactory improvement in the subject, which has yet to be reflected in pupils' overall attainment. There is an appropriate policy in place for the subject and national guidance has been adopted to assist in whole school planning. However, there are no satisfactory procedures in place to assess pupils' attainment and progress in order to guide future planning. Pupils make satisfactory progress throughout the infants and juniors. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to their classmates.
86. Although no lessons were observed in the infants, evidence from an analysis of pupils' work indicates that they make satisfactory progress in acquiring knowledge and understanding of the past. By the end of the infants, most pupils have some understanding of chronology and how things change over time such as seaside holidays. They have a factual knowledge of some major events and people they have studied such as Guy Fawkes and Samuel Pepys. Throughout the juniors, pupils continue to make satisfactory progress in developing their knowledge, skills and understanding of the past through their studies. By the end of the juniors, pupils' experience of the history of other eras and cultures, such as Ancient Greeks, Victorians and World War II, is satisfactory. They are able to discuss evidence about life in the past, at a level appropriate for their age, and have a sound understanding of historical vocabulary. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 discussed sensibly the difference between trade and tribute in relation to their study of the Aztec civilisation. Higher attaining pupils are able to work independently using secondary sources such as books and CD-ROMs, to find things out for themselves. However, less capable pupils rely heavily on the support of adults.
87. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. During the inspection only one lesson was observed. The teacher presented the lesson in a lively and interesting way, which stimulated pupils' curiosity and eagerness to learn and resulted in good learning. Work in the subject is used appropriately to develop pupils' literacy skills. For example, pupils in Year 2 wrote good accounts of the Great Fire of London. Teachers ensure that suitable links are made with other subjects. In art and design, related to their study of the Aztecs, pupils made chest ornaments. Information and communication technology is used appropriately to support work. Teaching assistants provide effective support for pupils with special educational needs and lower attaining pupils, which helps them to learn at a rate in line with their peers. However, the marking of pupils' recorded work is unsatisfactory overall. There is little evidence of marking showing pupils ways they can improve their work and marking is often just a series of ticks and sometimes work is not marked at all.
88. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The subject co-ordinator monitors colleagues' planning to ensure continuity but has not yet had the opportunity to carry out classroom observations in order to monitor the quality of teaching and learning. The subject is effective in promoting pupils' cultural development as they learn about their own past and that of people from other cultures and visit places of cultural interest, such as Tatton Hall.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

89. Standards are in line at the end of Year 2. However, by the end of Year 6, standards are below those expected. This represents a decline in standards since the last inspection, when overall standards were in line.

90. In the infants, pupils make satisfactory use of ICT to organise and classify information. They present their information in attractive ways. Older pupils enter, save and retrieve work when working on computers. For example, pupils in Year 2 were able to save pictures they had made using a drawing program. They also know how to print out a 'hard copy' of the resultant work. Pupils make satisfactory use of ICT to help them generate and record their work in subjects such as science and mathematics. Pupils talk readily about their use of ICT at school and in the home. The juniors use ICT to save information and find and use appropriate stored information, following straightforward lines of enquiry. For example, in Year 4 pupils have searched and found web sites using a standard search 'engine'. They could adequately explain what they did, but had not made any further use of their researches. Older pupils use ICT to generate, develop and present their work. For example, some lower attaining pupils in Year 5 used a graph generation programme satisfactorily to enter information and produce bar graphs to show the proportions of pets owned in the class. Pupils have had very limited opportunities to share and exchange their ideas with others using email. This aspect of their work is underdeveloped. Pupils have not had sufficient opportunities to use sequences of instructions to control devices and achieve specific outcomes. For example, in a lesson in Year 6, pupils were programming a floor 'roamer' with instructions. They then went on to use the programming language, 'LOGO' to control a 'turtle' on the computer screen. Their level of understanding was significantly below that expected of pupils of this age. Pupils have very limited opportunities to use ICT-based models or simulations and their standards in this aspect of the subject are below the expected level. Overall, standards in word processing and data handling are in line with expectations.
91. The quality of teaching in the infants is satisfactory, but in the juniors it is unsatisfactory. As a consequence, although pupils' progress in learning is satisfactory in the infants, it is unsatisfactory in the juniors. Where teaching is unsatisfactory, this is largely due to a lack of subject knowledge, expertise and confidence. Planning is also unsatisfactory, as it does not ensure the coverage of all aspects of the subject to sufficient depth. Pupils generally have a positive attitude to the subject and behaviour in lessons is good. When given the opportunity, pupils work well independently and make good use of ICT in their work. They also work amicably in pairs and small groups. The management of pupils in lessons by teachers is good. Systems for assessment are at an early stage of development and as yet teachers do not make sufficient use of them to inform their planning or to monitor pupils' progress as they move through the school.
92. Management is unsatisfactory. The co-ordinator is currently on long term sick leave and this has had a negative impact on the leadership of the subject. The scheme of work is satisfactory, but teachers are not making sufficient use of it to guide their planning. As a result, there is uneven coverage of the different aspects of the subject and control, programming, communications and simulations are all underdeveloped. The monitoring of the subject is unsatisfactory as the co-ordinator has not had the opportunity to monitor teaching, learning or standards in the recent past. The school is aware of the deficiencies in the subject and has identified ICT as an area for development in its current action plan. There have been some staff development problems outside of the school's control and staff have not received adequate New Opportunities Fund training as a result. Although resources are adequate overall, there is insufficient software for simulations and hardware for control and data logging.

MUSIC

93. No lessons were observed during the time of the inspection and there was insufficient evidence available to make an overall judgement of standards. However, standards achieved in singing are above those expected for pupils at the end of Year 2 and Year 6.
94. Throughout the school pupils enjoy singing. In whole school assemblies and in hymn practice they sing in tune and with good volume. They listen well to the piano accompaniment and words of the songs can be heard clearly because of clear diction. The pupils know a good range of songs. From

an early age pupils are appropriately encouraged to listen attentively to music and are provided with frequent opportunities to sing. Infant pupils sing enthusiastically and with good voice control for their age. Older pupils are able to sing well in unison and in two or more parts maintaining their own part well. They have good pitch control and sense of musical expression. For example in whole class assembly when introduced to a new hymn 'Think of a World without any Flowers', they differentiated well between the sad and happy parts which brought a spiritual ethos to their singing. Sometimes, visiting musicians enrich pupils' musical experience. During the inspection, two musicians from the Manchester Camarata visited the school. Pupils of all abilities were entranced as they listened to the instruments and joined in enthusiastically with singing and dancing to 'Dodleston in the Sun' which they had help to compose. Pupils are given suitable opportunities to perform music to a wider audience such as at Christmas concerts and at music festivals in the local area. Music provides an effective contribution to pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development.

95. The subject co-ordinator has good expertise. She normally teaches music throughout the school and therefore has a clear understanding of what is happening in the subject. However, unfortunately she was absent during the inspection on long term sick leave, and it was not possible to come to a judgement about the quality of leadership and management of the subject.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

96. It was not possible to observe all aspects of the subject during the inspection week and no lessons were observed in the infants. However, evidence from planning and discussions with pupils and teachers indicate that all aspects of national guidance are being undertaken satisfactorily. This evidence and that gained from observations in lessons in the juniors indicate that overall standards of attainment are in line with national expectations at the end of Year 6. There is insufficient evidence to make a firm judgement on standards at the end of the infants. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress.
97. By the end of the Year 6, pupils have an appropriate degree of control and co-ordination in their movements. Pupils understand how exercise affects their body and its value to health and fitness. They understand the need to exercise safely and to warm up and cool down before and after exercise. They work well together in pairs, in groups and in teams which makes an effective contribution to their social development. When playing games, they have a sound understanding of the 'rules' and the need to participate fairly. The school provides pupils with suitable opportunities to learn to swim and by the time they leave school nearly all pupils are able to swim 25 metres and have an awareness of water safety. There are some opportunities for pupils to participate in after school sports activities such as football. However, because of the small number of pupils in each cohort, it is difficult to put together teams to compete in local fixtures.
98. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. In the lessons observed during the inspection the teaching and learning was good. Suitable attention is given to safety in using equipment and pupils respond appropriately to this. Instructions are clear and pupils respond well to them and mostly perform with enjoyment and enthusiasm. Teachers give positive encouragement to pupils and this improves their self-esteem and confidence. In the best lesson, the teacher's very good subject knowledge was used effectively to extend pupils' skills in hockey and knowledge of the game and as a consequence they made very good progress and achieved a good standard. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour, which encourages good attitudes and behaviour and overall, pupils co-operate well together and are willing to help each other where necessary. A sufficient amount of time is allocated to 'warming up' and 'cooling down' activities. Health and safety issues and the need for pupils to be aware of the effects of exercise on the body are consistently undertaken in lessons.

99. The subject is managed well by the co-ordinator. However, although he has opportunities to teach the infants and monitor their learning, he hasn't had any opportunity to monitor teaching in the subject and to be fully effective in his role. Assessments undertaken are only informal and provide insufficient information about pupils' progress to enable them to develop their skills and abilities to the greatest extent. The school has only limited facilities for physical education and this has adversely affected standards. However, it makes satisfactory use of the community facilities available in the village.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

100. Standards meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This is a similar position to that found at the time of the last inspection. In the infants, pupils have a good knowledge of Bible stories and recall some of the main events in the life of Jesus. They know that the Bible is the 'special Book' of Christians and name some of the main features of an Anglican church. Pupils have a satisfactory understanding of things that are 'special' to them and are beginning to realise that some people may find some things more important than they do. They are developing an appropriate understanding of right and wrong and why some people behave as they do. In the juniors, pupils have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of Christianity. Younger pupils know that parables are stories with a hidden message and that Jesus used them as the main means of making His point. They recall the main points of the 'Good Samaritan' and understand that friendship is symbolised in different ways. All pupils can answer the question 'who is my neighbour' by stating that it is 'anyone who needs my help'. Older pupils have a satisfactory understanding of Judaism and can accurately recall the rituals associated with Shabbat. They give several examples of 'special days' in their own lives. Pupils have studied Islam and know the 'Five Pillars', including Hajj (pilgrimage). Pupils' understanding of Christianity is good, and many could give some detail about Isaiah's prophecies concerning the birth of Jesus. Most have a detailed understanding of the Christmas Story. Pupils are beginning to develop an appreciation of their own beliefs and the beliefs of others.
101. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Pupils are positive about the subject and behave well in lessons. They are sensitive to other people's opinions and can discuss issues in a mature way. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Good use is also made of assemblies to reinforce the teaching pupils receive in lessons. Teachers have satisfactory subject knowledge overall and their knowledge of Christianity is good. All pupils, including those with special educational needs are making satisfactory progress in the acquisition of skills, knowledge and understanding as they move through the school. Teachers' planning and assessment are satisfactory and based appropriately on the locally agreed syllabus.
102. Leadership and management are satisfactory. There has been appropriate monitoring of the subject, mainly through the scrutiny of planning and pupils' work. The scheme of work is based on the locally agreed syllabus, suitably supplemented by units provided by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. Assessment systems meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Resources are adequate overall, although there is a need to increase the number of religious artefacts available for pupils to examine.