

# INSPECTION REPORT

## SAIGHTON C OF E PRIMARY SCHOOL

Saighton, Chester

LEA area: Cheshire

Unique reference number: 111350

Headteacher: Mr G D Sheen

Reporting inspector: Mr A. C. Matthews  
RgI's No. 19410

Dates of inspection: 17 – 20 March 2003

Inspection number: 251096

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior

School category: Voluntary aided

Age range of pupils: 4-11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Saughton Lane  
Saughton  
Chester

Postcode: CH3 6EG

Telephone number: 01244 335822

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Appropriate authority: Governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr J Davies-Colley

Date of previous inspection: March 1998

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Team members |                |                      | Subject responsibilities   | Aspect responsibilities  |
|--------------|----------------|----------------------|--|--|
| 19410        | A. C. Matthews | Registered inspector | Mathematics<br>Science<br>Information and communication technology<br>Design and technology<br>Physical education<br>Foundation stage<br>Educational inclusion | What sort of school is it?<br>How high are standards?<br>How well are pupils taught?<br>How well is the school led and managed?<br>What should the school do to improve further? |
| 11437        | T. Anderson    | Lay inspector        |  | Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development<br>How well does the school care for its pupils?<br>How well does the school work in partnership with parents?                |
| 23686        | P. White       | Team inspector       | English<br>Art<br>Geography<br>History<br>Music<br>English as an additional language<br>Special educational needs  | How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?   |

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Saighton C of E Primary School is situated on the Duke of Westminster's estate in the village of Saughton a few miles south of Chester. Since the last inspection, the school has extended the playing field and playground provision, built a new classroom, created a hall and developed a small secure playground for the Foundation Stage. The majority of pupils (70 per cent) come from outside the catchment area. The roll has changed little since the last inspection in 1998 and the school is smaller than most other primary schools. The school is slightly under-subscribed. There are 100 full time pupils – 56 boys and 44 girls aged between 4 and 11, taught in four classes. There are no pupils for whom English is an additional language. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is well below the national average. There are 18 pupils on the special needs register which at 18 per cent is broadly average. A below average proportion of pupils has a statement of special educational needs. Pupils join the Reception class in the September of the school year in which they are five years old. Pupil mobility rate is 15 per cent which is slightly higher than most other schools, with four pupils joining and 12 leaving the school at other than the normal times. Attainment on entry has fallen in recent years and is now below average.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

Saighton Primary is a good school, with some very good features. The headteacher and senior teacher provide good leadership and are well supported by a dedicated and hardworking staff. The quality of teaching is good and enables pupils to make good progress through the school and achieve high standards. The school gives good value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- The pupils make good progress through the school and the very good quality teaching they receive in Years 5 and 6 results in them achieving standards that are well above average in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6.
- The pupils thoroughly enjoy school, behave well, have very good attitudes to their work and get on very well together.
- The headteacher provides good leadership and is well supported by governors and all staff.
- The provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is of high quality and leads to a calm, purposeful and positive atmosphere in school in which everyone feels valued.
- Parents have a very high regard for the school and provide very good support for their children's education.

#### **What could be improved**

- The way the school uses the results of assessments to track pupils' progress through the school.
- The pupils' attainment in information and communication technology by the end of Year 6.

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

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

The school has made good improvement since the last inspection in March 1998. In relation to the key issues, the school has improved the curriculum by introducing schemes of work in each subject which clearly set out what is to be taught and learned as the pupils move through the school. The school development plan is now carefully drawn up, clearly costed and systematically evaluated. Since the last inspection, there have also been improvements in the quality of teaching, the standard of pupils' work by the end of Year 6, the quality of relationships and pupils' personal development.

## STANDARDS

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

| Performance in: | Compared with |      |      |                 |
|-----------------|---------------|------|------|-----------------|
|                 | all schools   |      |      | similar schools |
|                 | 2000          | 2001 | 2002 | 2002            |
| English         | C             | B    | A    | B               |
| Mathematics     | C             | A    | A*   | A               |
| Science         | A             | C    | C    | E               |

| Key                |        |
|--------------------|--------|
| very high          | A<br>* |
| well above average | A      |
| above average      | B      |
| average            | C      |
| below average      | D      |
| well below average | E      |

The children's attainment when they start in the Reception class is below average and is particularly weak in the development of their early reading and writing skills. They make good progress in the Reception year because of the well-focused teaching and most will achieve the expected standards by the time they start in Year 1. The exception to this will be in the areas of literacy and personal, social and emotional development, where a significant minority of pupils will not achieve the expected standards. Unlike at the time of the last inspection, very few pupils in the Reception class will achieve higher than the expected standards. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make satisfactory progress and have above average attainment in mathematics and average attainment in reading and writing. In art and music, pupils' attainment is higher than national expectations and in all other subjects pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations. Pupils make good progress in Years 3 to 6, and particularly good progress in Years 5 and 6. The present Year 6 is achieving well above average standards in English, mathematics and science. This shows an improvement over last year's science results and the slight decline in standards in mathematics, where pupils' results were very high, being in the top five per cent in the country. The school has set very challenging targets for these pupils to achieve in the 2003 National Curriculum tests and evidence from the inspection confirms they are on course to meet these targets. These pupils have very well developed speaking and listening skills and the standard of their reading is high. Pupils make good use of their literacy skills in subjects such as science and history and this experience helps them to develop their writing, spelling and grammar further. Pupils are particularly good at developing their own investigations in science. The quality of pupils' art work is good and is very carefully displayed around the school. Pupils' attainment in information and communication technology is below average because pupils are not taught all aspects of the subject. Pupils' singing is of a high standard and enriches occasions like school assemblies. Pupils' attainment in all other subjects is in line with national expectations, except in art and music where the attainment is above expectations. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress in lessons. Higher-ability pupils are particularly well challenged in Years 5 and 6 by their teachers and achieve high standards. The progress of higher-achieving pupils in other classes is sometimes restricted by the use of undemanding worksheets.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

| Aspect                                 | Comment   |
|--|---|
| Attitudes to the school                | Very good. Pupils are very enthusiastic about school and have positive attitudes to their work.   |
| Behaviour, in and out of classrooms    | Good at all times.  |
| Personal development and relationships | Very good. Pupils have very good relationships with each other, take their responsibilities very seriously and show increasing confidence as they become older. |
| Attendance                             | Good, with pupils arriving promptly for school.   |

The very strong relationships through the school create a very caring and supportive ethos. These relationships are further developed by the residential visits for all years and the wide range of extra-curricular activities.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is good overall and this relates closely to the good progress that pupils make as they move through the school. During the inspection, a significant proportion of very good teaching was observed in the Reception and Years 5 and 6 classes, where pupils were consistently challenged and were most enthusiastic about their learning. Evidence from the work of Year 1 and 2 pupils indicates that the quality of teaching and the pupils' progress has been satisfactory over time. However, a significant proportion of lessons observed in the inspection in this class were good. English and mathematics, including the skills of literacy and numeracy, are taught well overall through the school and help pupils to achieve high standards by the end of Year 6. A clear strength of the teaching is the capable management of the pupils' behaviour in the classroom, allied to the teachers' very good subject knowledge and understanding. The most important area for development is the rationalisation of the use of worksheets, particularly in Years 2, 3 and 4, to ensure that the work builds effectively on pupils' previous learning so that pupils of all abilities, and particularly the higher-achieving, are effectively and consistently challenged. Teachers' marking of work is good, and particularly good in Years 5 and 6, where it leads directly to improvements in pupils' work. Homework is set very regularly and has a positive impact on pupils' learning. The teaching of art, music and swimming through the school is consistently good and leads to high standards in these subjects.



## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

| Aspect  | Comment  |
|---|--|
| The quality and range of the curriculum   | Good. The school provides a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum that meets all statutory requirements and accurately reflects the aims and objectives of the school. The curriculum is enriched by residential visits for all pupils and a very good range of extra-curricular activities. |
| Provision for pupils with special educational needs   | Good. Individual education plans are of good quality and pupils make good progress towards the targets set for them.   |
| Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | Very good. Pupils are given many opportunities to develop their social skills and to take responsibility for helping in the life and work of the school.   |
| How well the school cares for its pupils  | The procedures for child protection and ensuring pupils' welfare are good. There are good procedures for assessing pupils' attainment but the results of these assessments are not yet used sufficiently well to track pupils' progress through each year.                                     |

The school has very good links with parents who play a significant role in the life of the school. Parents receive very good quality information from the school and give very good support to their children's learning, both at home and in school.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

| Aspect   | Comment  |
|--|--|
| Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff | The headteacher, ably assisted by his experienced senior teacher, provides good leadership and management and is very well supported by all staff who are committed to raising standards further. Whilst subject leaders provide good leadership, they do not yet have sufficient time to monitor the quality of teaching and learning through the school. |
| How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities             | Satisfactory. The governors are very supportive of the school and play a much fuller part in setting the school improvement plan. Their monitoring of the school's performance is under-developed.   |
| The school's evaluation of its performance                       | Satisfactory. The monitoring of teaching by the headteacher is good and has been used effectively to improve the quality of teaching in the school. There is, at present, a lack of rigour in the way that the school uses assessment information to track pupils' progress through the school.  |
| The strategic use of resources                                   | Good. The school uses its budget carefully to improve its resources and accommodation. The school applies the principles of best value well, particularly in its consultation with parents, when buying resources and in its provision for extra-curricular activities.  |

Staffing is well matched to the needs of the curriculum and good use of teachers' expertise is made in art and music. Resources for learning are satisfactory. There has been a great improvement since the last inspection in the classroom accommodation and the outside play areas. Because of lack of space, the school hall is also a storage area for dinner tables and chairs and, as such, is not suitable for the more energetic aspects of physical education.

#### **PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

| <b>What pleases parents most</b>  | <b>What parents would like to see improved</b>                          |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children's enjoyment of school.</li> <li>• The quality of teaching and the good progress that children make.</li> <li>• The leadership and management of the headteacher and the approachability of the school.</li> <li>• The good range of extra-curricular activities.</li> <li>• Children's behaviour and opportunities for them to take increasing responsibility.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Homework provision.</li> </ul> |

The inspectors endorse parents' positive views but do not agree with parents' concerns about homework provision. This they felt was set regularly, with pupils having a clear idea how it helped their learning.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and pupils' achievements**

1. When the school was last inspected, in March 1998, standards of attainment were judged to be above average in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2 and above average in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 6. Since that time the standards at the end of Year 2 have fallen, principally because of the lower attainment of the children when they started at the school. The attainment at the end of Year 6 has improved in line with the national trend. In 2002, the school's performance in the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2 was above average in reading, average in writing and below average in mathematics. Compared with similar schools, attainment was above average in reading, below average in writing and well below average in mathematics. In the tests at the end of Year 6, the school's performance last year was well above average in English, below average in science and very high in mathematics, with attainment being in the top five per cent of all schools. Compared to similar schools, its performance was well above average in mathematics, above average in English but well below average in science.
2. Inspectors found that the present Year 2 pupils are making satisfactory progress. In reading, the pupils' attainment is above average and in writing, their attainment is satisfactory. In mathematics, pupils' attainment is above average with a higher proportion of pupils working at the higher levels. The attainment in these subjects clearly mirrors the pupils' attainment on entry to the school in the Reception class.
3. Inspection evidence confirms that Year 6 pupils' attainment is well above average in English, mathematics and science and has improved since the last inspection. This group of Year 6 pupils is making very good progress, due to the consistently high quality and challenging teaching. The noticeable improvement in science from the previous year is due to the significantly increased proportion of pupils working at the higher levels. Careful analysis of National Curriculum test results is used effectively by teachers to ensure that the curriculum is constantly refined to address identified weaknesses. However, the school's systems for setting yearly targets, and using the results of ongoing assessments to track pupils' progress towards these targets, is not rigorous enough to ensure that the high standards at the end of Year 6 will be maintained in future years.
4. The school's task in raising attainment, particularly at the lower end of the school, is made more difficult by the relatively high level of pupil mobility that the school experiences and the noticeable decline in standards on entry to the school in the Reception class. These are particularly noticeable in aspects of literacy, children's personal, social and emotional development and some aspects of numeracy. The attainment on entry of the present Year 6 pupils was higher than the attainment of those who joined the Reception class in the last two years. This means that the school will have to work very hard if it is to maintain the present standards at the end of Year 6. The school is fortunate in the parental help that it receives and also with the parents' interest in supporting their children with homework.
5. Standards are above average in art and music through the school and good use is made of teacher expertise in these two subjects. Standards in swimming are also above average. Standards in other subjects are generally in line with national expectations by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. In information and communication technology (ICT) standards are in line with national expectations at the end of Year 2 but below national expectations at the end of Year 6, where pupils do not cover all aspects of the subject. ICT is at present part of the school

improvement plan and weaknesses in the curriculum and in teacher expertise are being appropriately addressed.

6. There are some differences in the performance of boys and girls. Over the last three years, girls have outperformed boys in reading and writing at the end of Year 2 and this is carried through to the end of Year 6, where girls are almost the equivalent of a year ahead of boys. Whilst girls have performed better than boys in science during the last three years, this is likely to be reversed with the present Year 6 group. There is, however, an absence of a clear pattern from year to year which makes it important for the school to continue to monitor the differences carefully.
7. The attainment of children on entry to the school is much lower than at the time of the last inspection. This is most noticeable in the attainment of boys, with over half of the present Reception class group entering the school with attainment that is well below that expected of children of a similar age. However, teaching that is effective in improving basic skills and is founded on good management of the classroom and high expectation, results in the great majority of pupils attaining the expected Early Learning Goals<sup>1</sup> by the time they leave the Reception class. The exception is in communication, language and literacy and pupils' personal, social and emotional development, where a significant minority of pupils will not reach the expected standards.
8. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets set for them. Children in Reception have their needs identified early and make good progress in relation to their specific targets, because the staff adopt appropriate strategies to address weaknesses. Progress for these pupils continues to be good through the school, because their individual education plans clearly identify small, achievable targets for improvement in the next stage of their learning. Their progress is also helped by the work of the learning support teacher and the support assistant who work and plan closely with the class teachers to ensure that these pupils' learning needs are met, through individual or group support. Higher-achieving pupils achieve very well at the end of Year 6, but their progress through the school is sometimes restricted by undemanding work sheets.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

9. Pupils' attitudes and personal development are very good and their behaviour is good. Pupils' attendance and punctuality at the school is good. The high standards reported at the time of the last inspection have been maintained and have a significant impact on the pupils' work and progress.
10. Pupils display very good attitudes in the classroom and around the school. For example, in one role play activity in the Reception class, pupils dressed up as adults and carried out domestic activities such as cooking, cleaning and looking after the baby with great enthusiasm. Pupils respond very well to their teachers and other adults in the school. In a school assembly they sat very quietly listening carefully and with reverence to the classical music being played prior to the start of the assembly. In the playground pupils displayed consistently very caring attitudes to each other as they played a variety of games. The pupils have very strong feelings for the school. For example, in one discussion they were asked what they would change if

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<sup>1</sup> Early learning goals - these are expectations for most children to reach by the end of the foundation stage. They refer mainly to achievements children make in connection with communication language and literacy; mathematical development; and personal, social and emotional development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical and creative development. There are many goals for each area of learning, for example, in language and literacy pupils should be able to write their own name and other things such as labels and begin to write simple sentences.

they were the headteacher. After an initial stunned silence, the pupils spoke very positively about how much they enjoyed coming to school and its very positive ethos and values. There was nothing they wanted to change.

11. Pupils' behaviour is consistently good and often very good. Pupils behave very well when lessons have good pace and the work is challenging and expectations high. Occasionally, the teaching does not successfully challenge all the pupils and when this happens, as in one mathematics lesson, pupils take advantage and their behaviour deteriorates. Although not observed during the inspection, there is evidence of a very small amount of unsatisfactory behaviour from a small minority of pupils. However, the school's proactive approach minimises the impact of this behaviour on other pupils' learning. There have been no recent exclusions from the school. At lunch times, pupils behave consistently well both in the school hall and in the playground. They arrive and leave school in an orderly manner.
12. The day-to-day relationships between pupils and teachers and pupils and pupils is very good and these have a very positive impact on the way that pupils learn alongside each other and from each other. Pupils enjoy being given responsibilities and take them seriously. Responsibilities include monitors for classrooms and the library, working the overhead projector during assembly, and helping to distribute play equipment for lunchtime play. Two children from each year group are also members of the School Council that meets regularly to discuss and promote ideas submitted by their peers. Children respond well to this work because they can see how it improves their enjoyment of school. For example, the council is currently helping to draw up a set of playground rules to ensure that all children receive an equal opportunity to use the new playground resources. Pupils have well developed collaborative skills and these are used effectively by the teachers as part of the learning process. A good example of this was seen in a Year 5/6 self-defence lesson, where the pupils' collaborative skills led to high quality learning. The school also provides many opportunities for pupils to develop their social skills through speaking and listening, such as in one assembly, where several pupils performed a short play that was set to music, and other, older pupils talked about their recent road safety initiatives.
13. The overall attendance at the school is good and is currently above the national average. The incidence of unauthorised absence is very low and is well below the national average. There is very little evidence of pupil lateness and the vast majority of pupils come to school on time. There is, however, some slippage during the school day in relation to the starting time of some lessons. School registers are correctly marked.

#### **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?**

14. Overall the quality of teaching is good. It is strongest in Years 5 and 6, where pupils are consistently challenged and expectations are high. Teaching has improved since the last inspection, particularly in the proportion of very good or better lessons. Unlike at the time of the last inspection, there was no unsatisfactory teaching. Overall the quality of teaching is improving, promoted by the consistent approach adopted by the headteacher to monitoring, evaluating and developing the teaching in the core subjects.
15. There are some consistent and characteristic strengths in the quality of teaching across the school and across subjects. A clear strength is the way that teachers use their very good subject knowledge to question and assess pupils, whilst deepening their understanding. Teachers' planning is consistently good and clearly identifies what pupils are to learn during each lesson. In the best lessons, this is shared with pupils at the beginning of the lesson and referred to during the plenary session at the end of the lesson. The management of pupils is good overall and very good in the Reception class, where high expectations and a consistency

of approach are instilling good attitudes to learning and good behaviour. There is evidence of good quality marking in all classes but it is most consistent in Years 5 and 6, where it clearly identifies what pupils need to do to improve their work and has a noticeable impact on the quality of that work. The monitoring of planning by the headteacher and co-ordinators is a strong feature of the management of teaching and leads to teachers making good use of time, support staff and resources. In English, mathematics and science, teachers make good use of homework to support and consolidate learning in the classroom. It is a weakness that in Years 1, 2, 3 and 4, the teachers make too little use of ICT to encourage independent learning or to consolidate the pupils' computer skills. In Years 3 to 6, a lack of relevant programs and teachers' expertise in certain aspects of ICT is resulting in unsatisfactory progress by these pupils.

16. The teaching of English, including the skills of literacy, is good in Years 1 and 2 and very good in Years 3 to 6. The English co-ordinator sets good standards and most of the time teachers have high enough expectations and set work that is appropriately challenging. In the majority of lessons the pace is brisk and teachers display high levels of enthusiasm, enabling pupils to make good gains in their learning. Whilst the introductory parts of literacy lessons have good pace, the work set does not consistently encourage pupils to develop their literacy skills particularly in writing, where the use of worksheets restricts some pupils' ability to write at length. This is especially the case for the higher-achieving pupils, whose creativity and pace of learning is sometimes restricted.
17. The teaching of mathematics, including the skills of numeracy, is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and very good in Years 3 to 6. Teachers have a good understanding of the three-part lesson of the Numeracy Strategy and use resources effectively to develop the pupils' understanding of new concepts. The mental mathematics sessions at the beginning of lessons are carefully planned and prompt pupils to give fast answers. These sessions have been particularly effective at developing Year 5 and 6 pupils' knowledge of multiplication tables. Occasionally pupils get carried away in this work; calling out answers and spoiling the assessment opportunities for the teacher. Where teaching is most effective, the teacher not only pushes a pupil to explain how they reached their answer but also reinterprets the answer, so that all pupils in the class have a greater opportunity of learning from the response. This helps pupils to clarify their thinking and learn effectively from their peers. Teaching is less effective when the work set is too dependent on work sheets, as often happens in Years 1 and 2. This often restricts challenge, particularly for the higher-achievers and also limits pupils' opportunities to set down their own work.
18. Art and design, music and physical education are taught well and lead to pupils making good progress in these subjects. Good use is made of specialist teaching in all three of these subjects. The school is fortunate to have on its staff a very experienced music teacher, which results in high quality singing from the older pupils. Good quality teaching in physical education is leading to above average standards in swimming and well-coached extra-curricular football sessions are leading directly to some very skilful older players in the school football team. In science, pupils make satisfactory progress in Years 1 to 4 and very good progress in Years 5 and 6. Pupils' progress is sometimes restricted in Years 3 and 4 by the use of worksheets that do not challenge pupils of all abilities. This is particularly so when the work on a particular topic, such as light, is identical and does not give the teacher a clear insight into pupils' understanding. In geography, teaching is good and in all other subjects, the quality of teaching is satisfactory, leading to pupils making appropriate progress as they move through the school.
19. Pupils are very enthusiastic learners because teachers work hard to choose interesting topics that involve a range of different subjects. This was clearly evident in a Year 5 and 6 project on biscuit making, which resulted in a high-class booklet involving pupils' numeracy, literacy,

art and design and data handling skills and also some very tasty biscuits. Whilst teachers mark work carefully, the lack of a consistently applied school correction policy means that not all pupils are benefiting from their teacher's comments.

20. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. This is because individual education plans and other targets are matched carefully to meet their precise needs. Teachers use a wide range of successful strategies to motivate, involve and challenge these pupils which also involve good use of the learning support teacher and learning support assistant. Records are carefully maintained and regularly updated to enable teachers to track pupils' progress. The occasional example of inappropriate behaviour, such as was seen in the Year 3 / 4 class during the inspection, is dealt with very effectively to ensure that incidents such as this do not disrupt the learning of the class. Higher-attaining pupils generally learn well, although there are still some occasions when they are not sufficiently challenged to fully exploit their potential.

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

21. For the pupils in Years 1 to 6, the school now provides a good quality and range of learning opportunities that includes all the subjects of the National Curriculum. The curriculum meets statutory requirements for all subjects. The Christian values and philosophy of the school are clearly reflected in its commitment to provide the best possible equality of opportunity for all of its pupils whatever their age, ability or background. At the time of the last inspection, a key issue for the school was to improve the content of the curriculum by ensuring that schemes of work provide progression in knowledge, skills and understanding. This issue has been addressed successfully.
22. The school rightly gives a high priority to the teaching of literacy and numeracy and teaching and learning in both subjects are well planned and organised. The teachers' planning for literacy and numeracy is good. The headteacher and the co-ordinators usually guide and oversee the long and medium term plans based on the literacy and numeracy frameworks, and teachers then plan thoroughly using an agreed format. In other subjects, the school has successfully adopted and adapted the nationally published schemes of work. Class teachers use the schemes well to plan on a daily or weekly basis but the delivery of the lessons frequently involves the use of worksheet based activities and this can restrict the learning and creativity of some of the pupils, especially in writing. In information and communication technology in Years 3 to 6, some elements, for example control technology and multi-media, are not planned for or taught due to insufficient resources. This restricts the pupils' progress in the subject as they move through the school.
23. The school curriculum also includes a wide variety of supplementary visits and activities that include a residential visit for each year group. These provide rich and stimulating experiences for all the pupils and have a positive impact on the pupils' learning and particularly on their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, during a recent residential visit, the Year 6 pupils used music, dance and poetry to heighten their awareness of the plight of refugees. A visit by an artist provided the pupils with inspiration for their own artwork and writing about St George. This was carried out as part of the National Gallery's 'Take One Picture' initiative. The school also places great emphasis on the development of singing across the school. The choir has been successful in numerous music festivals and has performed at fund raising concerts in and around Chester.
24. There is a very good range of extra-curricular activities, which include sports and the opportunity to learn French and German. There is also a school council that meets regularly

and enables the pupils from Year 2 onwards to be actively involved in the life of the school. The school's good links with the local and wider community are used well to enrich the pupils' learning. For example, the Year 6 pupils attend lectures and workshops at a local secondary school.

25. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is good overall and is planned effectively in accordance with the nationally recommended Stepping Stones towards the Early Learning Goals in the six areas of learning. The curriculum is carefully tailored to the children's individual needs, and together with the good teaching helps to ensure that children are well challenged, make good progress and have positive attitudes to learning.
26. The school makes very good provision for the pupils' personal, social and health education. The planned programme of work includes elements of citizenship, sex education and drugs awareness. Additionally, the older pupils take courses in first aid and self-defence. Pupils who have received first aid training work alongside the teacher on duty to help put their first aid training into practice.
27. Good procedures are in place for the identification of pupils with special educational needs and the school provides well for them. All pupils with special educational needs have individual education plans that contain small, achievable targets for improvement and these are reviewed regularly. The plans are well written and, together with their parents, the pupils are made aware of the targets and their progress towards them. These pupils have access to the full curriculum and are helped to benefit from it through careful planning and the good use that is made of the learning support teacher and the classroom assistants. They work and plan closely with class teachers to ensure the pupils' learning needs are met and they provide good support either to individuals or small groups. The additional help that some of the pupils receive in the learning of the sounds for spelling and reading is particularly successful and results in these pupils making some good and very good progress in their learning.
28. The provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is very good. The spiritual development of pupils is very good. Assemblies make a significant contribution to the pupils' spiritual development. One observed assembly taken by a local minister contained a very powerful element of contrasting spirituality brought about by use of gentle music and the flickering glow of burning candles at the start and end of assembly. The spirituality was further developed by the pupils' singing of two wonderfully uplifting and vibrant hymns. The significantly high element of spirituality at this school is also evident in its very strong Christian ethos and in the way that it values the efforts of each and every pupil.
29. The moral development of pupils is very good. Teachers act as very good role models for pupils in the way they present themselves in the classroom and around the school. The very caring ethos of the school is used very well to promote the difference between right and wrong for all pupils and especially in the Reception class where pupils' personal and social skills are under-developed on entry to the school. Activities such as taking turns and sharing toys and games with each other very successfully develop the children's moral understanding. The school's behaviour code is quietly but efficiently promoted, particularly in personal, social and health education lessons that are consistently and effectively used by the school to underpin and enhance pupils' moral development.
30. There is very good provision for pupils' social development. Teachers and all staff throughout the school provide pupils with good role models, which encourage the development of positive attitudes and generally very good social behaviour. As soon as they start school, the children are helped and encouraged to work together as part of their daily routines. Pupils are also encouraged to help those less fortunate than themselves. They are actively involved in raising



money for a number of national charities and some overseas. During the time of the inspection, there were many examples of pupils working and playing well together. In lessons, they share equipment sensitively, co-operate in pairs and collaborate very well in group tasks. Relationships within the school between staff and pupils are very good which gives pupils the confidence to discuss and voice their opinions on a variety of matters and concerns. The school's council gives pupils a very good opportunity to play a positive role in the life of the school whilst learning important lessons about citizenship. The very good range of extra curricular activities creates valuable opportunities for pupils of different ages and genders to work and play together.

31. The cultural development of pupils is very good. Pupils have many opportunities to study local and national culture through subjects such as English, history, geography, music and art. Many visits are made into the local environment and a recent residential trip to Menai in north-west Wales provided the Year 6 pupils with significant awareness of the plight of refugees throughout the world. A wide range of external visitors is used to support pupils' cultural development. The wider study of the richness of other cultures, both in their own country and across the world, is very well supported by an extensive range of classroom displays and artefacts. For example, the Year 5/6 classroom had a very impressive display of the study of faith through art, whilst other classrooms had features linked to the pupils' present studies of Mexico and India.

#### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

32. The procedures for child protection and welfare are good, as are the procedures for the monitoring of pupils' academic and personal development. The school has good procedures for carrying out assessments to determine the pupils' attainment and to inform the teachers' future planning. Even more use could be made of this information to ensure that every pupil is making appropriate progress through each year. Child protection procedures are effective. The teaching and support staff, well supported by a range of external agencies, provide a high degree of welfare and educational support to individual pupils, as seen in the good provision for pupils with special educational needs. The high level of child protection and welfare support to pupils at the school, together with the good procedures for promoting pupils' personal development have a positive impact on their learning and are a significant strength of the school.
33. In the Reception class, the children are assessed soon after they start at the school. The teacher makes on-going assessments of the children's personal, social, language and mathematical development and the information is used to identify children who may have specific language or learning needs. Using this information, the teacher then plans carefully to meet the individual children's needs. The children's progress is assessed using the Early Learning Goals and is recorded systematically and regularly. In Years 3, 4 and 5 the pupils are tested in reading, spelling and mathematics. Additionally, the pupils have a record of achievement folder that contains samples of their work and provides a personal profile of progress and improvement as they move through the classes. The pupils with special educational needs are assessed regularly to measure their progress and to check the effectiveness of the strategies used in helping them work towards their individual targets. Assessment records show that many of them have made very good progress and significant gains in their standards of reading and spelling.
34. All the assessment information, including a thorough analysis of national test results in English and mathematics for Year 2 and 6 pupils is recorded and used effectively to set whole school targets and identify areas for development. For example, the school has rightly highlighted the need to improve standards in writing across the school, but especially in Year 2. This good

use of assessment information results in clear, well focussed planning in the core subjects. However, in order to ensure further and continued improvement in standards, the school now needs to use this information more systematically and rigorously to track the progress of individuals and groups of pupils, not only at the end of each school year, but also as they move through each year. The school could also usefully apply its good assessment procedures to subjects other than English and mathematics.

35. Individual targets for the pupils in Years 1 to 6 are included in a half-yearly profile which is shared with parents. Most of the older pupils are aware of what their targets are but their knowledge of their progress towards them is limited. The information to parents about their children's progress are good. They provide a clear picture of what the pupils know and also include information about what they need to do to improve.
36. All the staff know the pupils very well and have a good understanding of their capabilities. They are alert and responsive to the pupils' needs and their personal and emotional development is monitored informally but very effectively. Personal and social issues are addressed in classes during personal, social and health education lessons and in circle time<sup>2</sup>. Any pupils who have a specific problem or emotional need know that all staff will listen and support them sensitively.
37. In the classroom, teachers are quick to observe any personal difficulties exhibited by pupils and take appropriate action. The school operates a good first aid system for minor accidents and appropriate records are maintained. The school carries out occasional health and safety audits of the site and careful records are kept. Regular fire drills are carried out and the school also maintains a log of pupil medical records including food allergies that are copied to relevant kitchen staff. The school is taking steps to update its present procedures.
38. The school, together with the occasional assistance of external agencies, is proactive in the monitoring of the individual levels of pupil absence. The school promotes good attendance and parents are reminded to act responsibly when considering taking their children on holiday during term time. Although the school monitors lateness well, there is evidence of occasional inconsistency in the lesson starting times after break and lunch times. The school has developed a range of effective strategies for the monitoring and control of the rare examples of challenging behaviour, and positive attitudes are very well promoted in lessons such as personal, social and health education and circle time. The school takes a very strong stance on inclusion and does its very best to ensure all pupils are fully included in all activities that it provides. The school works extremely hard to integrate pupils whose attitudes and behaviour have not been successfully addressed at other schools.
39. The school provides a good level of educational and personal support to pupils which is aimed at raising their individual achievement and in increasing their self-esteem. The school acknowledges this achievement through the praise given to them in the classroom and, more formally, in regular sharing and presentation assemblies. In these, each teacher presents an award to the 'child of the week' describing in detail, the reason for their choice. This re-emphasises the school's ethos for hard work, achievement and effort, and also raises the pupil's self-esteem in the eyes of the school.

#### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

40. Parents have very positive views of the school and the school's links with parents are very effective. The impact of parental involvement on the work of the school is very good. This is

confirmed by the parents' meeting with the inspectors and in the high return of the parental questionnaires. A very significant majority of parents are very supportive of the school and of its aims and objectives. Parents feel that their children thoroughly enjoy school and that they are making good progress. Parents also feel that the teaching is good and that the school is well managed. Parents' work with the school as co-educators of the children is an important part of the school's philosophy. Homework, despite some parents' concerns, is used well to support the pupils' learning. An information pack for new parents to the school provides very helpful guidance and advice. The information provided by the school in the prospectus, annual governors' report to parents and the regular newsletters is of a high standard and much appreciated by parents. Pupils' annual reports are detailed but do not consistently identify areas for future development. However, this inconsistency is addressed in the parents' evenings. During these, the teachers share and discuss with parents a written summary of their child's general progress and their progress towards targets that had been shared with parents previously. Parents are very appreciative of the large range of extra-curricular activities that the school organises for their children and the well-organised annual residential visits that all pupils are encouraged to attend.

41. Some parents are frequent visitors to the school both in terms of providing very useful classroom support and also in helping with extra curricular activities, visits and occasional residential trips. All parents have been invited to enter into a home/school agreement that is designed to promote improved relationships between the school, parents and pupils. Parents interviewed during the inspection were extremely positive about the school. The 'open-door' policy is clearly understood by parents who feel that informal opportunities to see teachers 'nips potential problems in the bud'. Parents have great faith that any concerns reported to the school will be acted upon quickly and decisively. There is a good level of additional support provided to the parents whose children are on the school's register of special educational needs.
42. The great majority of parents also play an important part in their children's education by helping them at home with their variety of homework and in assisting them with project work which is related to a particular topic being studied at school. The Parent Teachers' Association is very supportive of the school and provides a further very effective link between home and the school. Parental attendance at school concerts, celebrations and sports days is very good. Overall, the school's links with parents provide a very strong contribution to the pupils' learning and personal development and are a significant strength of the school.

#### **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

43. The headteacher provides good leadership and management for the school and is very well supported in all his work, by his senior teacher. The headteacher has successfully addressed the issues of the last inspection and maintained the high standards at the end of Year 6. He has a good awareness of his own strengths and uses the skills of others to good effect. The governing body, members of staff and parents give him credit for the improvements that have been made in the school and for its strong Christian ethos. The staff in the school are a strong team that has a shared determination to further improve the quality of education it provides.
44. The governors are supportive of the school and fulfil their statutory duties satisfactorily. Since the last inspection there have been improvements in the procedures for their involvement in setting the priorities of the school improvement plan. The weaknesses identified in this process at the last inspection have been addressed and governors play an active part in planning the budget for the individual initiatives. Whilst the success criteria for each of the initiatives are clear, the school does not make enough use of governors' expertise to help in the evaluation of school developments, such as through formal discussions with groups of pupils.

Governors have a satisfactory understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses but much of this knowledge comes from the headteacher in his regular reports to the governing body. The numeracy and literacy governors are new to their role and the planned joint observations of lessons with the headteacher will give them a deeper insight into how the subject is taught. Members of the governing body will also benefit from this initiative when these governors feed back their findings.

45. Subject co-ordinators have good leadership skills overall. Numeracy and literacy co-ordinators have successfully overseen the introduction of the national strategies. Subject co-ordinators work closely with teachers in their planning and formally monitor standards in their subject. However, they do not have opportunities to observe the quality of teaching and learning in the different classes and, as such, their skills are not being fully utilised by the school. The co-ordinators for special educational needs manage the provision well and this leads directly to these pupils making good progress towards their targets. There are good relationships with outside agencies that are accessed when required. The procedures for drawing up and reviewing individual education plans are carefully considered with appropriate parental involvement.
46. The school has made good improvements since the last inspection. Relevant schemes of work and more challenge for the higher-attaining pupils have been appropriately addressed. This is resulting in more challenging and open-ended activities, particularly in subjects like science, physical education and design and technology. However, the over use of generic worksheets sometimes restricts the progress of the more able pupils.
47. The school's monitoring procedures are satisfactory overall. The monitoring of the quality of teaching by the headteacher is carried out regularly and has led to improvements in classroom practice. Whilst standards remain high at the end of Year 6, it is most important for the school that their monitoring and tracking systems are strengthened to ensure that all pupils make the requisite progress in each academic year. At present the assessment systems give an indication of pupils' attainment but there is a lack of rigour with which this information is used to ensure that appropriately high achievement is maintained in each year. As a result, a small minority of pupils reach the end of a school year with assessments indicating that they have not made the progress expected of them. With a much lower attainment profile for children entering the Reception class, it is important that pupils' progress is more regularly monitored. The information from this monitoring will enable the school to focus additional resources during the year when the identified progress of individual pupils has fallen behind expectations. In this way the school will be doing its utmost to ensure that its tradition for high standards is preserved. The school aims are highly appropriate and are well incorporated into the school's day to day routines. They highlight the importance of the development of pupils' potential and good relationships within a strong Christian ethos. School developments consistently reflect these aims and help to create an atmosphere in the school where pupils feel valued and challenged.
48. The provision of teaching and support staff is good and ensures that all aspects of the curriculum are taught appropriately. The exception is the teaching of ICT in the juniors where teachers' subject knowledge is not yet sufficiently developed to ensure all aspects of the subject are taught to the required standard. Whilst the school's accommodation is satisfactory overall, it has improved considerably since the last inspection, particularly with the addition of a new classroom, creation of a school hall and significant improvements to the outside areas. Resources are satisfactory overall but there is a weakness in some aspects of ICT and in the condition of some musical instruments. The staff are well supported by classroom assistants, some of whom provide specialist special educational needs support. The kitchen and caretaking staff also provide a very effective level of support to adults and children in the

school and are made to feel an important part of the school family. The induction arrangements for new staff are good and performance management systems and procedures are fully implemented and effective.

49. The day to day management of the school's finances is good and the headteacher works closely with the chair of the finance committee and school secretary in monitoring the process and in ensuring that educational priorities are appropriately financed. Specific grants are used effectively in the support of pupils with special educational needs and in the development of the school's accommodation. The majority of recommendations from the recent external auditor's report have already been implemented.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

50. In order to raise the quality of education and standards further, the headteacher, governors and staff should:

- (1) Improve the way pupils' progress is tracked through the school by:
- Setting clear, challenging and measurable targets for pupils to achieve at the end of each year in English and mathematics;
  - Tracking pupils progress at regular times in the year towards these targets
  - Putting into place extra support when necessary to ensure pupils meet their individual targets.

(Paragraphs 3, 32, 34, 47)

- (2) \*raise pupils' attainment in information and communication technology by the end of Year 6 by:

- ensuring the school has sufficient software so that all programmes of study can be taught;
- extending teachers' subject knowledge and levels of confidence;
- teaching information and communication technology skills on a regular and systematic basis and reinforcing these skills across the curriculum.

(Paragraphs 5, 15, 22, 48, 104-108)

In addition to the key issues above, the following minor issues should be considered for inclusion in the action plan;

- the overuse of undemanding worksheets;  
(Paragraphs 8, 16, 17, 18, 22, 68, 74, 81)
- ensure consistency in the application of the school's marking policy;  
(Paragraphs 15, 69, 74, 75 83),
- opportunities for the co-ordinators of English, mathematics and science to observe teaching and learning in different classes.  
(Paragraphs 45, 83, 107)

\* part of this year's school development plan

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### *Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection*

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

### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection*

|            | Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|------------|-----------|-----------|------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| Number     | 1         | 6         | 13   | 5            | 0              | 0    | 0         |
| Percentage | 4         | 24        | 52   | 20           | 0              | 0    | 0         |

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

### *Information about the school's pupils*

| <b>Pupils on the school's roll</b>                                    | Nursery | YR – Y6 |
|---|---------|---------|
| Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)      |         | 100     |
| Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals |         | 2       |

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

| <b>Special educational needs</b>                                    | Nursery | YR – Y6 |
|---|---------|---------|
| Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs       |         | 1       |
| Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register |         | 18      |

| <b>English as an additional language</b>                | No of pupils |
|---|--------------|
| Number of pupils with English as an additional language | 0            |

| <b>Pupil mobility in the last school year</b>                                | No of pupils |
|--|--------------|
| Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission | 4            |
| Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving           | 12           |

### *Attendance*

| <b>Authorised absence</b> | %   |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data               | 3.8 |
| National comparative data | 5.4 |

| <b>Unauthorised absence</b> | %   |
|-----------------------------|-----|
| School data                 | 0.0 |
| National comparative data   | 0.5 |

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

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

| Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year | Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
|--|------|------|-------|-------|
|  | 2002 | 11   | 7     | 18    |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results       |          | Reading | Writing | Mathematics |
|---|----------|---------|---------|-------------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above   | Boys     | 10      | 8       | 10          |
|   | Girls    | 7       | 7       | 5           |
|   | Total    | 17      | 15      | 15          |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School   | 94 (87) | 83 (73) | 83 (80)     |
|   | National | 84 (84) | 86 (86) | 90 (91)     |

| Teachers' Assessments                       |          | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above   | Boys     | 10      | 10          | 10      |
|   | Girls    | 7       | 7           | 5       |
|   | Total    | 17      | 17          | 17      |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School   | 94 (87) | 94 (80)     | 98 (80) |
|   | National | 85 (85) | 89 (89)     | 89 (89) |

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

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

| Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year | Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
|--|------|------|-------|-------|
|  | 2002 | 11   | 9     | 20    |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results       |          | English | Mathematics | Science   |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|-----------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above   | Boys     | 9       | 11          | 11        |
|   | Girls    | 9       | 9           | 9         |
|   | Total    | 18      | 20          | 20        |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above | School   | 90 (88) | 100 (100)   | 100 (100) |
|   | National | 75 (75) | 73 (71)     | 86 (87)   |

| Teachers' Assessments                       |          | English | Mathematics | Science   |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|-----------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above   | Boys     | 9       | 11          | 11        |
|   | Girls    | 9       | 9           | 9         |
|   | Total    | 18      | 20          | 20        |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above | School   | 90 (94) | 100 (94)    | 100 (100) |
|   | National | 73 (72) | 74 (74)     | 82 (82)   |

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



### *Ethnic background of pupils*

### *Exclusions in the last school year*

| Categories used in the Annual School Census         | No of pupils on roll | Number of fixed period exclusions | Number of permanent exclusions |
|---|----------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| White – British                                     | 100                  | 0                                 | 0                              |
| White – Irish                                       | 0                    | 0                                 | 0                              |
| White – any other White background                  | 0                    | 0                                 | 0                              |
| Mixed – White and Black Caribbean                   | 0                    | 0                                 | 0                              |
| Mixed – White and Black African                     | 0                    | 0                                 | 0                              |
| Mixed – White and Asian                             | 0                    | 0                                 | 0                              |
| Mixed – any other mixed background                  | 0                    | 0                                 | 0                              |
| Asian or Asian British – Indian                     | 0                    | 0                                 | 0                              |
| Asian or Asian British – Pakistani                  | 0                    | 0                                 | 0                              |
| Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi                | 0                    | 0                                 | 0                              |
| Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background | 0                    | 0                                 | 0                              |
| Black or Black British – Caribbean                  | 0                    | 0                                 | 0                              |
| Black or Black British – African                    | 0                    | 0                                 | 0                              |
| Black or Black British – any other Black background | 0                    | 0                                 | 0                              |
| Chinese   | 0                    | 0                                 | 0                              |
| Any other ethnic group                              | 0                    | 0                                 | 0                              |
| No ethnic group recorded                            | 0                    | 0                                 | 0                              |

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

### *Teachers and classes*

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

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| Total number of qualified teachers (FTE) | 5.2 |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher   | 20  |
| Average class size                       | 25  |

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y6**

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Total number of education support staff | 2  |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week   | 64 |

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

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

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### *Financial information*

|  |         |
|--|---------|
| Financial year                             | 2002/02 |
|  | £       |
| Total income                               | 281753  |
| Total expenditure                          | 272619  |
| Expenditure per pupil                      | 2463    |
| Balance brought forward from previous year | 10053   |
| Balance carried forward to next year       | 9134    |

### ***Recruitment of teachers***

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years   | 0.1 |
| Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years   | 0.2 |
| Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)  | 0   |
| Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)                           | 1   |
| Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE) | 0   |

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## ***Results of the survey of parents and carers***

### **Questionnaire return rate**

|                                   |     |
|-----------------------------------|-----|
| Number of questionnaires sent out | 100 |
| Number of questionnaires returned | 34  |

### **Percentage of responses in each category 34%**

|  | Strongly agree | Tend to agree | Tend to disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know |
|--|----------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|------------|
| My child likes school.   | 76             | 24            | 0                | 0                 | 0          |
| My child is making good progress in school.  | 65             | 35            | 0                | 0                 | 0          |
| Behaviour in the school is good.   | 38             | 62            | 0                | 0                 | 0          |
| My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.                              | 18             | 58            | 24               | 0                 | 0          |
| The teaching is good.  | 71             | 26            | 0                | 0                 | 3          |
| I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.                          | 24             | 67            | 9                | 0                 | 0          |
| I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem. | 82             | 18            | 0                | 0                 | 0          |
| The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.              | 82             | 18            | 0                | 0                 | 0          |
| The school works closely with parents.   | 76             | 24            | 0                | 0                 | 0          |
| The school is well led and managed.  | 85             | 12            | 0                | 0                 | 3          |
| The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.                      | 74             | 26            | 0                | 0                 | 0          |
| The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.            | 59             | 38            | 3                | 0                 | 0          |

## **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**

51. The school admits children to the school at the start of the academic year in which they attain their fifth birthday. At the time of the inspection, there were 16 children in the Foundation Stage. The overall attainment of children on entry to the school covers a wide range, but is below average overall and has fallen significantly since the last inspection. A significant proportion of the children have well below average attainment in their basic literacy skills and also in their personal, social and emotional development. The children, including those with special educational needs and the few who are higher-attainers, make good overall progress in the Reception class, because of the consistently good quality teaching they experience. By the time they enter Year 1, the majority of the children will meet the expectations of the Early Learning Goals<sup>3</sup> in all six areas of learning. In pupils' physical development, the great majority of pupils will exceed the expected standards but in the areas of communication, language and literacy and in personal, social and emotional development, a significant minority of pupils will not reach the expected standard.
52. There have been good improvements since the last inspection in the quality of the pupils' learning and in the resources that they use for learning. The quality of teaching is consistently good, with a significant amount of teaching being very good and sometimes excellent. The class teacher works very closely with the full-time nursery nurse. They know the children very well and are using the nationally recommended 'Stepping Stones' very carefully to assess children's progress and ensure that the work they set is appropriate and challenging. Children are very motivated learners because the activities that are planned for them are challenging yet fun. The children have many very good opportunities to learn through practical experience. This helps them to gain a real understanding of new concepts and to practise and consolidate newly-acquired skills. As a result, children regularly experience success and thoroughly enjoy all aspects of their learning.

#### **Personal, social and emotional development**

53. The children's attainment on entry to the school, in this aspect, is below average, with a significant majority of boys being well below average. Due to the teacher's careful planning and consistently good quality teaching, the children make good progress in developing their personal and social skills and quickly build up their confidence, so that they benefit from the wide range of learning experiences planned for them. The children are very well motivated because of the enthusiastic approach of the Reception class staff, who promote very positive attitudes to learning in all the children.
54. The children enjoy their work and the good teaching helps them to develop confidence in themselves as learners. They are keen to solve problems and to make choices and decisions about their work. During the inspection the children showed a wide range of levels of independence. Some are able to listen very carefully to instructions and quickly start their given tasks, whilst others need further support and encouragement. However, even with these

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<sup>3</sup> Early learning goals - these are expectations for most children to reach by the end of the foundation stage. They refer mainly to achievements children make in connection with communication language and literacy; mathematical development; and personal, social and emotional development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical and creative development. There are many goals for each area of learning, for example, in language and literacy pupils should be able to write their own name and other things such as labels and begin to write simple sentences. These goals are progressive and called Stepping Stones.

strategies, some children have weak concentration and do not fully follow the convention of waiting until it is their turn to speak. Resources are very easily accessible and most children observe the clearly emphasised classroom routines for using these.

55. The children take part in a very good range of exciting learning activities which successfully promote their personal and social skills. The majority of children work well together, sharing resources sensitively. For example, four children decided to organise a tea-time party in the play area, each having their allotted tasks. The teacher and nursery nurse provide excellent role models for the children, showing respect, courtesy and patience in their dealings with the children and this is reflected in children, who are becoming increasingly polite, kind, helpful and considerate of the needs of others. The Reception children's social skills benefit significantly from having some Year 1 pupils in the class with whom they work for parts of the day. There are good opportunities for children to learn about their own culture and to develop an awareness of other cultures. They participate in Christian festivals and are given appropriate opportunities to learn about the festivals of other cultures, such as Judaism. The teacher provides children with good opportunities to acquire a sense of awe and wonder at the world around them. For example, in an art and craft lesson, children were intrigued by the different textures and colours of the daffodil they were drawing and painting.

### **Communication, language and literacy**

56. The teaching in this aspect is consistently good and often very good. As a result, most children move to Year 1 with attainment that meets the Early Learning Goals. The teacher and her nursery nurse are very successful in promoting speaking and listening skills: clearly seen when pupils shared what they had been doing over the week-end. Occasionally, in some formal news sharing sessions, some children are allowed to dominate the sessions and disadvantage their peers. Staff model spoken language well and correct children's language when appropriate. In activities, the staff play a crucial role in developing the children's confidence in speaking, by responding positively to their contributions. This encourages children of all abilities to want to join in. The children are making good progress in seeing the link between a sound and the shape of a letter. Good questioning by the teacher such as, "if the word was 'red' what letter would it have on the front?" helps children to see these links. The teacher knows her pupils well and gives appropriate 'wait' time for the lower-attaining children to formulate their answers.
57. The children's enthusiasm for reading is encouraged by the text they follow in their literacy sessions and the class story. The children understand the terms author and title and become very excited when they recognise many characters in the pictures of a fairytale book. By the time they leave Reception, most children have satisfactorily developed reading skills, and with higher-attaining pupils able to use their letter sounds to break down simple unknown words. The technique of children learning to pronounce unknown words by pronouncing each letter in the word and then 'compressing' these letters to make the sound of the word is particularly effective for these pupils, who clearly understand the conventions of this technique. Very good use is made of the children's home-school reading diaries, which carefully plot pupils' progress through a range of books and in which teachers begin to set short-term targets, as children's reading improves. Many children recognise the majority of individual letters and use these skills in their writing. Most attempt a simple sentence, with higher-achieving children understanding the convention of a capital letter to begin a sentence and a full stop to end. For example, one higher-achieving child wrote 'I went to the shes.' (seaside) as part of his diary work.

### **Mathematical development**

58. The great majority of children will achieve the Early Learning Goals in their mathematics development by the time they join Year 1. Their attainment at the beginning of the Reception class is higher in this aspect than in language and literacy and is carefully developed by good quality teaching. The children benefit from taking part in a wide range of free and structured activities, which continually build on previous learning. Staff assess children's ability very carefully to ensure that work is appropriately challenging. High expectations are placed on the children and every opportunity is taken for them to develop their counting and number recognition skills. Particularly effective in this work is the teacher's use of her *Crazy Crow* puppet who 'caws' at different speeds, with the children counting the individual 'caws'. Children who are accurate are rewarded by a peck from the crow. In this fun atmosphere, children learn enthusiastically. All children can count up to ten and are beginning to understand the ordinal concept of these numbers. Songs and rhymes reinforce their understanding. Good use of the children's own teddy bears help them to understand concepts such as one more and one less. They know that two-dimensional shapes have different characteristics and are able to sort these shapes using criteria such as corners and sides. Carefully planned weighing activities help children to understand concepts such as heavier and lighter. A significant number of children have a good understanding of simple patterns, clearly shown in the way they threaded the coloured beads they had made. Higher-achieving children will achieve the Early Learning Goals before the end of the year and will be moving on to Year 1 activities before the end of the Reception year.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

59. By the end of Reception, children have made good progress in this area and the great majority will reach the Early Learning Goals. The teaching is consistently good and activities that are planned successfully promote the skills of enquiry and observation to encourage children to find out things for themselves. The children investigate objects and materials, through their regular access to sand, water and play dough and build things together with the good selection of construction kits. They know about features of daffodils, which they help to plant in their own garden and also draw and paint to make a Mothering Sunday card. Good questioning by the teacher encourages children to look carefully and leads to high quality observational drawing and painting for these cards. The children are building an understanding of the past through such activities as talking to grandparents who bring in toys from their childhood. The village is a rich resource and children traditionally go out in the summer to look at the different buildings and other features as part of their environmental project work. The children are developing good computer skills in the wide range of programs they use. They also benefit from the very good input from a friend of the school who works regularly with individuals and groups of children.

### **Physical development**

60. The children make good progress in their physical development and the great majority will exceed the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Reception year. The teaching in this area is consistently very good and leads to children moving with confidence and imagination, whilst understanding the importance of safety. The children show a good awareness of space: such as when they moved under, over and around a series of linked pieces of apparatus. They have good balancing skills and show good tension in these movements when working at different levels. A significant minority of children move with great agility on the hall climbing frame and understand the importance of a 'bent knee' landing when jumping from such apparatus. The children's physical development is also helped by a good range of play equipment in their secure area, with several children learning this year how to ride a bicycle. The children handle tools, paintbrushes and pencils with increasing control, because this is well

emphasised by the staff. As a result, their fine motor skills are above average as witnessed in their careful brush work in their paintings.

### **Creative development**

61. Good teaching helps children to achieve the Early Learning Goals in this area. However, the children's progress is sometimes hampered because the teacher cannot always see all activities taking place in the outside play area. As a result, opportunities are missed for staff to reinforce children's knowledge and understanding at crucial learning moments. A good range of dressing up clothes, encourages the development of children's role play, such as when a boy dressed up as a local policeman and supervised the children riding their bikes. The children enjoy singing songs and making music. They have access to a good range of instruments which they use to accompany songs. Singing is made great fun by the wide range of songs, both serious and light-hearted. One of the children's particular favourites *Twinkle, twinkle, chocolate bar, your dad drives a rusty car* is sung with great enjoyment. The children have a good understanding of pitch, which is effectively taught through the use of repeat phrases. The children benefit from the help of parents who regularly take groups for food technology sessions.

### **ENGLISH**

62. Inspection findings show that in the current Year 6, standards in reading, writing and speaking and listening are well above average and the pupils make very good progress. This shows an improvement since the last inspection. At the end of Year 2, standards are above average in reading and in speaking and listening and average in writing. Standards in writing are not as high as they were at the time of the last inspection. This is mainly because the school's assessment records show that the pupils' attainment on entry to the school is lower. Despite this lower starting point, the pupils in Years 1 and 2 make good progress overall. However, in order for standards in writing to improve further, the school should give due consideration to the introduction of the National Literacy Strategy intervention programmes and the Additional Literacy Support materials.
63. The pupils with special educational needs also make good and sometimes very good progress. This is because their particular needs are identified early and appropriate work and support is provided for them.
64. When the pupils enter the Reception/Year 1 class, their standards of speaking and listening are below average. The very good relationships and the secure atmosphere give the pupils confidence and they quickly learn how to speak out and to share their views and opinions. For example, when they give explanations as to the best methods of transport for Barnaby Bear to travel to France. The majority of the pupils continue to make good and very good progress in expressing their thoughts and ideas in a clear and mature way and by the end of Year 2, their speaking and listening skills are above average. Throughout the junior classes, group and class discussions are an integral part of many of the lessons and all the teachers encourage the pupils to support their viewpoints with reasons. As a result, the pupils make very good progress and by the time they are eleven, they take part in discussions, perform in assembly and confidently speak out to their peer group during plenary sessions.
65. By the end of Year 2, most pupils read well. They know many key words and have appropriate 'word attack' skills. In the shared text work in the Literacy Hour, the youngest pupils enjoy the Big Books and use phonics along with picture and context clues to help with their understanding of the text. The Year 2 pupils know the difference between fiction and non-fiction books. They also understand that an index helps them to find specific information

and that the glossary provides definitions of the vocabulary that is used. Many of them read with good expression, showing a good awareness of the mood of the story. By the end of Year 6, almost all pupils read fluently and with good expression. They can talk about their preferences for particular authors and titles, and are able to discuss the books they have read. They can also recognise different types of punctuation and understand how it assists the reader. Most of the classes have daily group reading sessions outside of the Literacy Hour where the pupils read and discuss texts or, in the case of the younger pupils, enjoy listening to taped stories. This has a positive effect on the standards attained by the pupils. All the pupils have a reading and homework diary that contains notes and comments and provides a useful link between home and school. However, their use is inconsistent, being used most effectively by the pupils in Years 1 – 4.

66. The pupils in Year 1 make good progress as they learn to write and spell. They learn letter sounds and blends and many pupils use this knowledge when trying to spell simple, unfamiliar words. By the end of Year 2, most pupils are beginning to develop their writing using interesting vocabulary as they write poems, descriptions, factual accounts and stories. However, the scrutiny of work reveals opportunities for the pupils in Years 1-2 to write independently and at length are sometimes limited. The school acknowledges this and additional time has been set aside for extended writing practice. In Years 1 and 2, some of the best examples of written work are in the pupils' journals, where they are writing personal accounts without the restriction of a worksheet or a writing frame. In Years 3 and 4, the pupils show a good understanding of how language can be used to paint a picture. For example, when writing a poem about the moon, one pupil describes how it '...glides and floats through the air, like a large plate, white and bare.' By the end of Year 6, the pupils are able to compare different styles of writing when they contrast the original poem of the Pied Piper of Hamelin with a modern parody. They show a very good understanding of the different vocabulary used in the two poems and appreciate the play on words and the humour of the parody. They write well for a range of purposes and audiences, not only in their literacy lessons but also in other subjects such as religious education, history, geography, design and technology and science. For example, in their writing about rivers and waterfalls in geography, the pupils in Years 5 and 6 show a good understanding subject specific vocabulary with words such as 'meander', 'deposit' and 'erosion'. As the pupils move through the school, spelling and punctuation become increasingly more accurate and many of the older pupils make very good progress in their ability to self correct their work, using dictionaries very effectively. The pupils with special educational needs are well supported by teachers, the special needs support teacher and the classroom assistants, and they make good use of prompts and writing frames as a basis for their writing. The majority of the pupils use computers as word processors satisfactorily and some of the older pupils know how to combine text and graphics to enhance their writing. However, the use of computers is unsatisfactory and much more needs to be done to incorporate information and communication technology into Literacy lessons.
67. The overall quality of teaching in English is good. In four of the five lessons observed the teaching was good or very good and there were no unsatisfactory lessons. In all the sessions, the pupils are quite clear about what it is they are to learn and tasks are organised so that the groups can work effectively. In the Reception/Year 1 class, the teacher used the text skilfully in order to encourage the less confident readers and to draw attention to the use of full stops to create a pause and to help with the meaning of the passage. Questions are also well used in order to move the pupils' thinking forward or to encourage closer observation. For example, in a lesson with the Year 1 and 2 pupils, answers to the questions, 'How do you know?' and 'Where would you look?' lead the pupils to use their inferential as well as their literal understanding when using an index to find information. In almost all of the lessons, and especially in Years 5 and 6, the pupils respond very well to the deadlines set by the class teacher. The older pupils work purposefully and are generally well motivated. The teacher's



high expectations of success, and the appropriately challenging tasks, result in very good learning for the majority of the pupils. When the lessons are less successful, it is often because worksheet activities restrict the pupils' creativity and a lack of challenge for some of the higher-attaining pupils has an adverse effect on their pace of learning.

68. The quality of the marking is variable across the school, but it is particularly effective in the junior classes where written comments invariably include ideas and points for improvement. With the younger pupils, oral feedback about their work is constructive and they usually know what they have to do to improve. Assessment procedures are good throughout the school. As well as the range of statutory and optional tests, the teachers provide a half-yearly profile that includes individual literacy targets. More systematic and rigorous monitoring of the pupils' progress towards these targets would help to raise standards in the subject further, particularly in writing.
69. Planning and teaching in English is based on the National Literacy Strategy supported by commercially produced materials. The teachers use a common framework when planning for the Literacy Hour and learning objectives are included at every stage. The co-ordinator and the headteacher provide good leadership for the subject, oversee teachers' planning and carefully analyse test results. The information is used to highlight gaps in attainment, such as the need to improve standards in writing, particularly for some of the middle year groups. Teaching and learning are monitored regularly by the headteacher who, together with class teachers, needs to continue to give careful consideration to the way in which the work progressively meets the wide and varying needs of the mixed age range within each of the classes.
70. The school has a good range of books for individual and group reading and the library contains a range of non-fiction books to support research and topic work. However, the pupils' library skills are limited and the library itself is small. Consequently, it is underused as a resource for independent study and research. Overall, the subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

## **MATHEMATICS**

71. Inspection findings indicate that the overall attainment is above average in Year 2 and well above average in Year 6. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls. Compared to the last inspection, this attainment is similar in Year 2 but shows an improvement in Year 6. The main reason for the improvement in Year 2 is the higher proportion of pupils working at the higher levels, compared to last year. The proportion of pupils working at the higher levels in Year 6 is very high.
72. The pupils' ability to use and apply their mathematical knowledge and understanding is above average through the school because of the emphasis on this area in teachers' planning and because this area of their mathematics is also used in other subjects, such as design and technology, science and ICT. Pupils of all ages and abilities, including those with special educational needs, make good progress as they move through the school and achieve their full potential, particularly in Years 5 and 6 where the quality of teaching is consistently very good and pupils' progress accelerates. The frequent emphasis on practical work helps pupils to enjoy their mathematics work. Most have positive attitudes towards the subject and this impacts on the quality of their learning. The National Numeracy Strategy has been well implemented in all classes and is proving to be effective in promoting pupils' mental mathematics. The teaching of multiplication tables is particularly good, leads to very high standards in Years 5 and 6 and has a very positive impact on pupils' mental mathematics work.

73. By the end of Year 2, the pupils have a good understanding of number and pattern. This aspect of the mathematics is taught well, with pupils having an above average understanding of place value, clearly seen in a Year 2 lesson, when pupils investigated the relationship between odd and even numbers and worked confidently in hundreds, tens and units. The pupils have a good knowledge of two and three-dimensional shapes but their knowledge of reflectional symmetry is less well developed. Too little use is made of ICT in pupils' data handling and graph work. There is too heavy reliance in Years 1 and 2 on the use of photocopied worksheets. Whilst most of these are appropriate for the different abilities of pupils in the class, there is some evidence that some worksheets are giving more practice in skills and concepts that are already understood, and this is slowing the potential progress that pupils could make. The use of worksheets also limits the opportunities pupils have to set down their own work. Indeed, evidence from pupils' books shows that the lower-achieving and special educational needs pupils generally have more opportunities for setting down their own work than their peers. The school's lack of clear policy for ensuring work is finished, means that not all pupils have enough opportunities to practise their new learning. As a result, teachers cannot judge the pupils' true level of understanding or confidently set appropriately challenging follow-up work.
74. The pupils make good progress in Years 3 and 4 and very good progress in Years 5 and 6, where the quality of teaching consistently challenges pupils of all abilities. Teachers provide a range of real-life situations for pupils to practise number skills, using units of money, time and measure. The pupils are encouraged to explain their methods of working and this helps them to clarify their thinking and also develop their mathematical vocabulary. In Years 3 and 4, pupils' knowledge of common two and three-dimensional shapes is secure. Effective teaching of place value skills in Year 4 through the good use of resources, enables most pupils to work confidently with fractions, which are closely linked to pupils' work on shape, space and measure. Opportunities for pupils in Years 3 and 4 to set down their work are limited, because of excessive use of worksheets. Only the lower-attaining pupils, who receive extra support and often do not use worksheets, have appropriate opportunities for planning and setting down their own work. There is no clear correction policy in the Year 3 / 4 class and, as a result, pupils are not benefiting from the teacher's careful marking.
75. The pupils in Year 5 make very good progress because the work is particularly well adapted to the abilities of different pupils and is very carefully marked, with clear ideas from the teacher about what pupils need to do to improve their work. As a result, pupils of all abilities show clear progress in the systematic development of their mathematical skills. By the end of Year 6, pupils work very hard and produce good amounts of carefully presented work in lessons. Their understanding of place value is very good and they have a very good understanding of addition, multiplication, subtraction and division, which they use well in their mental mathematics. They have a very good knowledge of the links between percentages, decimals and fractions. Pupils' understanding of probability, ratio and proportion is well above average. They use their knowledge of co-ordinates in the four quadrants to plot different two-dimensional shapes and their knowledge of graphs and data interpretation is very good and enhanced through their ICT work.
76. The teaching of mathematics is good overall but very good in Years 5 and 6 where pupils make consistently very good progress. Strengths of the teaching are the good use of the three-part lesson as laid down in the National Numeracy Strategy, good use of questioning to assess pupils' understanding and effective use of resources to enhance their understanding of new concepts. Introductory mental sessions are well planned and most are well paced, prompting pupils to give fast answers. Occasionally, such as in a Year 4 lesson, pupils' over-enthusiasm to complete their mental 'bingo' mathematics card, resulted in false alarms for a

full card, which slowed the pace of this aspect of the lesson. In the best lessons, teachers pressed the pupils to explain how they had arrived at their answers and then reinterpreted the pupils' responses to ensure that their peers would have a further opportunity to understand the method used. This strategy is particularly effective in helping pupils clarify their thinking and demonstrating that there are different, but equally effective ways of solving the same mathematical problem. Particularly effective is the way that the classroom assistants and students work with different ability groups of pupils to ensure they can take a full and active part in lessons.

77. The co-ordinators lead the development of the subject well. They have worked hard to introduce the Numeracy Strategy through the school and to provide a satisfactory range of resources that teachers can use to develop pupils' learning. There is a good analysis of National Curriculum test results to highlight strengths and weaknesses at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This information is generally used successfully to build on strengths and address weaknesses in future work. However, although targets are set for Year 2 and Year 6 pupils, there is a lack of rigour at present in the way that pupils' progress is tracked towards these targets through each year. The pupils do benefit from half yearly targets, which are set with their teachers and shared with their parents. Pupils have a good understanding of these targets, but the marking in their books is not consistently linked to these. The school makes good use of commercial assessments to judge pupils' attainment in each unit of work but the results of these assessments are not systematically passed to the co-ordinators so that she can track pupils' progress through each year. The headteacher regularly monitors the quality of teaching and learning in mathematics. As a result, teachers' strengths and weaknesses are identified, with staff making good use of appropriate in-service courses to develop their expertise. A new numeracy governor has been appointed and the planned joint observations of lessons with the headteacher will give this governor a better understanding of the school's strategies for the teaching of the subject. The subject is continually part of the school improvement plan and the school is rightly looking at the introduction of a different scheme of work that will reduce the number of worksheets at present being used through the school and develop pupils' abilities to set down their own work. The subject makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development overall and a good contribution to their social development, when they work collaboratively on their mathematics investigations.

## SCIENCE

78. Evidence from the inspection shows that Year 2 pupils, including those with special educational needs, are making satisfactory progress, with attainment that is in line with national expectations. The overall attainment shows a decline since the last inspection but much of this is due to the children's lower attainment on entry to the school. Year 6 pupils are making very good progress, with attainment that is well above average and with a significant proportion of pupils working at the higher level. The pupils' present attainment shows an improvement since the last inspection, particularly in the proportion of higher-achieving pupils. Throughout the school there is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls.
79. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a satisfactory understanding of a fair test, clearly seen in their work on forces, that involved rolling vehicles down a ramp. They recognise the main external parts of the human body but their understanding of the importance of exercise and healthy eating are less well developed. They know that materials have different properties and how these are chosen for specific uses. They understand that materials can be changed by bending, squashing, twisting and stretching but weaknesses in their understanding of how changes can be brought about by heating and cooling will be addressed next term. Pupils are developing a good understanding of different forces such as pushing and pulling and relate

these forces well to every day actions such as riding a bike, pushing a scooter and closing a door. Pupils' understanding of light and sound is less strong than other areas as this has not been taught this year. Pupils' recording of what they have found out has improved significantly since the beginning of the year, particularly when pupils write without the restrictions of worksheets. There are good links with art when pupils make good use of diagrams to show their findings. Some of these, relating to the push forces when riding a scooter, were of a particularly high quality and showed clearly how the force was acting on the vehicle.

80. By the end of Year 6 pupils, including those with special educational needs, are making very good progress. Their practical investigation work is of very high quality and makes very good use of pupils' numeracy, literacy and ICT skills to record their findings. What is particularly impressive about pupils' investigation work is how they plan their own investigation to answer a question, such as "how long does pulse rate take to recover after exercise?". Pupils work on life processes and living things is also of high quality and linked clearly to pupils' own investigations. Pupils are encouraged to find different ways to record the results of their investigations. For example, one pupil used high quality art illustrations to show the findings of her investigation into 'what plants need to grow well.' Pupils have a good knowledge of different soils and how this impacts on plant growth. They have a good working knowledge of food chains and the interdependence of different species. Their recent work on evaporation and condensation, showed a very good understanding of reversible and irreversible actions. They have a clear understanding of the differences between gases, liquids and solids and use this knowledge well in their investigations. Because of the way the curriculum is planned, pupils' knowledge of the physical processes is less well developed but this aspect will be covered shortly in after-school booster classes, which all pupils attend. Older pupils are very enthusiastic about their science work because they enjoy the opportunities to set up experiments to test out their hypotheses. Their findings are extremely well presented and benefit from high-class marking by the teacher, which clearly indicates what pupils need to do to improve their work.
81. The progress of pupils in Years 3 and 4 is satisfactory but is restricted by the over-use of worksheets which does not ensure that pupils of all abilities are suitably challenged. However, pupils have made good progress in their knowledge of the human body, particularly about the skeleton and its function, and the work of muscles. They have a good understanding of the different types of food needed for a balanced diet. They have a satisfactory knowledge of circuits, but their understanding of light is limited because all pupils in the class copy the same piece of work. This means that the teacher does not have a clear insight into pupils' understanding of their work and how to further develop this understanding. Pupils in Year 5 cover the same work as Year 6 pupils and make the same very good progress.
82. Pupils enjoy science and work hard in lessons. This is particularly so during practical work, when pupils become involved and are allowed to use their scientific knowledge to find out the answers to questions that they or their teachers pose. Pupils show good collaborative skills and learn well from each other, and in this way the subject makes a very good contribution to their social development. Pupils show a good variety of ways of recording their findings and the best quality work is when pupils are not restricted by the use of worksheets. This is particularly the case in Years 3 and 4, where worksheets often prevent pupils from writing at length and make only limited demands on the higher-achieving pupils.
83. The quality of teaching is good overall and this relates to the good overall progress that pupils make as they move through the school. Teachers have good subject knowledge and use this well when planning their work. However, their expectations are not consistently high in the way that pupils present their work. Teachers' marking is variable and, except for Years 5 and

6, does not clearly indicate to pupils what they need to do to improve. There is at present no clear policy of ensuring pupils complete their work. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and achieve appropriately. Teachers make good use of commercial assessments and pass on the results of these assessments to a pupil's new teacher. However, the results of these assessments are not consistently fed to the co-ordinator so that she can regularly monitor pupils' progress to ensure their progress is appropriate. There is good use of ICT, particularly in Years 5 and 6, to record the results of investigations. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 make good use of the computer microscope in their work on minibeasts. The subject is appropriately resourced. National Curriculum test results for Year 6 are carefully analysed, with information being used to identify areas for development which are addressed both in lessons and in booster groups. The co-ordinator provides good leadership for the subject and has a good understanding of standards in her subject. However, at present, she does not have release time from her classroom to observe teaching and learning in the classroom. As such her expertise is not being used to the full in the development of the subject.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

84. Although no art lessons were seen during the inspection, judgements from the high quality displays around the school, work in the pupils' sketchbooks and discussions with pupils clearly demonstrate that by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, standards in art are better than those found in most schools. This represents an improvement since the last inspection.
85. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs make good progress. All the pupils are encouraged to express themselves through art. They enjoy art activities; they are proud of their work and talk knowledgeably and enthusiastically about it. Their achievements are celebrated in well-presented displays that enhance the school hall, the classrooms and the communal areas. The pupils' work in art makes a significant contribution to their spiritual and cultural development.
86. The Year 1 pupils use marbling to create a mount for their observational drawings of daffodils. These are carefully observed showing attention to detail. The pupils then enhance their drawings using a colour wash to highlight the flowers. The Year 2 pupils show good skill as they work in pairs, using oil pastels and crayons to produce pictures inspired by Van Gogh's 'Cornfield'. By the time they are in Years 5 and 6 the pupils' drawing skills have developed well as they copy pictures of icons in connection with their work in religious education. Their use of pastels, colour and shading to reproduce the effect of radiance is very successful and results in beautiful, carefully observed drawings.
87. Throughout the school, the pupils make good progress as they develop their knowledge, skills and techniques. They are given opportunities to work with visiting artists and to use a wide variety of media and techniques. For example, all pupils have recently worked on a project initiated by the National Gallery and have produced a range of three dimensional artwork and models inspired by the story of St George. Models using fabric, paper, wire and recycled materials are of high standard as are the living outdoor sculptures made from weaving willow. The pupils' work shows effective use of colour, shape and perspective. The older pupils are beginning to use sketchbooks and these show a good understanding of the techniques of smudging, shading and pressure. However, sketchbooks are not yet used consistently throughout the school and, judging from the scrutiny of work, there are fewer opportunities for the pupils to work with clay and fabric.
88. From the range of the work seen and from discussions with the pupils, the quality of teaching in art is good. The headteacher, who is the co-ordinator, provides specialist teaching for some of the classes and his good subject knowledge, enthusiasm and expertise have a significant

impact on how well the pupils learn and the good standards they achieve. The good links that are made between art and other subjects also has a positive impact on the pupils' learning. Work is planned according to the national guidelines and provides for the progressive development of knowledge and skills. The use of information and communication technology to support learning in art needs to be much more consistent across the classes. The school does have some programs to support learning about pattern, shape and colour but these are not used widely or regularly. The school has good resources for the subject, but due to lack of space, has difficulties storing pupils' ongoing and finished work.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

89. Pupils' attainment has remained in line with national expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 since the last inspection. Pupils throughout the school, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in developing appropriate skills and knowledge. The co-ordinator has worked hard to develop a new scheme of work which has been modified from the national guidelines. The curriculum for the subject clearly identifies the development of pupils' skills and knowledge as they move through the years and has increased links with subjects such as science, numeracy and literacy.
90. By the end of Year 2, pupils make good progress in developing their designing skills. They use their knowledge from focused tasks to inform their planning and identify the materials that they will need in the making process. For example, in their planning of a vehicle to carry toy animals, pupils made very good use of their knowledge of fixed and rotating axles. These were carefully integrated into their designs, which included exploded diagrams to show both the side view and the view from underneath. Pupils used their knowledge of different materials well when designing the chassis and cab of their vehicle. Pupils' work on this particular project was further improved by the good use of pupils' ideas and exemplars to illustrate the range of different possible approaches to the design.
91. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 make satisfactory progress in their food technology work. A thorough investigation by pupils in Years 3 and 4 into different types of bread and fillings helped them to design and make a range of sandwiches using wholemeal, bagel, naan and tortilla breads. Pupils have a good understanding of the importance of hygiene when making fillings and how the look of a product influences the consumer. There were good links with mathematics in this particular topic, when pupils made detailed records and graphs of their peers' preferences for different types of sandwich.
92. By the end of Year 6, pupils have developed satisfactory skills in all areas of the subject. They talk enthusiastically about things they have designed and made and understand how the subject is giving them useful life skills. They understand the importance of design before the making process and how evaluation during this process helps to improve the finished product. Pupils work with a satisfactory range of tools and materials and have a good understanding of the importance of safety and hygiene. The pupils' project on biscuit making was of a particularly high standard and resulted in a detailed booklet which included links with art, research using the Internet, numeracy and literacy skills. Due to the two-year rolling programme of work, there was no physical evidence of pupils' work using fabrics to make slippers or their fairground rides, which showed how their knowledge of different materials could be combined with their understanding of electrical circuits and motors.
93. The co-ordinator has worked hard to produce a detailed scheme of work which is based on the national guidelines. Sufficient time is 'blocked' for the subject so that projects run over a short time span. This is a good initiative, which enables pupils to become fully involved in the

activities and overcomes the problem of storage that all the classrooms have. Teachers plan projects that involve much collaborative work and, as such, the subject makes a strong contribution to pupils' social and moral development. The co-ordinator is, at present, on a management course which is giving her the skills to develop the subject further. Good use is made of parents who give valuable support to groups of pupils in the classroom.

94. There is, at present, no assessment in place but teachers evaluate pupils' work at the end of each unit to ensure the objectives of the tasks have been met. The school has no record keeping system for the subject but the development of a formal system is part of the co-ordinator's course. The school has good links with the local supermarket which gives certificates to the school to award to pupils when they successfully complete their food technology units. The headteacher monitors teachers' planning carefully and the co-ordinator works with teachers to help in the planning of individual projects and to ensure they make full use of the school's resources. These resources are satisfactory overall and will be further improved with the new computer software that will enable pupils to control some of their working models.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

95. Standards in geography by the age of seven and eleven are broadly in line with those expected nationally and the majority of pupils, including those with special educational needs make good progress. This is a similar picture to that found at the time of the previous inspection in 1998.
96. The pupils in Years 1 and 2 show their learning about maps with their freehand drawings of their route to school. They are beginning to have some awareness of distances and map symbols, such as the representation of the church and houses. They are beginning to learn geographical facts and skills by comparing and contrasting the different features of locations when they study the lives of a family living in a Mexican village. When talking to the pupils, they show some awareness of places beyond their own locality but this is limited. In Years 3 and 4, the pupils consolidate their learning and gain a much better understanding of how different geographical locations affect the way people live during their study of the village of Chembakoli in India. By Year 6, the majority of the pupils have a good understanding of how physical features such as rivers, mountains and valleys are formed. They know and can use a range of geographical vocabulary such as meander, erosion, deposit and floodplain.
97. Two geography lessons were seen during the inspection and in one of these the quality of the teaching was very good. In the other it was satisfactory. These lessons together with the scrutiny of the pupils' work, indicates that the quality of the teaching in geography is good overall. A strength in both the lessons seen was the good use of questions which made the pupils think more deeply. For example in the lesson in Year 3 and 4, the teacher's questions made the pupils consider routines and aspects of their own daily lives in order to compare and contrast them with those of an Indian family. In both lessons the teachers used the plenary session very well to share and to reinforce the pupils' learning. In the very good lesson the use of brainstorming provided a very good strategy for the pupils to recall previous learning about floods before being extended skilfully to consider the effects of flooding on people's lives. The majority of the teachers have good geographical knowledge and this has a positive impact on both teaching and learning. Where the teaching and learning are less effective, it is sometimes because the worksheet tasks are not fully understood and the restrictions on space for writing adversely affect the pupils' creativity.
98. At the time of the inspection there was no co-ordinator for geography and consequently, there has been limited monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning in the subject.

Nonetheless, the teachers plan well using the national guidelines. The work is organised into a two-year cycle of topics to ensure coverage of the required programmes of study. Across the school, but especially in the juniors, the teachers use factual and explanatory writing as well as careful drawings and paintings to make good links between geography, literacy and art. Resources for the subject are satisfactory and ICT is beginning to be used, for example, to support the pupils' research on rivers, and in word processing their work on Chembakoli. The subject is enriched through visits to places of interest and residential visits, and makes a significant contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

## HISTORY

99. No history lessons were seen during the inspection. However, from the scrutiny of work and displays, and from discussions with pupils and teachers, it can be judged that across the school, levels of attainment in history are in line with those expected nationally. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, are making satisfactory progress,. This is a similar judgement to that made at the time of the previous inspection in 1998.
100. In Years 1 and 2, the pupils' folders reveal a limited amount of recorded work. This is because much of the learning involves discussion of the pupils' ideas and observations about the past through the examination of pictures, videos and artefacts. Discussions with the pupils reveal satisfactory learning and knowledge about the past. For example, the pupils in Year 2 can use simple terms about the passing of time and can produce a personal time-line of their lives. They compare and contrast life in the past with modern living when they learn about the history of the school and compare toys in the past with those of the present day. When looking at the display of old toys and talking about them, they begin to show an understanding of the changes that have taken place over time. Many of the higher-attaining pupils are beginning to have a sound understanding of sources of evidence and are able to explain some of the ways in which we find out about the past.
101. In Years 3 and 4 the pupils learn about life in Tudor times and have produced work of sound quality. They use their previous learning well to explain the similarities and differences between now and then. In Years 5 and 6, the pupils show that they have good research skills when they use primary and secondary sources in their learning about changes in Chester since Roman times and Saughton since the school was built in 1867. Their work is well presented and shows the pupils' good use of a range of sources of evidence to find out about aspects of life. These include the school logbook and an interview with a past pupil of the school.
102. From the scrutiny of work the overall quality of teaching in history is judged to be satisfactory. The quality of recorded work is generally of a good standard and well presented. In the juniors, the pupils' work shows some evidence of personal research but much use is made of worksheets. Most of the pupils complete the same one and there is limited evidence that the teachers provide different work for the range of ability within the class. Additionally, the use of worksheets frequently restricts the pupils in recording their thoughts, ideas and knowledge creatively and independently. The use of information and communication technology to support work in history is slow to develop and, currently, is not widely or consistently used.
103. Planning for history is satisfactory. To ensure coverage of all the elements of the history curriculum, units of work are allocated and work is planned according to a 2-year cycle of topics. There is currently no co-ordinator for history and, as a result, there has been limited monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning in the subject. Currently, there is no assessment of attainment in history. The pupils' work and interest in history is stimulated through a range of educational visits and these make a strong contribution to pupils' spiritual



and cultural development. Some pupils have an example of history work in their personal profiles that they take with them as they move through the school. This gives new teachers insights into pupils' attainment when they first move up to a new class.

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

104. Standards by the end of Year 2 are in line with national expectations but are below national expectations at the end of Year 6, as pupils are not covering all aspects of the subject in sufficient depth. Since the last inspection standards in information and communication technology (ICT) have been maintained in Years 1 and 2 but have declined in Years 3 to 6. At present ICT is a main focus in the school improvement plan, with all teachers also completing their national training.
105. By the end of Year 2 pupils build successfully on their good work in the Reception class and have successfully acquired basic mouse skills and familiarity with the keyboard. Pupils have made good progress in using ICT to communicate. They show a good awareness of the importance of presentation when they word process their work, such as about toys from the past and present. They understand how to access the Internet and use some Internet programs to support their work in literacy. They are developing a satisfactory understanding of how ICT makes things happen, clearly demonstrated when pupils prepared sequences of commands for the floor robot. Careful planning by the teacher enables pupils to practise their number bonds on a numeracy program and makes use of appropriate software to improve their spelling.
106. By the end of Year 6 pupils are attaining standards in line with national expectations in communication but, because of a combination of a lack of suitable programs and teacher expertise in certain areas, pupils' skills and knowledge of multi-media work, control and monitoring are below national expectations. Pupils use ICT very well in their design work; clearly evident on the front cover of their ICT book. They are confident in the use of data handling programs and use this information to create graphs of different pulse rates as part of their science work. Whilst pupils are confident in loading data into these programs, their ability to question the data is limited. Pupils have well-developed word processing skills; clearly evident in their applications for a monitoring job in the school and in their recipes for a 'Perfect Christmas'. Pupils are confident in the use of the Internet and have found information about rivers and knights to support their work in geography and history. They have also made good use of CD ROM to find information for their World War II project. Pupils make satisfactory progress in Years 3 and 4 in developing their word processing; they show a good awareness of audience when choosing different fonts and colours to produce their poems such as *The Spider*. Good use is made of the computer to support pupils' work in literacy, although pupils' opportunities to use the Internet are limited. Pupils' attainment in data handling and control is below average because teaching does not emphasise these skills well at present. All pupils enjoy using computers and work well collaboratively when the opportunities are planned. Interviews with pupils confirmed inspectors' judgements that pupils should use computers more in their everyday work to give an added dimension to their learning.
107. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 but unsatisfactory in Years 3 to 6, where teachers do not have the appropriate skills to teach all aspects of the subject. No direct teaching of ICT was seen and the planned use of computers to support pupils' learning during the inspection was very limited. As a result, opportunities for teachers to use computers to support and extend pupils' learning are, at present, being missed. There are some important areas for development to improve standards in the subject through the school. Teachers, and particularly those in the top two classes, do not yet have sufficient subject knowledge to teach all aspects of the subject or to integrate computers effectively into the school curriculum.

Limited space in the classrooms makes the teaching of computer skills difficult as pupils find it very hard to see the monitor during whole class teaching sessions. The static siting of the computers in Years 3 to 6 results in pupils working at inappropriate heights and positions. The development of pupils' skills is also hindered because there are different word processing programs on the school's PCs and laptops. The school improvement plan is addressing the weaknesses in teachers' subject knowledge and the lack of programs to ensure that all aspects of the subject are covered and taught appropriately. The plan to purchase an interactive whiteboard should help to overcome the present limitations in whole class skills teaching. Pupils with special educational needs use a range of specialist programs to help develop their basic numeracy and literacy skills.

108. At present there is no formal assessment of pupils' skills as they move through the school year and no standardised sheet for the recording of pupils' progress. However, a new assessment and recording document is in place in the Reception and Year 1/2 classes, and this will be extended through the school as part of the subject development plan. The plan to include pupils' ICT work in their individual portfolios will give teachers and the co-ordinator a clear understanding of how pupils' skills are developing through the years and of whether standards are high enough in all aspects of the subject. The co-ordinator has a clear understanding of how standards should be raised and pupils' computer skills used more effectively to support their learning in other subjects. At present, the subject makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

## MUSIC

109. Only one music lesson was seen during the inspection and this took place with the Year 5 and 6 pupils. Other music sessions observed were a whole school singing practice and a choir practice that involved all of the junior pupils. Nonetheless, from the scrutiny of the co-ordinator's subject file, planning documents and discussions with staff and pupils it is evident that by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 all the pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress overall. They are provided with a good range of experiences that enables them to achieve standards that exceed those seen nationally. This is an improvement since the time of the previous inspection.
110. The school places great emphasis on the teaching and learning of singing and this is very successful. Across the school, pupils of all ages and abilities sing well. The choir achieves successes in several local music festivals and three of the current Year 6 pupils have been accepted as choristers at Chester Cathedral.
111. From an early age, almost all of the pupils have very good control of their own voice and they know and can sing a range of traditional songs. The older pupils are further able to sing in two parts and to sing rounds in three and four parts. As they move through the classes they learn pitch through the use of the pentatonic scale and the 'sol-fah' sounds and hand signs. Almost all of the junior pupils can use these to sing a simple melody from sight. The older infant pupils and almost all of the juniors can sustain a rhythm and keep to a beat whilst listening and singing. When listening to music, the older pupils identify some orchestral instruments and make comparisons with other types and styles of music heard previously. They respond well as they listen to a range of music at the beginning and end of assemblies and this makes a positive contribution to their spiritual and cultural development.
112. In the lesson in Year 5 and 6, pupils made good progress in reading and clapping a syncopated rhythm from written notation. Several of them could explain simple compound time and could recognise it in an example. In the choir practice, many of the junior pupils showed a good understanding of the difference between loud and soft sounds and some of the older pupils

could use the correct musical vocabulary of ‘dynamics’ and the associated ‘crescendo’ and ‘diminuendo’.

113. The majority of the pupils respond well during music and singing lessons but a small minority of the older pupils are less well motivated and are reluctant to join in all the activities. In discussions with the pupils they expressed the view that their enjoyment of singing was marred by the amount of time given to it and the formal repertoire of songs.
114. The overall quality of the teaching in music is good. The pupils benefit from the specialist teaching of singing from the co-ordinator and the additional expertise of an accomplished pianist who accompanies many of the music sessions. The teacher and the accompanist work well together and this has a positive impact on the standards achieved by the pupils. Both teachers use their voice effectively to control the group and to sing instructions and the pupils respond well to this. In the lesson with the Year 5 and 6 pupils, the teacher used skilful questioning and good examples to extend their understanding of rhythm and pitch. Her use of practical demonstration, speaking, clapping and movement helped all the pupils to succeed in understanding and ‘feeling’ a syncopated rhythm. Her expertise and encouragement also gave the pupils confidence and several of them willingly sang solo phrases in front of their peer group.
115. The co-ordinator for music is enthusiastic and dedicated. Her knowledge and expertise make a significant contribution to the good standards achieved by the pupils. Music lessons are well planned using a commercial voice-based scheme and the national guidelines. The planned work incorporates the elements of performing, listening, appraising and composing. However, there is some imbalance in the way these elements are almost exclusively taught through singing. Consequently, opportunities for the pupils to perform and compose using tuned and untuned percussion instruments are limited. Visiting specialist teachers provide opportunities for the pupils to learn to play the violin, clarinet and the recorder. The pupils’ musical experiences are further enriched through music workshops and performances by professional musicians such as string players and members of the Manchester Camerata.
116. The school’s collection of percussion instruments is barely adequate. Many of them are old and in need of replacement and there is a further need to invest in programs and equipment that will allow the greater use of information and communication technology to support teaching and learning in music.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

117. Standards in physical education have been maintained since the last inspection and are in line with national expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Standards in swimming in Years 3 and 4 are higher than those expected for pupils of a similar age. Since the last inspection the school has considerably improved its accommodation for the subject by creating a large playground suitable for netball, a new playing field for football, athletics and other summer games, and a hall for gymnastics and dance.
118. By the end of Year 2, pupils build on the good standards of the Reception class. They make good use of space and are also fully aware of the potential dangers of the hall when moving at speed. Pupils show satisfactory control in their movements, and use this well in their rolling and balancing work. Pupils show good collaborative skills, learning well from each other when working in pairs and small groups. Pupils also benefit from the good use of demonstrations which they then have opportunities to copy and develop. Pupils’ ability to evaluate the work of their peers is less well developed.

119. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 make very good progress in their swimming. They work in small groups, based on ability, and benefit from high quality teaching which develops their skills well. In lessons, there is a very good emphasis on the correct body position and strong arm and leg actions. As a result, pupils swim with good style, with higher-achievers showing particularly good technique in breast stroke, freestyle and back stroke. Teachers work the pupils particularly hard in lessons with non-stop practices and activities, which successfully develop the pupils' stamina.
120. By the end of Year 6, pupils have a good understanding of the importance of warm-up and the impact that exercise has on the body. Pupils respond very positively to their set tasks which they find enjoyable but which also successfully develop their skills. They have a sound understanding of tactics in invasion games and realise the importance of marking. Boys in particular show above average control in stopping and passing a football ball, with higher-achieving pupils showing very good control with both feet. Good use of exemplars enables pupils to improve the quality of their passing skills. Pupils develop good stamina in lessons because of the good emphasis on sustained movement.
121. The quality of teaching is good overall and has improved since the last inspection. Teachers have benefited from a training initiative which has improved their subject knowledge and confidence. There have also been improvements in resources, which teachers use well to challenge pupils in lessons. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, are fully included in lessons and those requiring extra help are well supported by the teachers and their peers so that they can play a full part in all activities. The curriculum is now good, is based on the national guidelines and is extended by a very good range of extra-curricular activities, such as cricket, football, netball, rounders and rugby. Pupils also benefit from the expertise of parents who lead some of these out of school clubs. The school makes good use of the skills of the co-ordinator to work alongside teachers. Apart from swimming, there is no formal recording of the development of pupils' skills. The subject makes a very good contribution to pupils' moral and social development.