

INSPECTION REPORT

LATCHFORD CE (VA) PRIMARY SCHOOL

Latchford, Cheshire

LEA area: Warrington

Unique reference number: 132247

Headteacher: Sally Gray

Reporting inspector: John Carlton Midgley
1064

Dates of inspection: 31 March – 3 April 2003

Inspection number: 248968

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Old Road Latchford Warrington Cheshire
Postcode:	WA4 1AP
Telephone number:	01925 634967
Fax number:	01925 231706
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Brenda Hynes
Date of previous inspection:	No previous inspection

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
1064	John Carlton Midgley	Registered inspector	Mathematics Music	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? a) The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
13895	Angela Smith	Lay inspector		How high are standards? b) Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
1718	Kay Charlton	Team inspector	English as an additional language Foundation stage Design and technology Information and communication technology Physical Education Science	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
1516	Michael Warman	Team inspector	Educational inclusion Special educational needs Art and design English Geography History	How well does the school care for its pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Latchford CE Primary School is a voluntary aided school for boys and girls aged three to 11 and this is its first inspection. The school was newly formed in September 2001 from the amalgamation of two other aided schools with falling rolls, one of which had recently come out of special measures. Latchford Primary School is situated near the centre of Warrington. Its wide catchment area consists mostly of terraced housing and includes some pockets of disadvantage. There are 211 pupils on roll, including 44 who attend the nursery part-time. The school is a one-and-a-half form entry, with a standard admission number of 45; it is currently undersubscribed. Of the 167 pupils from reception to Year 6, there are seven pupils with English as an additional language, of whom three are at an early stage of language acquisition. These figures are below the national average. There are 40 pupils eligible for free school meals, a proportion which is above the national average. Three pupils have a statement of special educational needs, which is below the national average. The school has identified 24 per cent of pupils who need further support, the majority with moderate learning difficulties – a figure which is above the national average. Pupils' attainment on entry was below average in both 2001 and 2002.

During the inspection, the Year 1 and Year 4 classes were taught by short-term supply teachers.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Latchford is an improving school. It has made a good start to its development in the five terms since it opened. As a result of satisfactory teaching, most pupils attain the expected standards in reading, mathematics and science by the age of eleven. The headteacher provides good leadership and along with staff and governors has a clear commitment to future improvement. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils achieve good standards in science.
- The leadership and management provided by the headteacher are good.
- It is a caring school with good provision to encourage pupils' personal development. Relationships are very good and pupils behave well.
- The good provision for children in the nursery ensures that children make a good start to their education.
- The school provides a strong Christian ethos.

What could be improved

- Standards of writing.
- Standards of the more able pupils.
- Consistency of teaching and the use of information gained from assessment.
- Co-ordination of the foundation subjects.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Not applicable – this is the first inspection of this new school.

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	n/a	n/a	E	E
mathematics	n/a	n/a	D	C
science	n/a	n/a	A	A

Key	
very high (in the top 5% in the country)	A*
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E
very low	E*

The 2002 National Curriculum test results are the only ones available for the school, so patterns and trends over time cannot be identified. At the end of Year 6, the results of the National Curriculum tests in 2002 for eleven-year-olds are shown in the table. In English and mathematics, very few pupils attained the higher level (Level 5) but a high proportion did in science.

At the end of Year 2, the results of the National Curriculum tests in 2002 for seven-year-olds show that standards in reading, writing and mathematics were well below the national average and below those of similar schools. Very few pupils attained the higher level (Level 3). Care should be taken when interpreting these results, as there were only 20 pupils in Year 2 and each pupil represented five percentage points.

The inspection outcomes show that standards in English are still below average for pupils in the current Year 2 and Year 6, with pupils making satisfactory progress overall. Pupils enjoy reading and standards are now average. There has been an improvement in writing since 2002, although pupils could still achieve more. Pupils' skills in speaking and listening are appropriate for their age. In mathematics, pupils make satisfactory progress and by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, standards are broadly average. In science, pupils are making good progress overall. They attain average standards by Year 2 and above the levels expected by Year 6.

In other subjects, pupils attain the levels expected for their age and throughout Years 1 to 6 achieve satisfactorily. However, in information and communication technology, standards in monitoring, modelling and control are below those usually seen. In music, standards in composing and appraising are below average.

Children make good progress and achieve well in the nursery; progress is satisfactory in reception. By the time they enter Year 1, pupils have attained the majority of the expected early learning goals.

Pupils with special educational needs and those who are learning English as an additional language receive a good level of support and achieve the targets set out in their individual education plans. More able pupils underachieve. There are no significant differences in the performance of boys and girls.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils enjoy school. They concentrate well in lessons and work hard.
Behaviour, in and out of	Good. There is a calm working atmosphere and the school is an orderly

classrooms	community.
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Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils willingly take responsibility and relationships are very good.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Attendance rates have improved this year.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Teaching is good in the nursery and in Years 5 and 6. The quality of teaching in English and mathematics is generally sound. The teaching of science is good overall.

In the nursery and reception classes, teachers and support staff work together well as a team. They provide a secure learning environment where children make significant gains in their levels of confidence and in the development of their social skills. Staff have a good knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum and this is reflected in the planning, which is undertaken conscientiously. In the nursery, individual needs are met well but in reception there is not always sufficient pace and challenge.

In Years 1 to 6, staff are generally secure in their subject knowledge and understanding, with the exception of music. They teach the basic skills of reading and numeracy competently, using consistent approaches, which ensure that pupils build up their skills effectively. The teaching of writing skills is satisfactory overall but practice is inconsistent. Teachers consistently reinforce good behaviour so pupils behave well in class and concentrate on their work. There is a harmonious working atmosphere in lessons, which has a positive effect on pupils' learning. Lessons are well organised and there is a suitable range of worthwhile activities that interest and motivate the pupils.

Teachers' planning is thorough and, in general, work set is well matched to the levels of knowledge and understanding of the pupils. However, insufficient attention is paid to the needs of the more able pupils, who underachieve in a range of subjects. In science lessons, staff use a wider range of teaching and learning strategies and the pace is usually brisk. Progress is less than might be expected in some English, mathematics, geography and history lessons, because the pace of learning is too slow. Learning resources and support staff are used well. Overall, the quality and use of day-to-day assessment are unsatisfactory. Good use of assessing learning was made in science; it was satisfactory in English, mathematics, design and technology and information and communication technology. In other subjects, teachers' questioning sometimes lacks rigour and plenary sessions are not used well to check what learning has taken place.

Pupils with special educational needs and those who are learning English as an additional language are well supported by their teachers so that they make progress in line with others in the class.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. The school provides a broad range of learning opportunities across the curriculum and a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities.

Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. There is a good level of support, which helps these pupils to meet their individual targets.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The few pupils who are not reasonably fluent in English are well supported by their teachers so that they make progress in line with others in the class.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils are clearly helped to understand the difference between right and wrong. They learn to respect others' feelings and beliefs.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Staff provide good support and guidance for pupils. Assessment procedures are good in English and mathematics but unsatisfactory in foundation subjects.

The good links with parents ensure effective support for pupils' learning.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher, ably supported by the deputy head, leads the drive to raise standards effectively.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. Systematic monitoring and evaluation are undertaken by the headteacher. Monitoring by subject co-ordinators is not well established.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Expenditure is clearly linked to the priorities within the school development plan. Financial planning, management and control are strong.

The school is appropriately staffed with teachers and support staff. The accommodation is satisfactory and the quantity and quality of learning resources are good. The school is committed to the principles of best value and is applying these when making decisions.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children like school • Children make good progress • Behaviour is good • Teaching is good • Children are expected to work hard • Children's personal development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of homework • The information about their child's progress • The relationship with parents • The range of extra-curricular activities

The inspection team agrees with the parents' positive views of the school overall. Teaching and progress are both satisfactory rather than good. The amount of homework set is generally appropriate and the range of extra-curricular activities is satisfactory. The school provides suitable information about pupils' progress. Although some parents raised concerns through the questionnaire and at the parents'

meeting about their links with the school, the team's judgement is that links with parents are good overall.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. On entry to the school, children's attainment is broad ranging. Overall, it was below the level expected of children of this age in 2001 and in 2002. Children make good progress and achieve well in the nursery. In the reception class they achieve satisfactorily. By the time children enter Year 1, most are on course to attain the expected early learning goals in the areas of personal, social and emotional development, creative development, and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. Early learning goals are also met in the areas of speaking and listening, reading and aspects of mathematical development. Overall attainment is still below the levels expected in writing, mathematical problem solving and aspects of physical development.
2. At the end of Key Stage 1, the results of the National Curriculum tests in 2002 for seven-year-olds show that standards in reading, writing and mathematics were well below the national average. The results were also below those of similar schools. Very few pupils attained the higher level (Level 3). There were no significant differences between the performance of boys and girls. It should be noted that the Year 2 cohort consisted of a small number of pupils.
3. At the end of Key Stage 2, the results of the National Curriculum tests in 2002 for eleven-year-olds show that standards in English were well below both the national average and the results of similar schools. Standards in mathematics were below the national average but in line with those of similar schools. In science, standards were well above both the national average and the results of similar schools. In addition, a high proportion of pupils attained the higher level (Level 5). In English and mathematics, very few pupils attained the higher level. There were no significant differences between the performance of boys and girls. The school is suitably focusing on the need to improve the standards in English, particularly the writing. The school set challenging targets for 2003 in the first term of its existence. These targets were not based on good information about pupils' prior attainment. Nevertheless, the school is on line to meet the target in mathematics. In English, although there has been a significant improvement in standards, the school's results are unlikely to reach the target set. The 2002 National Curriculum test results are the only ones available for the school. Consequently, patterns and trends over time cannot be identified.
4. The inspection outcomes show that standards in English are below average for pupils in the current Year 2 and Year 6, with pupils making satisfactory progress overall. Pupils enjoy reading and standards are now average. Teachers are systematic in using a wide range of strategies to help pupils with their reading. By Year 2, this results in pupils having a satisfactory understanding of letters and sounds and being able to 'build up' words they are unsure of. By Year 6, many pupils show good levels of comprehension and appreciate the underlying ideas and subtleties in the text. They can explain clearly why they like certain books, giving informed reasons for their choice. Pupils use the library, indexes, glossaries and contents pages successfully to find information from books. There has been an improvement in writing since 2002, although pupils could still achieve more. Most pupils have positive attitudes to writing. By Year 2 they learn to appreciate the need to have a simple sequence when writing a story. They learn to write effectively in different ways and they are developing a suitable understanding of spelling. Presentation is satisfactory but in handwriting pupils could achieve more. By Year 6, pupils write effectively for different purposes and most are competent writers. Only a few pupils in Year 6 produce extended writing that is well thought out and interesting and of high quality. Across the school, pupils are not applying the skills of grammar consistently and work is being undertaken to address this. Pupils' skills in speaking and listening are appropriate for their age. Most pupils are confident speakers. They contribute well during class discussions and they are keen to answer questions and make comments. Pupils listen attentively both to teachers and to each other.

5. The inspection findings also show that pupils make satisfactory progress in mathematics throughout the school and by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, standards in mathematics are broadly average. By Year 2, most pupils have extended their understanding of place value up to 100, with some more able pupils comfortable to 1,000. All pupils recognise odd and even numbers but some are not secure with two-times and five-times tables. They name common three-dimensional shapes, use standard measures for length and recognise line symmetry in simple cases. Overall, there is insufficient emphasis on solving problems. By Year 6, most pupils add and subtract decimals to two places and order decimals to three places. Many pupils multiply and divide whole numbers and decimals by ten, 100 or 1,000. Most pupils draw angles to the nearest degree and they identify and describe acute and obtuse angles.
6. Currently, in science, pupils are making good progress overall. They attain average standards by Year 2 and above the levels expected by Year 6. As in 2002, pupils are achieving well, although fewer pupils in Year 6 are achieving the higher level (Level 5). There is a strong emphasis given to investigative work and this helps pupils to develop a good understanding of the subject. By the end of Year 2, most pupils have a secure understanding about growth in plants and the properties of different materials and they appreciate the importance of a healthy diet. Pupils are able to say what they have found out from their work and offer simple explanations for their observations and results. By Year 6, pupils have learned about electricity, about solids, liquids and gases, and about the life cycles of different animals. In investigative work, they are able to draw sensible conclusions from their readings, and they both record and interpret findings well. Their skills of prediction are above those usually seen.
7. In other subjects, pupils attain the levels expected for their age and throughout Years 1 to 6 achieve satisfactorily. However, in information and communication technology (ICT), standards in monitoring, modelling and control are below those usually seen. In music, standards in the elements of performing and listening are in line with those expected, with some good singing in assembly. Pupils have fewer experiences of composing and critically appraising, and standards in these areas are below average.
8. The school ensures equality of opportunity for all. Throughout all age groups, pupils with special educational needs and those who are learning English as an additional language receive a good level of support and achieve the targets set out in their individual plans. More able pupils are not well catered for and they underachieve. Boys and girls are attaining equally in different subjects throughout the school.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. Pupils enjoy coming to school and have positive attitudes to learning. The majority of pupils listen carefully to teachers and to each other, ask questions and are keen to give answers. Most pupils are eager to get on with the work set for them in lessons and are keen to learn and share their ideas with each other. They concentrate well and work hard.
10. Behaviour is good. There is a calm working atmosphere and the school is a well-organised, orderly Christian community. Teachers have high expectations that pupils will demonstrate good standards of behaviour. The majority of pupils co-operate with teachers and behave well in the classroom and around the school. This good behaviour boosts their progress and makes an important contribution to the standards achieved by many pupils. During inspection, no racist or sexist behaviour was seen, nor was any bullying observed. There is one reported instance of a pupil's fixed-term exclusion from school, for appropriate reasons.
11. Pupils' personal development is good and pupils willingly take responsibility. Older pupils take part in the school council and the oldest pupils act as 'buddies' to help younger children with playing during lunch breaks. Pupils also take part in extra-curricular activities provided after school, such as rugby and choir, although there are fewer opportunities for younger pupils. All pupils are very involved in supporting charities including supporting the education of a child in Uganda.

12. Relationships in the school community are very good and they are a strength of the school. Very many examples of high-quality relationships between pupils and adults in the school were observed during the inspection. Pupils are friendly, courteous and willing to help and talk to visitors to the school. They show respect for one another's views, beliefs and culture and are caring towards each other. They co-operate well with one another and are frequently supportive of each other's efforts, often with spontaneous applause when something has gone well. Pupils take the good opportunities provided by the school to discuss and reflect on the impact of their actions on others during class discussions and assemblies.
13. Attendance is now satisfactory. In the term preceding this inspection it was in line with the national average, having been below the average last year. The number of unauthorised absences is higher than the national average. Most pupils arrive in time for the beginning of the school day and settle down quickly to ensure that lessons begin promptly. Registration is carried out efficiently at the beginning of morning and afternoon sessions. A number of parents are keeping their children away from school during term time for holidays sometimes lasting longer than the annual concessionary allowance agreed with the headteacher.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

14. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and this leads to satisfactory learning. Teaching is good in the nursery and in Years 5 and 6. The quality of teaching in English, mathematics and other curriculum subjects is generally sound. The teaching of science is good overall. During the inspection, the Year 1 and Year 4 classes were taught by short-term supply teachers.
15. In the nursery and reception classes, teachers and support staff work together well as a team. They provide a secure learning environment where children make significant gains in their levels of confidence and in the development of their social skills. Staff have a good knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum and this is reflected in the planning, which is undertaken conscientiously. They have high expectations of children in the areas of personal, social and emotional development, creative development and knowledge and understanding of the world. In these areas, effective reference is made to the pupils' own practical experiences so that they are fully engaged in the learning. Teaching in the nursery is also good in the areas of communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and physical development. In reception, there is a lack of pace and challenge in some of the work, particularly with regard to writing, mathematical problem solving and aspects of physical development. This limits the progress children make, especially the more able children.
16. In Years 1 to 6, staff are generally secure in their subject knowledge and understanding. The exceptions are in music and in the monitoring, modelling and control aspects of ICT. They teach the basic skills of reading and numeracy competently, using consistent approaches, which ensure that pupils build up their skills effectively. The teaching of writing is satisfactory overall but practice is inconsistent. Teachers consistently reinforce good behaviour so pupils behave well in class and concentrate on their work. There is a harmonious working atmosphere in lessons, which has a positive effect on pupils' learning. In general, lessons are well organised and there is a suitable range of worthwhile activities that interest and motivate the pupils. This is particularly noticeable in science, where pupils indicated that they enjoyed the many opportunities for practical work and where they showed enthusiasm and curiosity.
17. Teachers' planning is thorough. It is appropriately based on national guidance, such as the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. In many lessons, teachers write the learning objectives on the board and refer to these at the beginning of lessons to ensure that pupils are clear about the overall purpose of the session. This is a strong feature of the daily mathematics lessons. In general, work set is well matched to the levels of knowledge and understanding of the pupils. However, insufficient attention is paid to the needs of the more able pupils, who underachieve in a range of subjects. Staff work together well as a team, so that all adults, including support staff, are clear about the purposes of the activities and their roles and responsibilities within them.

18. In science lessons, staff use a wider range of teaching and learning strategies and lessons are usually well timed. Pupils of all abilities benefit from these brisk lessons and they make clear gains in understanding. Progress is less than might be expected in some English, mathematics, geography and history lessons, because the pace of learning is too slow. For example, in the teaching of writing, there are times when pupils are uncertain about the amount and quality of work expected and how long they have to complete the tasks. Learning resources are used well. In English, 'big books' are effectively used to develop reading. Pupils use a wide range of media in art and design to experiment successfully with colour and shape. Good use is made of visits and visitors to extend the learning in history.
19. Overall, the quality and use of day-to-day assessment are unsatisfactory. Good assessment was seen in science and it was satisfactory in English, mathematics, design and technology and ICT. In other subjects, teachers' questioning sometimes lacks rigour and plenary sessions are not used well to check what learning has taken place. For example, in physical education (PE), teachers regularly praise pupils' efforts but there is generally too little clarity for pupils about the criteria that make for successful performance. Marking is satisfactory but it could be improved in the majority of subjects. In mathematics, for example, teachers mark work regularly and often add supportive comments but there are few comments to help pupils to overcome their difficulties.
20. In the most effective lessons, purposeful reviews take place at the end of lessons so that pupils can assess for themselves what they do and do not understand, for example, when pupils in science lessons in Years 5 and 6 have to explain what they have learned, in correct scientific terms, in a one-minute slot. Good use of technical language is a feature of the best lessons, as is the strong focus on asking pupils to explain their thinking.
21. Individual lessons in ICT are satisfactory and the overall programme provides sufficient opportunities over time for pupils to both develop and consolidate their skills. Lessons are conscientiously planned and most aspects of the National Curriculum are covered effectively, with the exception of monitoring, modelling and control. Currently there is little use of ICT in other curriculum subjects, but where it occurs, teachers use ICT satisfactorily.
22. Class teachers work well with the support staff, ensuring that individuals and small groups are given extra help with specific tasks, often to develop pupils' basic skills in reading. Teaching assistants are particularly effective when working with individuals or small groups of pupils with special educational needs. Some of the pupils identified as having special educational needs also receive extra support from outside agencies. This work is effectively organised so that all adults work with the common purpose of helping pupils to meet their individual targets. Pupils who are learning English as an additional language are well supported by their teachers so that they make progress in line with others in the class.
23. Different types of homework, such as reading and learning tables, are given and these suitably reinforce the pupils' learning. The school's homework policy and procedures meet the expectation set out in the national guidelines.
24. Visits out of the school are used well to stimulate learning, as exemplified by the work undertaken after visits to local churches, museums and to Speke Hall. Displays are interesting, supportive and up to date; they help to create a bright and stimulating learning environment.

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

25. Overall, the school's curriculum is satisfactory. It is broad, reasonably balanced and meets statutory requirements.
26. The curriculum for the nursery and reception class is satisfactory overall. The school has used the national guidance for the Foundation Stage as a basis for planning and the children in these

younger classes benefit from a worthwhile and interesting programme. In the nursery, staff know the children well as individuals and ensure that children's needs are met effectively. In the reception class, however, learning opportunities are not always maximised, particularly in writing and mathematical problem solving, and in these areas children could achieve more.

27. In the rest of school, curriculum development has been undertaken in a systematic way. There has been a good focus on the development of pupils' basic skills. The school has introduced the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies as well as the various additions, such as booster classes, to support this focus. Overall, this is having a positive impact on pupils' learning, although there is some inconsistency in the implementation of these. Subject planning for science is effective. It places a high emphasis on the development of pupils' skills in investigative work and this is helping to ensure that the pupils achieve well by the end of Year 6. Curriculum planning in the foundation subjects is thorough but since assessment procedures are not well established, this results in the work set not always being sufficiently demanding, especially to challenge the more able pupils. Also, the cycle of teaching history and geography creates some lack of continuity in pupils' learning and the programme in place for teaching music is not well balanced.
28. The school has a strong commitment to ensuring equality of opportunity for all. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well. Clear procedures are in place, which meet requirements. The school has reviewed its policy and practices and these are in line with the revised Code of Practice. Pupils' needs are identified early and a good level of support is provided. All these pupils have individual education plans, which contain clear and appropriate targets. Provision to support pupils in developing fluency in speaking English is effective. Assessments are undertaken at an early stage and relevant programmes are drawn up. These, appropriately, include opportunities for pupils to be taught on an individual, group and class basis. Across the school, all pupils have equal access to the whole curriculum and they are included well in all activities. However, there are occasions when the more able pupils are not challenged sufficiently in their work.
29. The school's provision for personal, social and health education is good. The planned programme helps pupils to realise that each individual has responsibilities as well as rights, and that everyone has to learn how to make choices. There is good attention given to the need for healthy living and the dangers associated with the misuse of drugs. A suitable programme of sex education is provided.
30. The provision for the development of pupils' skills in ICT is satisfactory overall. When the new school first opened, many of the pupils had limited skills in this area. The school has placed a high priority on the improvement of this subject in the school development plan and ICT resources have been improved significantly. Staff training has taken place and staff are now generally confident to teach the subject. The school has a clear action plan to ensure further development, particularly in the area of monitoring, modelling and control.
31. There are suitable links with the local secondary school resulting in smooth transition. The school provides a satisfactory range of activities outside lessons. These include several after-school clubs, for example, football, rugby, gardening and judo.
32. The school has good links with the community, which enhance pupils' learning. A wide range of visits into the community takes place supporting several subjects, most notably studies in geography, history and religious education. These include visits to local churches, museums and places of interest, such as The Lowry. A wide range of visitors, including poets, musicians, the police and local clergy, all help to enhance the curriculum well.
33. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is consistently good.
34. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. Staff receive and value pupils' ideas and encourage pupils to have a positive self-image. They set good role models and inspire a sense of

trust. In this climate, pupils are confident to explore their feelings and emotions, for example, during a sensitive discussion about the worries the older pupils have about moving to the secondary school. The school provides a wide range of opportunities for pupils to find out about what they, and others, believe. Assemblies, religious education lessons, stories and visits to places of worship, such as the local church and a synagogue, all contribute to this effectively. There are good opportunities for reflection in assemblies and pupils respond particularly well to occasions when they listen to and join in with prayers. In subjects such as science, music and art, opportunities are provided for pupils to develop a sense of wonder at the beauty of the world. This was particularly noticeable when some of the pupils discussed the work they had produced in the style of Monet.

35. There is good provision for moral development. Pupils are aware that they are expected to behave well. They are taught the difference between right and wrong, and appreciate the importance of 'The Golden Rules'. They understand that it is their responsibility to behave well and also to help others to do so. There is helpful discussion about bullying and pupils know what to do should it occur. Those pupils who have identified behavioural needs are set clear and appropriate targets, and the staff work hard to help them to be successful in meeting them. This results in their making particularly good progress in this respect.
36. The support for pupils' social development through the daily life of the school is good. Adults are very supportive of the pupils and have established very good relationships with them. The school is particularly successful in ensuring that pupils help and care for one another. For instance, older pupils readily help younger ones. In class and elsewhere, pupils are effectively encouraged to work together and support the whole school community and also those less fortunate than themselves. They are encouraged to take responsibility and develop their independence. They do this well in many ways, for example, when the pupils take on specific jobs for the whole school or their class. The annual residential visits, undertaken by pupils in Years 5 and 6, play an important part in fostering their social development.
37. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to develop their cultural awareness. Pupils develop their understanding well through visits to local places of interest, when visitors come to school, and through their lessons, notably in art and design, history, geography and religious education. For example, pupils enjoyed visits from a Ghanaian artist and from a group of tuba players. A good contribution to this aspect is made by studies about other countries, for example, when pupils learn about the lives of different peoples in their geography lessons. Pupils' understanding of different faiths and cultures is also promoted through learning about Christianity, Judaism and Islam in religious education. Books appropriately include information about the diverse range of cultures represented in society. The school has a suitable policy to encourage positive race relations and, taken overall, the school ensures that pupils learn effectively about life in a multi-cultural society.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

38. The arrangements for ensuring pupils' welfare are good and pupils receive good personal support and guidance. Parents are generally pleased with the quality of care and support given. The school's arrangements for monitoring pupils' academic performance and personal development are satisfactory overall.
39. Child protection procedures are in place and are effectively managed by the headteacher. Health and safety procedures are well managed and the arrangements for first aid and medical care are good. Attendance is accurately recorded and the school analyses trends effectively so that pupils with regular absence can be identified easily. Good attendance is promoted effectively and there are suitable procedures to follow up unexplained absence. The school encourages punctuality and pupils are generally on time.
40. The school's procedures effectively promote good behaviour. Pupils fully understand and value the expectations of good behaviour, which are clearly explained to them. Rules are prominently

displayed. The school's personal, social and health education programme, together with the consistent application of the school's strategies, contributes successfully to the good standards of behaviour in the school. The school has effective anti-bullying procedures, which pupils clearly understand. They are fully aware that if there are any concerns these should be reported to their teachers.

41. There are effective arrangements for assessing and tracking children's progress in the nursery and reception classes. The school has appropriately concentrated on establishing assessment procedures in the core subjects of English and mathematics for pupils in Years 1 to 6. These are good and provide an effective mechanism for checking pupils' progress over time. An important part of the procedures involves setting targets for individual pupils. These are generally well matched to the needs of individual pupils but they are not always used consistently as a regular part of teaching and learning to guide curriculum planning. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are unsatisfactory in the foundation subjects, and the school has identified this as a priority in its development plan.
42. The school analysed in detail the outcomes of the national tests in 2002. The results have been discussed with staff and this has informed the target setting process. Issues have been identified for curriculum development, particularly in relation to the improvement of pupils' writing skills in English and in other subjects of the curriculum.
43. There are effective procedures for the identification of pupils with special educational needs. Baseline assessments for pupils starting school are carefully analysed and if necessary concerns raised. Ongoing classroom observation helps with early identification. Teachers draw up individual education plans, and realistic and manageable targets are set and reviewed regularly. External agencies are involved when required to help meet pupils' specific needs. Teachers keep detailed records of what pupils do and how well they achieve against their specific targets.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

44. The school works well in partnership with parents and has forged effective links that make a positive contribution to pupils' learning. Information gathered through the parents' questionnaire and at the parents' meeting shows that parents and carers have a positive view of the school overall. Although a small number of parents raised concerns about their links with the school, the inspection team's judgment is that links with parents are good overall.
45. Parents say their children enjoy school and are happy to attend. Most parents say children behave well and become mature and responsible. Parents feel pupils are expected to work hard, that teaching is good and pupils make good progress. Inspectors' judgements broadly support these positive views. Teaching and pupils' progress are both satisfactory rather than good. However, a number of parents do not think that the school keeps them well informed about their child's progress or that the school works closely with them. Parents would like more consistency in the setting of homework and an improved range of activities outside lessons. Inspectors found these areas to be at least satisfactory.
46. The quality and quantity of information provided to parents are good. Letters and weekly newsletters keep parents informed about events, issues and forthcoming school trips whilst also celebrating the school's successes. Workshops and curriculum information are provided for parents to help them understand what their children are learning. Reading diaries make another good home-school link. The school prospectus and the Annual Governors' Report to Parents are informative publications but currently omit some minor statutory information, such as the rates of pupils' attendance for the last reporting year. Good opportunities each term are provided for parents to discuss their children's progress with the teachers, including a meeting in the summer term after parents have received pupils' annual written reports. Annual reports for parents on pupils' progress are detailed and cover a range of information on pupils' achievements.
47. Parents are made very welcome in the school and there is an informal open door policy for parents and carers wishing to discuss matters or to make complaints. The headteacher is keen to develop strong links with parents. Teachers are accessible at the beginning and end of each school day and the headteacher is also available to parents and carers wishing to discuss matters concerning their children. The school tries hard to work closely with parents and seeks their views on matters concerning their children's education and welfare. For example, a parents' questionnaire was used last year. Refreshments are served after the weekly assemblies attended

by many parents. The headteacher and others involved in the school frequently join this informal gathering and are available should parents wish to discuss any matters of concern. There are good arrangements for pupils with a statement of special educational needs to receive appropriate information through annual reviews. Consultation meetings for parents of pupils with special educational needs are well supported. Most parents attend reviews and contribute suggestions as to how the needs of their children may be met.

48. There are many opportunities for parents to become involved in the life of the school and to support their children's learning. The school welcomes the help of those many parents who are able to give time consistently to work alongside teachers. Many more parents are involved in supporting school activities such as sports day, school productions and school outings. The contribution of parents to children's learning at school and at home is good and makes a positive contribution to pupils' standards of education.
49. The school works closely with parents, friends of the school and the church through the Friends of Latchford to organise social events and raise extra funds. Good quality financial support is provided for the work of the school via funds raised through activities such as the Easter coffee morning, pupils' discos, and bingo sessions. Money raised is used to assist the school in the provision of extra equipment and resources. Funds are currently being raised for improvements to the playground.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

50. The headteacher provides good leadership with a clear focus on ensuring that pupils achieve of their best. The good support given to her by the other staff and the governing body means that the vision for the school is shared by all and that everyone is working as a team with a common sense of purpose. The headteacher, ably assisted by the deputy head, has worked hard to establish planning, as well as systems and structures, that provides a firm foundation from which the school can continue to make progress. She has taken much effective action since the school opened, giving a strong lead in raising standards of teaching and learning, attainment and achievement. She has been instrumental in creating a supportive environment in which staff and pupils feel valued.
51. The headteacher undertakes systematic monitoring of pupils' attainment and of the quality of provision so that she is clear about what needs to be done to improve standards. Together with senior staff, she has analysed the available performance data thoroughly, including National Curriculum test results at the end of key stages and teacher assessments. These analyses compare the school with the national averages, similar schools and the local authority statistics. They include pupils' performance at the higher levels, the performance of boys and girls and the value added between key stages. These analyses help the school to sharpen the target setting process and to diagnose its weaknesses. The headteacher regularly monitors the quality of teaching, which is validated by the local authority adviser. She has also been involved in monitoring teachers' planning and scrutinising pupils' work. There are satisfactory systems for performance management across the school and an appropriate whole-school pay policy. Performance management is effectively supported by a programme of staff training and the mentoring arrangements that are in place for new staff.
52. Subject co-ordinators for English and mathematics have a good overview of the quality of teaching and the standards attained. They are conscientious in their approach, monitoring planning regularly, observing classroom practice and scrutinising pupils' work. From a detailed analysis of assessment data, they set challenging targets for pupils' performance, regularly monitoring progress and resolving any issues that may arise. Co-ordination of science and ICT is developing well along similar lines. However, co-ordination of the foundation subjects is unsatisfactory overall. There are recently appointed co-ordinators for geography, history and PE. The headteacher currently oversees design and technology, and music. The deputy head oversees art and design. In these foundation subjects, more needs to be done on developing effective procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress, then using the assessment information

- to improve curricular planning. In addition, systematic and rigorous monitoring and evaluation procedures have not been established. These are needed in order to achieve greater consistency of teaching and learning, and improve standards. Plans are in place for these developments to begin in the near future.
53. School development planning is thorough and provides clear educational direction for the work of the school. Resources are linked to priorities, with actions, timescales and success criteria specified. All staff and governors are included in the review of the previous year's plan and in the development planning process. This high level of involvement ensures that the plan is a useful management tool and that all aspects of school life are considered.
 54. The school's aims and values are clearly reflected in its day-to-day work. The headteacher, staff and governors work closely together to promote the Christian ethos of the school, which particularly enhances the pupils' personal and social development. Pupils are well cared for and all feel safe and secure in their surroundings. Very good relationships have been established between pupils, and between pupils and adults. The school's administrative staff provide an efficient and welcoming point of contact for visitors and parents, and the school's financial procedures are managed well. ICT is used appropriately in managing the school's finances.
 55. The school is committed to providing equality of opportunity for all its pupils. The provision for pupils with special needs is effective, as is that for pupils who are learning English as an additional language. The co-ordination of special educational needs is satisfactory.
 56. The governing body supports the school well and it is committed to striving for the highest quality of education for all pupils. It works closely with the headteacher to achieve this objective. Governors know and understand their role clearly and they successfully meet their statutory responsibilities overall – some minor statutory information is omitted in the school prospectus and in the Annual Governors' Report to Parents. The governing body has ensured that all required policies, such as an anti-racist policy, are in place. Governors attend training and keep abreast of national and local initiatives. Individual governors focus on literacy, numeracy and special educational needs. They take an active role in keeping themselves, and their fellow governors, well informed. The proceedings of the governing body are conducted efficiently and committees are well organised. Many of the governors visit the school regularly and are involved in the life of the school. The chair of governors has divided the school development plan into sections, which match the committee structure. Each committee is responsible for the monitoring and evaluation of the progress of their part of the plan. From these evaluations and the reports on standards provided by the headteacher, the governing body has a good knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the school.
 57. Financial planning is good with a planned programme of spending clearly linked to the priorities in the school development plan. The school's budget is monitored closely by governors and the school uses specific grants well for their purpose. The planned carry forward from 2001-02 has been used appropriately for staffing in order to maintain single age classes. The school ensures that money is spent wisely by researching and making decisions about goods and services that represent best value. Governors also challenge and debate before making major spending decisions and they are beginning to compare, contrast and challenge how effective the school is in helping the pupils to achieve the best possible standards. This process is inevitably at an early stage since a systematic monitoring programme is only partly developed and there is little data available on which to base judgements. There is a satisfactory match of staff to the demands of the curriculum, although there is a lack of subject expertise in music. The accommodation is satisfactory and good use is made of the available space. The quantity and quality of learning resources are good and ICT resources have been improved significantly since the school opened. The accommodation and resources are well maintained. Overall, at this stage of its development, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

(The numbers in brackets after each key issue indicate the paragraphs in which the weaknesses are discussed)

58. In order to raise standards further, the headteacher, staff and governors should:

(1) Improve standards of writing by:

- providing more opportunities for extended writing in English;
- ensuring that more opportunities are taken for writing in other subjects;
- ensuring that pupils apply the skills of grammar consistently;
- ensuring that pupils know how they can improve their writing;
- using ICT to support pupils' learning, particularly when drafting and re-drafting.
(Paragraphs: 1, 2, 3, 4, 16, 18, 60, 65, 78, 81, 83, 84)

(2) Improve standards of the more able pupils by:

- planning work that is well matched to their abilities;
- maximising the opportunities to extend their learning by making greater use in lessons of questioning designed to further their understanding;
- basing future planning more firmly on what they already know.
(Paragraphs: 2, 3, 4, 8, 17, 27, 28, 65, 78, 81, 83, 85, 87, 89, 90)

(3) Improve the quality of teaching by:

- ensuring greater consistency in quality across the school;
- raising teachers' expectations about what pupils might achieve;
- ensuring that there is a good pace throughout the lesson;
- making effective use of assessment information as a regular part of teaching, in order to match work more effectively to pupils' levels of understanding;
- ensuring that marking and verbal feedback given are helpful in making pupils aware of what they need to do to improve.
(Paragraphs: 17, 18, 19, 20, 65, 68, 77, 83, 88, 89, 94, 95, 132)

(4) Improve the co-ordination of the foundation subjects by:

- appointing a co-ordinator for each subject;
- developing effective procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress;
- using the assessment information to improve curricular planning;
- establishing procedures to monitor and evaluate standards and quality.
(Paragraphs: 27, 52, 102, 107, 112, 118, 123, 129, 133)

(Key issues 1, 2 and 4 have been identified by the school as priorities within its development plan)

In addition to the key issues above, the following less important weaknesses should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- Improve standards in the composing and appraising aspects of music *(Paragraphs: 7, 16, 19, 27, 124, 128)*.
- Improve standards in the monitoring, modelling and control aspects of ICT *(Paragraphs: 7, 16, 21, 30, 119, 121, 122)*.
- Provide more opportunities for pupils to use ICT in other subjects *(Paragraphs: 84, 89, 95, 107, 112, 118, 123)*.
- Ensure that the school prospectus and the Annual Governors' Report to Parents meet statutory requirements *(Paragraph: 46)*.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	45
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	18

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	7	14	22	2	0	0
Percentage	0	16	31	49	4	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	44	167
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	40

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	40

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	7

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	20
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	18

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.9

National comparative data	5.4
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National comparative data	0.5
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Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	9	11	20

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	14	17	15
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	70	85	75
	National	84	86	90

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	15	15	16
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	75	75	80
	National	85	89	89

Separate totals for girls and boys are not given in the above table as fewer than 11 boys took the tests, therefore individuals could be identified.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	14	15	29

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	11	13
	Girls	9	12	14
	Total	17	23	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	59	79	93
	National	75	73	86

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	10	11
	Girls	10	11	12
	Total	19	21	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	66	72	79
	National	73	74	82

Ethnic background of pupils

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

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
140	1	0
0	0	0
1	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
1	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
2	0	0
0	0	0
1	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
3	0	0
0	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20.9
Average class size	23.9

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	91

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
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Financial information

Financial year	2001-02
(7/12 – September 2001 to March 2002)	
	£
Total income	305,679
Total expenditure	264,021
Expenditure per pupil	1,553
Balance brought forward from previous year	0
Balance carried forward to next year	41,658

Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	25
Number of pupils per FTE adult	11

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	10

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	191
Number of questionnaires returned	57

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	58	35	0	4	4
My child is making good progress in school.	39	51	9	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	26	60	7	4	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	25	33	28	7	7
The teaching is good.	46	49	2	0	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	28	46	18	9	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	49	35	11	5	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	51	40	2	0	7
The school works closely with parents.	21	47	19	7	5
The school is well led and managed.	25	49	4	7	16
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	35	53	9	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	30	32	12	9	18

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

59. The provision for the children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall. It is good in the nursery. Management of the Foundation Stage is sound and monitoring is satisfactory.
60. The children in this key stage either attend the nursery on a part-time basis or are full-time in the reception class. Their attainment on entry is broad-ranging. Overall, it is below the level expected of children of this age. Children make good progress and achieve well in the nursery. In the reception class they achieve satisfactorily. By the time children enter Year 1, most are on course to attain the expected early learning goals in the areas of personal, social and emotional development, creative development, and (in their) knowledge and understanding of the world. Early learning goals are also met in the areas of speaking and listening, reading and aspects of mathematical development. Overall attainment is still below the levels expected in writing, mathematical problem solving and aspects of physical development.

Personal, social and emotional development

61. Teaching in this area is good overall and children make good progress. In the nursery, the high level of care along with the attention given to individual children's needs ensures very good provision. Children quickly gain in confidence and develop independence very well. They make choices very effectively from the range of activities provided. Most children manage to get themselves dressed ready for hometime and playtime. By the time they are in reception, they know routines well. For example, they come in and sit quietly on the carpet and listen carefully as the register is called. The use of encouragement by the staff gives the children a positive feeling and pride in their achievements. In both the nursery and reception, teachers and support staff work together well and provide good role models for the children, treating them with courtesy and respect. The children are keen and motivated and want to be involved in the interesting activities provided. In the nursery, they quickly learn to take turns and by the time they leave the reception class they can concentrate for quite long periods of time. They raise their hands to ask questions and share and clear away equipment sensibly. Snack-time in the nursery is a well-established social event. Children learn good manners; they say 'please' and 'thank you' and enjoy the discussions that take place at these times. In both nursery and reception, children behave well and show concern for others. They learn respect for their own cultures and beliefs and those of others. Staff promote an understanding of the difference between right and wrong, and children are aware of what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. In the reception class, children are increasingly prepared to share resources, take turns and support each other well. They take part in assemblies and playtimes with the rest of the school and they are well prepared socially for their transfer to Year 1.

Communication, language and literacy

62. Teaching and learning are good in the nursery and satisfactory in reception.
63. Overall, children attain the expected levels in speaking and listening. In the nursery, staff take every opportunity to engage children in discussion. For example, as children arrive, staff encourage them to talk about what they have done since they were last in school. They also provide good opportunities for imaginative role-play. Staff interact well with children in these situations and, as a result, children's spoken language is effectively developed. However, in reception, the opportunities to extend children's skills in speaking and listening through imaginative play are not always used to advantage. In both classes, children listen carefully to stories and to adults. They enjoy talking as a whole group, for example, about snails in the nursery and about 'Mr Wolf' in reception. Staff encourage them to ask questions, which are followed up with clear explanations that successfully increase children's vocabulary.

64. In the nursery, children learn about books and develop a good understanding of the conventions of books. There is a good focus on the development of sounds in words. Many children are beginning to use this knowledge to help them to read and write. Well-planned, motivating and interesting sessions ensure that children are attentive and learn well. They enjoy sharing books and show understanding about text carrying meaning. In reception, children of different abilities continue to have a good level of individual support in developing their skills in reading. Many are able to point to the title of a book and name the characters and they continue to make good progress in identifying sounds in words and simple key words. They use pictures well to tell what is happening in the story and are beginning to predict the outcome. Children are eager to share their books and achievements and many read simple texts to an adult with confidence. Overall, a firm foundation is laid and children build up their reading skills systematically.
65. Overall, by the time children enter Year 1, their skills in writing are still below those usually seen. Writing skills are targeted well in the nursery. Opportunities are always available for children to make independent marks and try pre-writing skills that successfully develop their pencil control and help children understand the wide range of reasons for writing – for example, when writing to the 'Lazy Ladybird'. Staff are attentive to the need to give individual support and they remind children to write their name on pieces of work, although only a few do this successfully without the need of an exemplar. In the reception class, children develop their writing skills satisfactorily. Staff provide many opportunities for them to write for a range of purposes and children are prepared to 'have a go'. However, there is not always sufficient challenge in the activities, especially for the more able children. For example, children who were capable of much more were asked simply to write a menu that consisted of a list of three or four words. Feedback to children is supportive but it is not always made sufficiently clear to them how they might improve their work in future, for example, in letter formation.

Mathematical development

66. Teaching and learning are good in the nursery. They are satisfactory in reception. By the time children enter Year 1, many attain the expected goals, although their skills in problem solving are still below those expected.
67. In the nursery, some children recognise numbers from one to ten and, through good interaction with adults, begin to understand the terms 'bigger', 'smaller' and 'longer than'. Throughout the day, through play, adults reinforce children's understanding of number and its associated vocabulary. For example, they successfully count the spots on a ladybird's wing and learn terms such as 'how much' and 'altogether'. The children know a good range of number rhymes and jingles to support their learning. Good opportunities are given to children to develop their counting and spatial awareness through building with large blocks.
68. Reception children are developing their counting skills satisfactorily. Most children become confident in working up to ten and more able children work up to 20. Suitable use is made of the computer to strengthen number recognition and counting skills. Children enjoy working through mathematics programs independently. The majority of children demonstrate appropriate formation of numbers but several still find difficulty with this. Work with shapes is undertaken; children match objects to their outline shape and recognise common shapes, such as circles, squares, triangles and rectangles. Structured play encourages children to develop practical methods of learning about volume and they can explain their understanding of such concepts. Children's understanding of mathematical calculations and simple problem solving, however, are not sufficiently extended through adult interaction when children play games or when they undertake 'free choice' activities. Opportunities are also missed to ask children to solve simple number problems as they undertake work in other areas of mathematics, for example, when they were learning about pattern making. This means that children are capable of achieving more.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

69. Teaching and learning are good overall in this area in both the nursery and reception. Through a wide range of activities and effective teaching, children in the nursery successfully learn about the world around them. The children use the outside area to observe plants and animals. In a topic about mini-beasts, children have particularly good opportunities to find out about living things such as worms and snails. They are fascinated with the slow movements of each, but particularly of the snails, as they moved from a smooth surface up onto a piece of carpet. Children have good opportunities to use the computer to support their learning and they are confident in using the mouse. They learn about the difference between past and present and note patterns and change over time, for example, when referring to photographs of a rose bush in the school grounds over a full year. Children learn about nearby buildings and construct their own models using a good range of equipment.
70. Reception children, through a wide range of topics, learn about many items of interest. They develop observational skills well, for example, when noting the taste of different foods. They are beginning to make relationships between the things they observe. Children are familiar with naming parts of their body and the parts of a plant, and they recognise that animals and plants change over time. They are learning about how things work, for example, when they designed and made kites of different types of material. Children continue to develop their skills in using ICT effectively. They successfully learn about the toys children played with in the past and produced moving toys of their own using construction kits. Children learn about warm and cold weather and identify the different types of clothes they would wear during each. They have particularly enjoyed finding out about the ways in which people in the school, such as the caretaker and the school cook, help them. The school environment is used well to stimulate their interest, for example, as they notice patterns in items around the school.
71. The range of experiences available to the children in both nursery and reception gives them a firm foundation on which to build their knowledge and understanding of the world. Most children are on course to achieve the early learning goals by the end of reception.

Physical development

72. Teaching and learning are good in the nursery. They are satisfactory in reception but there are aspects where children could achieve more. By the time children enter Year 1, the majority of children achieve what is expected in fine manipulative work. Most gain suitable understanding about using space and awareness of others. They know about the effects of exercise on their bodies. However, in balancing and climbing and in their imaginative response many attain below the levels expected.
73. Children in both classes develop their fine manipulative skills through daily opportunities to use pencils, crayons, paints and scissors. Individual feedback is well targeted in the nursery but occasionally opportunities are missed with the older children to give detailed feedback about the ways improvement might be made. In both classes, children play with small equipment such as bats and balls and they learn to kick, pass and throw with increasing control.
74. Outside the nursery there is an enclosed play area where both nursery-aged and reception-aged children run, use wheeled vehicles and play. When using this equipment, children of nursery age effectively improve their movements and they develop awareness of space their skills in balancing and climbing. They also respond imaginatively, initiating new combinations of movement to express their ideas. Overall, these younger children develop their co-ordination and control well. However, much of the outdoor provision does not present sufficient challenge for children of reception age and important opportunities are lost to extend the children's learning. In the reception class, children also develop their physical skills when using the school hall for their regular PE sessions. Although these sessions were not observed, they are effectively planned.

Creative development

75. Overall, teaching is good in this area. Children make good progress and are generally on course to attain the expected goals. When, experimenting and making sound patterns to music in the reception class, the teaching seen was satisfactory, though in this element the children could achieve more.
76. Children use a wide range of techniques and media in nursery and reception to increase their confidence and skills and develop their imaginative response. Overall, good use is made of opportunities to reinforce and extend children's recognition of colours. For instance, whilst painting in the nursery, staff questioned the children well to develop their knowledge of colours. In both classes, children show increasing control when colouring and drawing. Good experiences generally ensure that children have the opportunity to develop their skills to their full potential. A particularly good feature of the work in both classes is the way that children learn to make use of the techniques of other artists, such as Kandinsky and Monet. The wide range of opportunities, including those that support other areas of the curriculum, is successful in ensuring that children get plenty of practice and good-quality experiences. They use a range of materials to make collages of shiny and sparkly materials. Children have experience of bubble printing, paint blowing and using paint, pastels and chalks. They work effectively in both two- and three-dimensions.
77. Children in both nursery and reception learn by heart a good repertoire of songs that they sing with enthusiasm. In the nursery, children develop a good understanding about how to make sounds but this is not extended sufficiently well in the reception class since the teaching in the whole class sessions lacks sufficient pace and challenge.

ENGLISH

78. Overall, by the end of Years 2 and 6, standards in English are below average. Standards in reading are average. Those in writing are below average. Pupils are making good progress in reading but they can achieve more in writing. Too few pupils are achieving the higher levels. The progress of pupils with special educational needs and the small number who are learning English as an additional language is similar to that of other pupils.
79. Pupils' skills in speaking and listening are appropriate for their age, with clear improvements through the school. Most pupils are confident speakers, both in class and in more formal situations. They respond well to the teachers' encouragement to contribute during class discussions and they are keen to answer questions and make comments. Pupils listen attentively both to teachers and to each other. They enjoy listening to stories, for example, when the Year 2 class listened to 'The Boy Who Cried Wolf'. When Year 5 pupils discussed a traditional folk tale from another culture, they showed a good level of interest and responded thoughtfully to questions. 'Circle-time', an organised discussion which is part of the personal, social and health education programme, is playing an important part in helping to develop pupils' skills since they need to listen very carefully at this time to others' points of view. Drama also plays an important part in developing pupils' skills. A good example of this was seen in Year 4, when pupils enacted parts of the story about the 'Sand Horse'; they used adventurous vocabulary to develop their ideas, which were very well drawn out by the teacher.
80. Pupils enjoy reading. Teachers are systematic in using a wide range of strategies to help pupils with their reading. By Year 2, this results in pupils having a satisfactory understanding of letters and sounds and being able to 'build up' words they are unsure of. They are also able to use a range of other clues, such as pictures, to help them work out unfamiliar words and meanings. More able readers show sufficient confidence to tackle difficult texts and they like reading longer, more complex stories. They are able to explain and discuss what they have read and higher-attaining pupils can talk about particular authors and why they like them. Many pupils show good awareness of the importance of using expression when reading aloud. They speak out with enthusiasm, for example, when pupils in Year 2 were reading aloud the story of 'The Boy Who Cried Wolf'. Throughout the school, pupils are encouraged to think and talk about books they have read. Most can use the technical vocabulary, such as 'character', 'blurb' and 'dialogue',

effectively when describing books. By Year 6, many pupils show good levels of comprehension, and appreciate the underlying ideas and subtleties in the text. They refer to what they consider to be successful use of writing techniques by the author, for example, when building up the distinctive features of a particular character or setting. They can explain clearly why they like certain books, giving informed reasons for their choice, for example, because they enjoy adventure stories. They are able to contrast books and films of the same story and why the differences are necessary – for example, the book and film of Harry Potter. Pupils use the library, indexes, glossaries and contents pages successfully to find information from books.

81. The school has worked hard to improve pupils' writing. Although it is improving, it is still below average overall, and standards of writing are below those of reading. Too few pupils achieve the higher levels at the end of Years 2 and 6. Most pupils have positive attitudes to writing and by Year 2 they learn to appreciate the need to have a simple sequence when writing a story. They learn to write effectively in different ways, for example, to record information, write a story and write simple poems and lists. They are developing a suitable understanding of spelling and, although presentation is satisfactory, in handwriting pupils could achieve more as too few pupils use joined-up script. By Year 6, pupils develop an understanding that writing needs to be organised in different ways depending on its purpose, for example, for a playscript or a report. They have produced newspaper reports demonstrating different types of reporting techniques and language, depending on whether it is written for a tabloid or broadsheet newspaper. In their poetry writing, many pupils show effective use of metaphor and simile. Pupils' writing is reasonably logical and spelling is usually correct. Work is mostly well presented and handwriting is satisfactory overall. Some pupils in Year 6 produce extended writing that is well thought out and interesting and of high quality but few pupils are reaching this level at the present time and there is too little use of imaginative vocabulary. Recent work has meant that pupils in Year 6 are very clear about how to achieve their best in the forthcoming National Curriculum tests. However, throughout the school, pupils are not always clear enough about the different ways in which they might improve their writing. Across the school, pupils are not applying the skills of grammar consistently and work is being undertaken to address this.
82. Overall, teaching is satisfactory, with examples of good teaching. A good focus is given to the teaching of reading throughout the school. Pupils who find reading difficult receive a significant amount of individual attention from adults and there is a well thought out approach to encouraging pupils' independence in reading. Consequently, pupils are motivated to read and they are confident when explaining the 'strategies' they need to use to be successful readers. Teachers build their lesson planning appropriately on the National Literacy Strategy. Staff are secure in teaching reading and use the associated technical vocabulary well, for example, when describing parts of a word and elements of the text. Effective use is made of resources, especially the 'big books' and other class texts. In general, pupils try hard and they respond particularly well to the expectations which are made of them in reading. Teachers and support staff work together closely with good liaison to help ensure work is well matched to pupils' levels of understanding in reading and the 'guided reading' sessions work well. Teaching in other subjects contributes appropriately to the development of pupils' reading skills.
83. The teaching of writing is satisfactory overall but practice is not as consistent as in the teaching of reading. Teachers plan conscientiously to develop pupils' writing in literacy lessons but there is insufficient attention given to how writing skills can be developed and practised in other subjects of the curriculum. In literacy lessons, writing is often developed through the use of small group work during the middle part of lessons. However, at this stage, there is a tendency for the pace of the work to slow down and pupils lack a sense of urgency when they work independently. There are times when the pupils are uncertain about the amount and quality of work expected and how long they have to complete the tasks. On these occasions, pupils could be challenged more, particularly the more able. Plenaries and reviews are undertaken at the end of lessons. In a few classes these sessions include effective critical evaluation by pupils of the outcomes of their work. However, this part of the lesson does not always make the different ways in which improvements can be achieved clear enough to pupils. The contribution of other subjects to the development of pupils' writing skills is limited, as suitable opportunities for writing are not always taken.

84. The co-ordination of English is good. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable in the subject and has ensured that there is a good policy and planning in place. Monitoring has taken place, appropriate strengths and weaknesses have been identified and attention is being focused on achieving improvement. A good example of this is the way developments in writing are taking place following the production of a specific action plan to improve writing, which is a key priority in the school development plan. Learning resources are good and the resources in the library are developing well. Assessment procedures are good overall but there are times when more use could be made of the outcomes of assessment to help the children appreciate how they might improve their written work. Some use is made of ICT to support pupils' learning in English but it is not a sufficiently integral part of most lessons. This particularly affects pupils' skills in learning to draft and re-draft their writing.

MATHEMATICS

85. Overall, pupils make satisfactory progress throughout the school and by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, standards are broadly average. The progress of pupils with special educational needs and the small number who are learning English as an additional language is similar to that of other pupils. More able pupils could achieve more.
86. Pupils make sound progress in Years 1 and 2. The younger pupils add and subtract pairs of single-digit numbers and some more able pupils operate successfully with two-digit numbers. Pupils know that addition can be done with the numbers in any order and most have committed some basic addition and subtraction facts to memory. There is good understanding and use of the vocabulary of comparing and ordering numbers, such as 'more than', 'less than' and 'in order'. Pupils are beginning to measure mass in non-standard units, such as plastic cubes, but their estimation skills are weak. By the end of Year 2, most pupils have extended their understanding of place value up to 100, with some more able pupils comfortable to 1,000. All pupils recognise odd and even numbers but some are not secure with two-times and five-times tables. In shape, space and measures, all pupils have completed the same work. They name common three-dimensional shapes, such as cube, cuboid, cylinder and triangular prism. They use standard measures for length and recognise line symmetry in simple cases. Overall, there is insufficient emphasis on solving problems.
87. Most pupils continue to make sound progress in lower Key Stage 2. Progress is often good in upper Key Stage 2, where the teaching is more effective. In Years 3 and 4, pupils build progressively on their mental mathematics skills during the mental skills activities at the beginnings of sessions – doubling and halving, and counting on in steps of 2, 5, 10 and 20. Older pupils develop their mental skills to include working with decimals and percentages and, by Year 6, most calculate confidently and accurately. Year 3 pupils are able to use the data in a frequency table, construct a simple bar chart and use a computer to make a similar chart. They are able to answer a range of questions, such as 'How many?' and 'What is the difference between?' Most Year 4 pupils interpret data effectively from graphs and charts. However, many have an insecure knowledge of how to label graphs appropriately and of the associated technical vocabulary, such as horizontal and vertical axes. In Year 5, pupils have a sound understanding of the language of the probability of events ranging from certain to impossible. They discuss probability statements and decide whether they are likely, unlikely or have an even chance. By the end of Year 6, most pupils add and subtract decimals to two places and order decimals to three places. Many pupils multiply and divide whole numbers and decimals by 10, 100 or 1,000. Most pupils draw angles to the nearest degree and they identify and describe acute and obtuse angles. They are beginning to use their mathematical skills more regularly in problem solving situations. The scrutiny of pupils' work shows that a good amount is completed and homework is set regularly. However, pupils of different abilities largely receive the same work so more able pupils underachieve. In both key stages, insufficient attention is given to the development of problem solving skills. This means that pupils have few opportunities to develop their own strategies and to organise their information in a systematic way in order to present and analyse their results effectively.
88. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Teaching varies from very good to unsatisfactory and it is strongest in Years 5 and 6. In most lessons, teachers show satisfactory

subject knowledge and understanding; planning is sound and it follows the National Numeracy Strategy. Clear learning objectives are shared with the pupils, which helps to gain their attention and interest at the start of lessons. Pupils are managed well, behaviour is good and working relationships are very good. Learning resources are used well and support staff work effectively with pupils with special educational needs. The plenary is used to revise the learning objectives to check what has been learned. Where teaching is good or very good, technical language is used well and the lesson is delivered with energy and enthusiasm. The main activity is modelled sufficiently and learning targets with time limits are set. The plenary is used effectively to identify and resolve errors and misconceptions. Weaknesses in a number of lessons are low expectations and lack of challenge, particularly for the more able pupils. Together with a lack of timescaling and urgency, this leads to a lack of pace and to some underachievement. In most lessons, pupils concentrate well and work hard.

89. Teachers mark work regularly and often add supportive comments but there are few comments to help pupils to improve their work. Other subjects make a limited contribution to pupils' competency in numeracy – frequency tables are used in geography, and graphs and charts feature in science. There is little use of ICT to support work in mathematics.
90. The co-ordination of mathematics is good overall, although the co-ordinator is currently on long-term sick leave. The co-ordinator has good subject knowledge and understanding and has put an effective policy in place. A clear action plan for the subject is supported by a summary of termly priorities. Assessment data is analysed, pupils' work is scrutinised, teachers' planning is monitored and lessons are observed. The school is clear about the actions that need to be taken to improve performance and it has plans to implement these when the co-ordinator returns. Assessment procedures for mathematics are good but insufficient use is made of the assessment information to set challenging work for more able pupils. Learning resources are good and are used well. There are supportive mathematical displays in all classrooms.

SCIENCE

91. Pupils' attainment is in line with expectations in Year 2 and above the levels expected in Year 6. All pupils make good progress overall. As in 2002, when standards were well above the national average in the Year 6 National Curriculum tests, pupils are achieving well. However, fewer pupils in Year 6 are achieving the higher level (Level 5). There is a strong emphasis given to investigative work and this helps pupils to develop a good understanding of the subject.
92. By the end of Year 2, most pupils know that light comes from a variety of sources and they can describe how to make a bulb light up in a simple electrical circuit. They know about simple forces and can describe the effects of these on objects. They can draw and label a plant correctly and they have a secure understanding of what makes a plant grow. Many Year 1 pupils have learned that different animals, such as worms and spiders, live in different places. By Year 2, most pupils appreciate the importance of a healthy diet. They enjoy sorting objects and materials into groups – for example, those that are natural and those that are manufactured – and they recognise the differences between them. Their skills in problem solving and investigation are developed effectively. Pupils record information successfully in simple tables and charts, and they can explain how their experiments were carried out. Most pupils are able to say what they have found out from their work and offer simple explanations for their observations and results. More able pupils give good explanations about the ways in which they ensure that a test is fair.
93. By Year 6, pupils' attainment is above the levels expected. In Year 3, pupils suitably apply their understanding about the properties of materials and, in discussion, give good reasons why they think particular types of paper are more absorbent than others. They show a clear understanding of the idea of a fair test when they set up an investigation. In Year 4, pupils make appropriate gains in learning, for example, when learning about the properties of materials and about forces. In Years 5 and 6, pupils further develop their knowledge and understanding of a wide range of topics in the National Curriculum. Year 6 pupils can recall what they have learned, for example, about electricity, about solids, liquids and gases, and about the life cycles of different animals. In

a lesson on the daffodil in Year 6, pupils demonstrated very good knowledge about parts of a plant and many were able to describe how the functions of these are essential to the organism. The science work in Year 6 shows that pupils are able to draw sensible conclusions from their readings, and they can both record and interpret findings well. Pupils can explain why it is important to ensure tests are fair and to carry out scientific tests more than once. Their skills of prediction are above those usually seen.

94. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. There is some variation in quality through the school but very good teaching in Years 5 and 6 compensates for this. Throughout the school, teachers manage pupils very effectively. This results in the pupils having positive attitudes to learning and behaving well in lessons. The way in which teachers include pupils in class discussions is a strength. Generally, there is good challenge and pace in lessons, although occasionally the pace slows. This happened in one lesson because of some confusion caused by the teacher's well meaning but misguided attempt to extend children's learning into an area of science that was well beyond their understanding. Across the school, teachers ensure that pupils have plenty of opportunities to undertake practical work. Pupils show enthusiasm and curiosity, and say that they enjoy science. This was very evident in a Year 3 lesson when pupils tested the absorbency of different materials. Where the teaching is very good, staff make particularly good use of assessment both to make clear to pupils what they should have learned by the end of the lesson and also to challenge the pupils in their learning. The technique of pupils having to explain, in correct scientific terms, what they have learned in a one-minute slot towards the end of the lesson is particularly effective. Pupils work very hard knowing that they have to be ready to do this. Throughout these lessons, teachers question the pupils very well and constantly ask them to explain their thinking.
95. Teachers mark work thoroughly and comments are supportive. Overall, there are too few evaluative comments to assist pupils in developing their scientific ideas and improving their work. Generally, there is too little use of ICT in teaching science.
96. The co-ordinator is providing a clear structure and sense of direction for the future. The school makes effective use of national guidance as the basis of its curriculum. This is supported by a policy statement which outlines the school's high expectations in relation to this subject. Careful analysis of performance data has enabled the school to identify staff development and resource needs. The priorities in the development plan are appropriate and levels of resourcing are good. There has been some direct monitoring of teaching, and more is planned. The monitoring of planning to ensure progression of skills across the school and a good match of task to the prior attainment of individual pupils is developing well.

ART AND DESIGN

97. Overall, standards in art and design are average, with many examples of good quality work. The standards of much of the pupils' work on display around the school are above average. Pupils make at least satisfactory progress and for many in Key Stage 2 it is good. Pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language are well supported and make similar progress to other pupils in all aspects of art.
98. In Years 1 and 2, pupils use a range of media, including paint and crayon, to experiment successfully with colour and shape and to develop good techniques. They successfully develop their techniques to produce designs on textiles using wax resist and weaving simple patterns. Pupils in Year 1 have made pictures of sunflowers and used printing techniques to make flower designs. They also illustrate their written work with suitable designs. By Year 2, pupils work confidently and creatively and they have created imaginative designs inspired by the work of Escher. Careful observation skills can be seen in the sketches of teapots they have drawn.
99. Through Years 3 to 6, pupils continue to learn to work in the style of famous artists. For example, pupils in Year 3 have produced imaginative work in the style of Picasso and Degas. Pupils show good techniques in mixing and blending colours and in the composition of their

drawings and paintings. Pupils in Year 6 have produced designs in the style of Seurat. Careful observational skills can be seen in the self-portraits drawn and the use of pastel, crayon and pencil helps them to show the textures well – for example, pupils have produced portraits in the style of Picasso. Pupils in Year 5 have made three-dimensional pictures of houses and flowers, and pupils in Year 4 have made pictures in the style of Georgia O'Keefe.

100. Links with other subjects are good and include drawings to support a geography topic about the rain forests in Year 3. When pupils designed Islamic patterns, good links were made with mathematics, since this work involved repeating patterns, and with their studies in religious education. Studies in history are well supported by the three-dimensional models of Tudor houses and ships in Year 4 and clay models in Year 3. Good links were made with a literacy lesson when Year 5 pupils designed plates in the style of the Willow Pattern plate. The subject makes an important contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
101. From the evidence available in pupils' work, teachers' planning and the three lessons seen, teaching and learning are judged to be satisfactory with some good features. Teachers demonstrate sound subject knowledge and they have clear objectives and expectations.

Lessons are carefully planned to provide the opportunity for all pupils to develop their skills and use their imagination. Pupils learn well, are enthusiastic and sustain concentration throughout the sessions.

102. The curriculum is planned by individual teachers to provide pupils with appropriate opportunities using a variety of media to cover the National Curriculum. At present, leadership is unsatisfactory, as there is no identified co-ordinator, although the deputy head monitors teachers' planning effectively. Procedures for the assessment and recording of pupils' attainment are in the process of development. Resources for art and design are good.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

103. Standards are in line with those expected for pupils in Year 2 and in Year 6. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress overall. The standard of practical work is better than pupils' recorded planning and evaluations. By Year 6, the standards of the practical element of the work is often above that usually seen but pupils' below average skills in writing often limit the standard of their recorded work. The small amount of teaching observed was evaluated together with teachers' planning and records, and displays of pupils' work. Discussions were held with pupils and teachers.
104. A good range of topics is undertaken and in Year 1 pupils are able to describe how they had looked at pictures of buses, cars and sleighs before making their own designs of a vehicle that moves. It was evident that within a range of choices they had selected the materials they were to use and had carefully labelled their designs. Not every design had worked first time but pupils had modified their models to achieve improvement. For example, when referring to the ways in which wheels were attached to dowel axles, the pupils had learned that 'if we glued the wheels to the boxes they would not go round'. Pupils in Year 2 are in the process of designing puppets and they show clear awareness of the need to plan the materials and the tools needed ahead of making the puppets. Pupils talk with enthusiasm about the ways in which they will show the difference between the characters they intend to portray, for example, a bad wolf or a beautiful princess.
105. Year 3 pupils have designed and made different sandwiches that they considered to be part of a healthy diet. They have also used a good range of materials to make musical instruments. Some particularly good work based on an Elizabethan harbour has been undertaken by pupils in Year 4, who show good understanding about the materials used as they describe the project. A significant amount of work is undertaken in Year 5. For example, pupils have designed and made

books, a box of sweets for Mother's Day, T-shirts, masks, glove puppets and three-dimensional flowers. Pupils talk very knowledgeably about the design process that took place for each of these. Year 6 pupils have been particularly successful in the work on 'design and make an adventure playground for a hamster'. The outcomes of this work show particularly good use of natural materials and a very imaginative response to the brief. Discussion with Year 6 pupils confirmed that this was something they really enjoyed doing. The design outlines and the written evaluations are in line with those expected but the standard of the finished items is above those usually seen.

106. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. There is good teaching in Years 5 and 6. A suitable policy outlines the school's expectations in relation to this subject. Appropriate emphasis is given to health and safety. Topics are planned for each year group with built-in progression across the school.
107. There has been a good focus on design and technology during the past year and there is evidence of improvement, particularly in the practical outcomes of pupils' work. The staff have worked together well as a team and in the absence of a co-ordinator they have ensured that the subject has continued to develop. The subject is appropriately resourced but assessment procedures are not yet in place. There has been no monitoring of the quality of teaching or moderation of work produced across the school to ensure consistency in judgement of standards. There is limited use of ICT to support the work undertaken in design and technology. The school has rightly identified the need to ensure that co-ordination is undertaken in a more systematic way.

GEOGRAPHY

108. Overall, standards in geography are average. Discussions with pupils in Year 6, a scrutiny of pupils' work, teachers' planning and other documentation has informed the judgements as well as observation of one lesson. Teachers' planning shows that geography is taught systematically. Work on display and in pupils' books shows that pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress in their knowledge and understanding. More able pupils could achieve more.
109. Pupils in Year 1 can identify and describe features in the local environment. They learn about different types of building near the school and consider ways of making the area safer. Pupils find out about places further afield by following the travels of 'Barnaby Bear'. In Year 2, pupils make comparisons between the local area and life on the imaginary Island of Struay. They have looked at the different jobs people would do on Struay and compared them with the jobs people do in Warrington. They know how to use an atlas and can identify the British Isles and where Warrington is located. They are developing a suitable understanding of the use of maps and plans and know how to locate places using simple grid references.
110. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 have observed the world beyond their classroom. They have studied a contrasting locality in the United Kingdom and they have also studied the effects of weather around the world and its influence on travellers. Pupils in Year 4 looked at a European locality in their recent studies of France. Pupils in Year 5 have made a study of rivers and the effects on settlements and livelihoods. In Year 6, pupils show a good understanding of the effects of humans on the environment. For example, they have looked at a non-European locality and show a good understanding of life in Japan. They are developing suitable mapping skills and understand concepts such as scale and the use of keys.
111. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. In the single lesson observed, teaching was satisfactory. The teacher had sound subject knowledge and prepared the lesson well to develop pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. Geography studies in Years 3 to 6 alternate termly with history. Teachers' planning shows that there is appropriate coverage of

geography throughout the school and that topics are covered in appropriate depth. However, there are long gaps between geography topics, which limits the systemic development of skills.

112. The co-ordinator has recently taken on the subject responsibility and has made a satisfactory start. An audit of the provision has been completed and there is a clear plan for future development. Assessment arrangements are in the process of being developed. Little monitoring of the subject has taken place to date. Generally, there is too little use of ICT in teaching geography, although pupils in Years 3 to 6 have used the Internet to find information to support their studies.

HISTORY

113. It was possible to observe only two history lessons during the inspection. From discussions with pupils, a scrutiny of work in their books and a wide range of documentation, it is evident that pupils attain average standards. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress. More able pupils could achieve more.
114. Pupils in Year 1 have looked at transport today and compared it with how it was in the past. They compare the distinctive features of each and discuss the role of horses. At the moment they are looking at what it was like to go to school in Victorian times. In Year 2, pupils have studied the way people shopped in the past and how we do it today. They discuss photographs of different types of shop and what would be sold in them. Pupils showed a sound knowledge of the Fire of London. They know where it started, why it spread so quickly and how people tried to put it out with buckets of water as 'there were no fire engines'. They have also studied the lives of famous people including Guy Fawkes, Florence Nightingale, Samuel Pepys and Louis Braille. For example, they understand how hospitals have changed since the time of Florence Nightingale.
115. Pupils in Year 3 are looking at life in ancient Egypt and how we know about life then by using evidence of how bodies were preserved after death and which articles were buried with them. They understand about the use of different sources of evidence. Pupils in Year 4 have studied the Tudors and have built detailed models of Tudor houses and ships. Their work shows a suitable understanding of life then and the major figures. The work of pupils in Year 5 demonstrates a sound knowledge of ancient Greece. Pupils in Year 6 have made a detailed study of what life was like in the 1960s and have studied the period through the life of John Lennon. They can compare life today with life then. Part of their study involved the questioning of somebody who grew up in that period. After watching a television programme, they planned questions to help them understand the period better. The questions asked were very thoughtful and showed a good understanding of what they had already learned.
116. From the two lessons seen and other evidence, teaching and learning are judged to be satisfactory. Staff have a sound knowledge of the subject and plan lessons to ensure that pupils develop a suitable understanding and the skills of finding out about life in the past. For example, the lesson seen in Year 6 where pupils questioned an eyewitness of the 1960s had obviously been well planned so that pupils could run the whole session on their own with minimum support from the teacher. In addition to good use being made of visitors, as was seen in that lesson, visits are made, including those to Warrington Museum and Speke Hall, where pupils in Year 4 supported their work on the Tudors.
117. History studies in Years 3 to 6 alternate termly with geography. Teachers' planning shows that there is appropriate coverage of history throughout the school. Topics are covered in appropriate depth, although there are long gaps between history topics, which limits the systematic development of skills. The planning is based on national guidance for history and covers appropriate topics to ensure that pupils develop the skills, knowledge and understanding required.
118. Leadership of the subject is satisfactory overall, with a suitable action plan for future development. Assessment and recording of pupils' attainment against the expectations of the National

Curriculum are in the process of development. Little monitoring of the subject has taken place to date. Learning resources are generally good but there is too little use of ICT in history to support pupils' learning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

119. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress overall. By Year 6, pupils' skills in word processing and their understanding of the use of multi-media, spreadsheets and databases are generally in line with expectations. Attainment in monitoring, modelling and control is below that usually seen. By Year 2, many pupils have achieved the expected knowledge, skills and understanding for their age. Improvements are taking place through the school so that standards at the end of Year 6 are gradually improving.

120. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve much that is expected at that age. They have a positive attitude to technology and enjoy talking about what they know. In Year 1, they use a simple word processor, control a mouse and show an understanding of the keyboard. They use different tools for different purposes to convey information, for example, when using a pencil icon or a sound or picture icon. By Year 2, pupils carry out simple research and enter, retrieve and save work. They present their ideas in different forms such as in tables and charts. They program a moveable toy, known as a Roamer, so that it moves forwards and backwards as well as

sideways at their commands. They have sufficient knowledge and understanding of computers as everyday appliances and appreciate that technology is used to control them. Their word processing skills are generally appropriate for their age.

121. In Year 3, pupils are suitably extending their knowledge of databases. They enter data into a database and recognise the advantages and disadvantages of using ICT in this work. They are suitably building up their understanding about using different search methods to interrogate databases. Pupils use the technical vocabulary associated with this work effectively. In Years 4 and 5, pupils are developing their ideas about how to manipulate text and graphics and they show a good level of confidence in this work. Year 5 pupils are very confident in using a commercial package to create their own melodies to accompany a 'powerpoint' presentation they are planning for the whole school. By Year 6, pupils have developed appropriate skills in word processing and use multi-media well to present information for different purposes. They realise the importance of adapting information for their audience, for example, when they delivered technical information to the rest of their class about the heart and internal organs. They are able to use spreadsheets and databases for a variety of purposes and can explain the effectiveness of each. They are making good use of the Internet and are aware of the need to follow the school's policy on Internet safety. When asked about work undertaken in monitoring, modelling and control pupils are much less clear, although they are able to describe some recent work undertaken using 'super-logo'. Nevertheless, in this aspect pupils can achieve more.

122. Teaching overall is satisfactory. Very good teaching was observed in Year 5 where the ICT co-ordinator is helping to raise standards by teaching this year group of pupils in addition to her own Year 6 class. Throughout the school, staff plan carefully and all aspects of the National Curriculum are covered. They have undertaken training and have sound expertise in the subject, although in the areas of monitoring, modelling and control there is still some uncertainty. Teachers use a range of techniques to make the best use of time and of the skills of support staff in the ICT suite. They ensure that pupils are fully engaged throughout. Occasionally, however, teaching lacks sufficient challenge, particularly to extend the learning of the most able pupils, some of whom have gained considerable expertise by using ICT at home. All staff in school effectively reinforce the importance of ICT as a key skill and pupils' enthusiasm for ICT is a strong feature. Pupils are eager to help and share activities and, in all age groups, pupils work well together. Many of the older pupils work with minimal supervision, using initiative and frequently

taking responsibility for their own learning. Equipment is treated well and routines for retaining and printing work are carried out smoothly. Pupils behave well in lessons.

123. Co-ordination is good. Improvement has taken place since the new school opened and further development, particularly in the area of monitoring, modelling and control, is now taking place. Resources are good and have been improved significantly in the last two years. A staff training programme has been carried out successfully, with teachers having gained accreditation as a result. Staff are beginning to use ICT in other subjects of the curriculum; for example, a computer microscope is used in science lessons. However, overall, the contribution of other subjects is limited. Assessment procedures are in the process of being developed so that teachers can fully assess and challenge all pupils. The provision is enhanced by an ICT club and this is generally well attended.

MUSIC

124. Standards in music are average overall and pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language, make generally satisfactory progress through the school. Standards in the elements of performing and listening are in line with those expected, with some good singing in assembly. Pupils have fewer experiences of composing and critically appraising and standards in these areas are below those expected. Recent work in upper Key Stage 2 on composition using ICT shows promise.

125. Music provision is enhanced by a series of visitors to the school. Pupils have been able to listen to professional musicians perform, such as the brass ensemble 'Tubulate'. They have been involved in playing rhythms on African drums from Ghana and in exploring musical rhythms in poetry. The subject makes an important contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils.
126. By the end of Year 2, most pupils are able to sing simple songs in tune. They are learning to improve pitch and vary the dynamics so that they can sing in an expressive manner. Many pupils play untuned percussion instruments with appropriate timing. The majority clap a rhythm accurately, respond appropriately to different moods in music and recognise when music gets faster or slower. In one lesson, pupils responded well to music through dance and they were keen to perform in a future assembly.
127. By the end of Year 6, most pupils sing in tune with expression. They are able to recognise regular and irregular rhythm patterns and the majority can build layers of rhythms using a limited range of notes. Pupils listen well to recorded music and to explanations about the background of different kinds of music, such as the Tarantella. In one lesson, pupils were asked to listen to Tchaikovsky's 'Italian Caprice' and some were able to comment suitably on what they had heard in the piece.
128. The teaching overall is satisfactory, leading to satisfactory learning. The use of a commercial scheme is helping to overcome teachers' weaknesses in subject knowledge and understanding. Currently, there is insufficient work on composing and appraising. Planning is generally sound with specific objectives but expectations are too low, especially for the more able pupils. Lessons consist mainly of whole-class activities, with all pupils being set the same task. Classroom management is effective – pupils behave well and working relationships are very good. Most pupils are interested in music; many are keen to perform and their concentration is good overall. There are no formal assessment procedures in music.
129. Leadership is unsatisfactory, as there is no identified co-ordinator. The headteacher oversees the subject and she is clear about the way forward – improving the provision in music is a priority in the school development plan for 2003-04. The resources and scheme of work will be reviewed, a policy will be drafted, and teaching and planning will be monitored and evaluated.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

130. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress overall. They attain standards that are in line with those expected for pupils of this age.
131. Pupils have opportunities to undertake all the areas of activity outlined in the National Curriculum and they achieve satisfactory gains in learning. Most pupils throughout the school have established a reasonable level of co-ordination and control of their movements and show good awareness of space and others. In physical education lessons, pupils undertake energetic activity and many are able to explain the effects of exercise on their bodies. By Year 6, pupils are developing a sound knowledge and understanding of a range of different games activities and can explain, for example, the importance of marking an opponent and of using different techniques to gain possession of a ball. Most pupils demonstrate the ability to plan ahead and they show that they have some good ideas. However, they tend not to give sufficiently evaluative feedback in order to help others achieve improvement in their work. In swimming, pupils make satisfactory progress and attain in line with the levels expected.
132. The teaching overall is satisfactory, leading to satisfactory learning. Teachers plan thoroughly. There is a good focus on the development of skills; staff spend time explaining how these can be developed and the pupils are prepared to practise hard. Relationships between staff and pupils are very good. Staff manage pupils' behaviour very well and the pupils are enthusiastic about taking part in physical activity. Resources are well organised and are used effectively. Staff

dress appropriately for physical education and in this way set a standard for pupils, who in turn dress appropriately. Overall, best use is made of the time available, although there are occasions where pupils have to wait for too long before having a chance to be active themselves. There is generally a suitable focus on warming up and cooling down. Staff are prepared to help pupils' understanding by demonstrating techniques themselves and they use other pupils as a model. Teachers often praise pupils' efforts but there is generally too little clarity for pupils about the criteria that make for successful performance. Teachers do not always draw attention to the specific vocabulary needed to evaluate different types of activity effectively. As a result, there is a tendency for pupils to give general feedback to each other about the ways in which they might improve performance rather than more incisive comments that lead to challenging learning and improved standards.

133. Co-ordination is satisfactory overall. The co-ordinator took on responsibility for the subject only at the beginning of the academic year. She has achieved much in that short time but there is still further to go in order to achieve better consistency across the school and improved standards. Already she has undertaken an audit of provision and helped to develop planning. She has clear ideas about how to take the subject forward, including further development of the assessment procedures and also the monitoring procedures. Resources are generally good and accommodation is adequate. There is suitable attention to the importance of safe practices. There are a number of extra-curricular activities that effectively support the work undertaken in physical education; these include clubs for football, rugby and judo.