

INSPECTION REPORT

**MURDISHAW WEST COMMUNITY PRIMARY
SCHOOL**

Runcorn

LEA area: Halton

Unique reference number: 111174

Headteacher: Mr S Jameson

Reporting inspector: Bob Cross
15917

Dates of inspection: 3rd to 6th February 2003

Inspection number: 251713

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Community
School category:	Infant and junior
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Barnfield Avenue Murdishaw Runcorn Cheshire
Postcode:	WA7 6EP
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs G Wilson
Date of previous inspection:	July 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
15917	Bob Cross	Registered inspector	Science Information and communication technology Physical education Foundation Stage English as an additional language	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements. How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
9874	Malcolm Milwain	Lay inspector	Educational inclusion including racial equality	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
19120	Philip Crookall	Team inspector	Mathematics History Music Religious education Special educational needs	
11510	Keith Oglesby	Team inspector	English Art Design and technology Geography	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

Murdishaw West Primary School educates boys and girls aged between four and 11 years. There are 206 pupils on roll which is about the same size as most other schools of the same type. Twenty-eight children are in a Reception class in the Foundation Stage. The school has 73 pupils on its register of special educational needs, which is above the level of the national average. Five pupils have statements of special educational needs which is also above the level of the national average. Pupils with speech and communication difficulties are the largest group amongst those with special educational needs. The school has 16 more girls than boys on roll and there is a marked gender imbalance in the numbers in some classes. Very few pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds which is much lower than in most schools. None of the pupils speaks English as an additional language which is low compared with most schools. Eighty-five pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is well above the national average. During the last school year, nine pupils entered the school other than at the usual time of first admission and nine left it at times which were not those of the normal leaving or transfer for most pupils. This is rate of mobility is not unusual. The school is a member of the "Aspire" Education Action Zone. Pupils enter the school at very low levels of attainment.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Murdishaw West Primary School provides its pupils with a sound education which has strengths and weaknesses. By the time that they leave the school, pupils have made good progress from their very low starting point. In the 2002 end of key stage tests in Year 6, pupils reached average standards in English and mathematics and below average standards in science compared with all schools. The school received a "School Achievement Award" in April 2002 for improvement in its Year 6 national test results since 1998. This is because of its sound leadership and the consistently at least satisfactory teaching and learning in most classes throughout the school. Overall, the school's provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and all pupils are fully included in its activities. However, standards in Year 2 have been consistently well below average over recent years. This is because of weaknesses in the quality of teaching and shortcomings in the effectiveness of management in this year group. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- In the end of key stage tests in 2002 in Year 6, the school reached well above average standards in English and mathematics and above average standards in science compared with similar schools.
- By the time that they leave the school, pupils have made good progress because the quality of teaching and learning is consistently at least satisfactory in most classes. For example, they reach above average standards in history in Year 6.
- The pupils show good attitudes to their work which helps them to progress.
- The school's good provision for the pupils' moral, social and cultural development promotes good relationships.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and helps them to improve.
- The school makes good use of new technology in both the curriculum and administration.

What could be improved

- The standards reached in the end of Key Stage 1 national tests and assessments in Year 2 and those reached by more able pupils in Year 6 which are below the level of the national average.
- Aspects of the quality of teaching in some cases, for example, where teachers do not have high enough expectations of the standards that the pupils can achieve.
- The accuracy and use of assessment information to plan pupils' work in order to help them to progress.
- Aspects of the quality of management which do not make it sufficiently clear that effectively raising standards is the school's main priority.
- Attendance which is well below the level of the national average.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in July 1998 and, since then, it has made a satisfactory improvement. It has a similar capacity to continue to improve. Since the school's last inspection, standards in the end of key stage tests in Year 6 have risen sharply in English and science and also, although less sharply, in mathematics. However, in the tests in Year 2, there has been a sharp decline. This pattern is confirmed by comparing the findings of this inspection with the judgements made by the school's 1998 inspection. The overall judgement of teaching made by the two inspections is the same although there are detailed variations between the findings. There is approximately one third less unsatisfactory teaching than there was in 1998. Since 1998, significant improvements have been made in curricular planning, the information and communication technology curriculum, assessment procedures and the effectiveness of the school's links with parents. There has also been some improvement in the effectiveness of leadership. However, in most other respects, the same strengths and weakness noted in 1998 remain although attendance has fallen significantly. The key issues for action from the 1998 inspection have been addressed satisfactorily.

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	D	C	A
mathematics	D	E	C	A
science	D	D	D	B

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

Compared with all schools, standards in the end of Year 6 tests have been mainly average or below since 2000. However, there has been a rising trend since 1998 which is marked in 2002. In 2002, the school's results compared with similar schools were well above average in English and mathematics and above average in science. The school did not reach its target for the percentage of pupils reaching Level 4 and above, in English and mathematics in 2002.

The findings of the inspection are that, in Year 6, pupils achieve above average standards in history. They reach average standards in English, including literacy, information and communication technology, geography, art, and religious education. Standards are below average in mathematics, including numeracy, science and design and technology. There was insufficient evidence to make judgements in music and physical education. In Year 2, standards are well below average in English, including literacy, mathematics, including numeracy and science. They are average in all other subjects except design and technology and physical education where they are below average. In Year R, children are on course to reach well below average standards in their communication, language and literacy skills and their mathematical development, similar standards to those found in most schools in their personal, social and emotional development, their knowledge and understanding of the world and their creative development and below average standards in their physical development.

Children enter this school at very low levels of attainment and leave it at average levels. This is good achievement. This is supported by the school's 2002 data showing how pupils progress at Key Stage 2 compared with pupils in other schools who entered Year 3 at similar levels of attainment. The data show that standards in the 2002 end of key stage test in English, mathematics and science were below average (D). The rate of progress varies throughout the school. It is good in Year R and in Years 3 to 6 but unsatisfactory in Years 1 and 2 although it is generally satisfactory when Year 1 is considered

alone. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress throughout the school. Gifted and talented pupils are not identified and, therefore, make inadequate progress.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils have a good attitude to school. They show enthusiasm for, and an interest in, their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Satisfactory. Behaviour is generally good in most classes and circumstances, but there are, on occasions, instances of unsatisfactory behaviour in some classes. There were three instances of pupils being excluded from the school in the last year.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils relate well to their peers and to adults both in and out of the classroom. Pupils willingly accept responsibility when they are given the opportunity.
Attendance	Poor. Attendance is well below the national average and unauthorised absence is well above the national average.

The pupils' attitudes, personal development and relationships help them to make good progress. Their behaviour promotes satisfactory achievement. High absence rates lower the standards of those who are away from school.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory but it varies as shown in the table above. Where teaching is at least satisfactory, strengths include teaching of basic skills, teaching methods, management of the pupils, use of time and resources and a good understanding of the needs of the children. Shortcomings include lack of knowledge of the subjects taught, failing to use assessment information to plan appropriate tasks for pupils and low expectations of what they can achieve. The major strengths in learning are the overall progress made by the pupils, the effort they put into their work and their sustained concentration. Weaknesses in learning include not paying attention, producing small amounts of low quality work and limited awareness of how to develop their own learning.

In Year R, teaching and learning are good in all areas of development. In Years 1 and 2, teaching is unsatisfactory in science, design and technology and physical education and satisfactory in all other subjects including literacy and numeracy. There are significant variations between Years 1 and 2. In Years 3 to 6, teaching and learning are good in history, unsatisfactory in design and technology and satisfactory in all other subjects, including literacy and numeracy, where there was sufficient evidence to make a secure judgement. No judgements were made in music and physical education. Throughout the school, teaching and learning for pupils with special educational needs are good. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to the progress of these pupils.

Overall, the school meets the needs of its pupils well. However, this progress varies throughout the school. The pupils' needs are well met in Year R and in Years 3 to 6 but unsatisfactorily met in Years 1 and 2. The pupils' needs are generally satisfactorily met when Year 1 is considered separately from Year 2. The needs of pupils with special educational needs are well met throughout the school. However, more able pupils do not reach their full potential and gifted and talented pupils are not identified and, therefore, their needs are not met.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. Curricular provision is similar to that found in most schools. The National Literacy and Numeracy strategies have been implemented soundly. Equality of opportunity is satisfactory overall, although there are variations in the achievement of some pupils. Extra-curricular activities are satisfactory although the range of out of school clubs provided is not as good as that generally found. Provision of free access to outside activities is a weakness in the Year R curriculum.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Teachers and support staff know the pupils well. They address the pupils' needs well and are supported in this by good individual education plans. The management of the school's special educational needs provision is satisfactory in practice. However, the roles undertaken by staff do not reflect the job descriptions which outline their responsibilities. The school does not have sufficiently rigorous data to demonstrate the overall success of its special educational needs provision.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall and in moral, social and cultural development. Provision for the development of the pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. There are too few instances of opportunities for the pupils to reflect on spiritual matters in the curriculum. The pupils' understanding of Britain as a multicultural society is not developed well enough.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory. The teachers know the pupils well and take good care of them. Some minor health and safety issues were drawn to the attention of the school during the inspection. Procedures for assessing pupils' academic progress and personal development are satisfactory although the use of assessment information to guide teachers' planning is unsatisfactory. In Year R, good use is made of the assessments of the children which take place on their entry and of the judgements representing the standards that most children reach at the end of Year R. However, insufficient use is made of the more detailed steps in learning which help them to reach these standards. The school has recently adopted a policy to ensure racial equality.

Provision for special educational needs, and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good. The teachers know the pupils well and take good care of them. Curricular provision is satisfactory with weaknesses in extra-curricular provision and the provision of outside activities in Year R. Although assessment procedures are satisfactory, assessment information is not used well enough to plan the pupils' work or to assess the progress of pupils with special educational needs. The school's partnership with parents is good

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory leadership of the school ensures that its aims are suitably met and gives it a good team spirit. However, management is unsatisfactory, as raising standards at Key Stage 1 in particular has not been adequately addressed.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. The governors have established a sound understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They have ensured that all statutory requirements apart from a few minor omissions in the information provided for parents have been met. Their role as critical friends to the school is underdeveloped, for example, in challenging the school to improve standards.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Unsatisfactory. Teaching and learning are not monitored rigorously enough to ensure that all pupils throughout the school make the maximum progress of which they are capable. The school identifies most of its weaknesses accurately but does not always address them effectively. For example, it has not made appropriate provision for all more able pupils. The school development plan does not have raising standards as its overriding priority. The school does not challenge itself sufficiently.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. Budget planning is careful and suitably linked to educational priorities. Spending is carefully monitored. Overall, pupils make good progress although progress in Key Stage 1 is unsatisfactory. The headteacher has a clear understanding of the principles underpinning the school's ability to give value for money, but the governors are less sure about this matter.

The school's satisfactory leadership has created a commitment to raise standards which has succeeded in Years 3 to 6. However, shortcomings in management have meant that this commitment has not been successful in Years 1 to 2 and for more able pupils. Value for money, particularly in terms of challenging existing standards, is not given enough priority. The school's accommodation supports the teaching of the curriculum well. It has a good number of teachers and support staff and its learning resources are good.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The expectations that the school has of their children. • The quality of the teaching. • The way the school is led and managed. • Their children are helped to become mature and responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of activities provided outside of lessons. • The work that their children are given to do at home.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The progress made by their children.• They are comfortable about approaching the school.• The fact that their children like school.• The way the school works closely with them. | |
|---|--|

The findings of the inspection support many of the positive views of the parents. They differ in terms of aspects of teaching, leadership, progress and expectation. In addition, they find that the provision of homework and extra-curricular provision, apart from out of school clubs, is satisfactory. However, the school's annual reports to parents about their children's progress are not detailed enough.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Overall, children enter the Foundation Stage with very low levels of attainment for their age. This is consistent over time and is particularly marked in their communication, language and literacy skills. The judgement is confirmed by the school's data and the findings of the inspection. It represents a decline in standards on entry since the school's last inspection when standards on entry were judged to be below average. In Year R, the quality of teaching and learning is good overall and so the children make good progress. This is an improvement on the findings of the school's 1998 inspection when progress was judged to be "erratic" and teaching satisfactory. The children are on course to reach well below average standards in their communication, language and literacy skills and their mathematical development. They are on course to reach similar standards to those found in most schools in their personal, social and emotional development, their knowledge and understanding of the world and their creative development. Children are on track to reach below average standards in their physical development because of limitations in the school's outdoor provision for this area. The school's Education Action Zone has comprehensive plans to assist the improvement of early childhood learning experiences.
2. In the end of Year 2 national tests in 2002, compared with all schools, standards were well below average in reading and very low (in the lowest five per cent in the country) in writing and mathematics. Standards have been broadly at this level since 2002 and there has been a declining trend since 1999. In the assessments made by teachers in science, standards were well below average. There are no significant differences in the attainment of boys and girls. In 2002, in writing, the school had significant numbers of pupils working below Level 1 in the tests and few pupils at the higher levels of 2A and above. In reading and mathematics, below average numbers of pupils reached the higher Level 3, but above average numbers gained Level 2A. In both subjects, significant numbers of pupils were working at Level 1.
3. The findings of the inspection are that, in Year 2, standards are well below average in English, including literacy, mathematics, including numeracy and science. They are below average in design and technology and physical education and average in all other subjects. Compared with the findings of the school's 1998 inspection, standards have fallen in English, mathematics, science, design and technology and physical education and remained the same in all other subjects. The decline in standards is directly related to weaknesses in teaching and management. The judgements made in English, mathematics and science are comparable with those of the school's end of key stage national tests and assessments in 2002.
4. In the end of Year 6 national tests in 2002, standards in English and mathematics were average compared with all schools. Standards in science were below average. In 2002, the school's results compared with similar schools were well above average in English and mathematics and above average in science. There has been a rising trend since 1998 which is very marked in 2002. In 2002, in English, mathematics and science, the school exceeded the national average for the percentage of pupils reaching the expected Level 4, but did not reach the average for pupils obtaining the higher Level 5. However, it did not reach its target for the percentage of pupils reaching Level 4 and above in English and mathematics in 2002. There are no significant differences in the attainment of boys and girls.

5. In Year 6, the findings of the inspection are that standards are above average in history, below average in mathematics, including numeracy, science and design and technology and average in all other subjects including English and literacy. There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement about standards in music and physical education in Year 6. The judgements in English and science are the same as the school's results in the 2002 end of key stage national tests. The judgement is lower in mathematics because the pupils concerned entered the key stage at lower levels of attainment than the 2002 year group. Compared with the findings of the school's 1998 inspection, standards have risen in English and history, they have fallen in design and technology and have remained the same in all other subjects where judgements were possible. However, when the national test scores reported in the school's 1998 report are compared with those of 2002, a sharp increase in the percentage of pupils reaching Level 4 and above has occurred in English and science. Additionally, the percentage of pupils reaching that level in mathematics has increased, although less sharply.
6. Pupils achieve well in this school. This is supported by the school's 2002 data showing how pupils progress at Key Stage 2 compared with pupils in other schools who entered Year 3 at similar levels of attainment. This shows that standards in the 2002 end of key stage test in English, mathematics and science were below average. However, although overall achievement is good, it varies significantly throughout the school because of differences in the effectiveness of management and the quality of teaching. In Year R and Years 3 to 6, progress is good. In Years 1 and 2, it is unsatisfactory although it is satisfactory in Year 1. In addition, progress for more able pupils is not maximised throughout the school and gifted and talented pupils are not identified and, therefore, make inadequate progress. The Education Action Zone of which the school is a part, has plans to sustain and enhance attainment in Year 6 through comprehensive transfer arrangements for pupils who are gifted and talented in music and the performing arts.
7. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well, particularly in literacy and behaviour. This is because teachers plan for the pupils' needs well and work together closely with the teaching assistants who provide good support. Learning support assistants keep weekly diaries of the pupils' progress and use these to monitor the pupils' progress and report it to the special educational needs co-ordinator and class teachers. Pupils with special educational needs have good attitudes to their work and this helps them to make good progress.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

8. A good relationship between staff and pupils and between pupils and their peers makes a good contribution to pupils' learning. The behaviour of pupils is satisfactory. However, in some lessons there are instances of unacceptable behaviour, which disrupts the learning of the rest of the class. Where this occurs it is usually dealt with effectively by the teacher. During the period of the inspection, there was no evidence of bullying or any other form of oppressive behaviour.
9. The overall attendance rate for the school is well below the national average and some pupils arrive after the attendance register has been closed.
10. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, have a good attitude to school and most involve themselves fully in lessons. During a personal, social and health education lesson in a Year 4 class, all the pupils were actively involved in a debate on dog fouling. This led to some stimulating ideas for the design of a poster. However, pupils are not always able to discuss their work clearly due to limited language skills.

The majority of pupils co-operate well with each other. In lessons they share resources and, when working in pairs or in groups, they are able to discuss and share ideas.

11. There are some opportunities for pupils to take personal responsibility for tasks around school and the school council gives pupils from Year 2 onwards an opportunity to make a useful contribution to the life of the school. Many pupils take advantage of the extra-curricular activities offered by the school, such as netball, football and art. Class teachers arrange for pupils to act as “buddies” to new pupils.
12. Children in Year R have positive attitudes to their work and play. They behave well. The children work well with their teacher, teaching assistants and other adults. These judgements are similar to those made by the school’s 1998 inspection. The children are given many good opportunities to develop independence to which they respond well. However, this development is limited as they do not have an easily accessible outside area which they can use spontaneously.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

13. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, but it is good in Year R, unsatisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory in Years 3 to 6. There are further variations between the years, notably that, in Year 1, teaching and learning are satisfactory. The overall judgement is the same as that made by the school’s 1998 inspection but the variations observed in the current inspection were not noted then. In 1998, four per cent of the teaching was very good, 39 per cent at least good, 83 per cent at least satisfactory and 17 per cent unsatisfactory. This inspection found two per cent to be very good, 34 per cent to be at least good, 89 per cent to be at least satisfactory and 11 per cent to be unsatisfactory.
14. Where teaching is at least satisfactory, strengths include teaching of basic skills, teaching methods, management of the pupils, use of time and resources and a good understanding of the needs of the children. Shortcomings include lack of knowledge of the subjects taught, failing to use assessment information, including marking of the pupils’ work, to plan appropriate tasks for children and low expectations of what the pupils can achieve. In some cases, the management of the pupils’ behaviour is not good enough. This is a significant change from 1998 when class control was noted as a strength. The current inspection finds that some teachers lack sufficient expertise in managing the behaviour of the pupils and others do not have an adequate knowledge of the subjects of English, mathematics, science, design and technology and physical education. The Education Action Zone of which the school is a part has an initiative to support teachers in the management of the pupils’ behaviour. Weaknesses in the knowledge which teachers had of English and mathematics, low expectations of the pupils and the failure to give them hard enough work were all noted in the 1998 inspection.
15. The major strengths in learning are the overall progress made by the children, the effort they put into their work and their sustained concentration. Weaknesses in learning include not paying attention, producing small amounts of low quality work and not really understanding the task.
16. Overall, the school meets the needs of its pupils well. However, this varies throughout the school. The pupils’ needs are well met in Year R and in Years 3 to 6 but unsatisfactorily met in Years 1 and 2, although pupils’ needs are generally satisfactorily met in Year 1. The needs of pupils with special educational needs are well met

throughout the school. However, more able pupils do not reach their full potential and gifted and talented pupils are not identified and, therefore, their needs are not met.

17. The quality of teaching and learning in Year R is good, which results in the children making good progress. Teaching and learning are good in all areas of development. This is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection when teaching was judged to be satisfactory. All children are fully included in all activities. The teachers and support staff know the children very well as individuals and have capably developed a secure environment with good relationships. The teaching, of literacy and numeracy, is introduced effectively to the children. However, in some instances, the work they are given is much the same for all of the children and does not allow some of them to progress as fast as they could. The children are well used to the routines established in the class and respond positively to them. All adults in the Foundation Stage class listen carefully to the children when working with them and effectively help them to develop their vocabulary and other skills. However, in rare instances, adults over-direct the children and limit their personal development. This shortcoming was also noted in 1998 although to a greater extent. The very good partnership between the teacher and all of the support assistants is a strong feature of Year R, which helps the children to make good progress. This was also noted in the school's 1998 inspection.
18. In Years 1 and 2, the quality of teaching and learning is unsatisfactory. This is a decline from the findings of the 1998 inspection when it was judged to be satisfactory. During the inspection, 11 lessons were seen. Two were good, five satisfactory, three unsatisfactory and one poor. In Year 1, where teaching and learning are satisfactory, five lessons were seen. Two were good and three were satisfactory. The major weaknesses in Year 2 were low expectations, evident in the often too easy work set for the pupils, lack of knowledge of the subjects being taught, failure to use assessment information accurately to plan the pupils' work and shortcomings in the management of the pupils' behaviour. When Years 1 and 2 are taken together, teaching and learning were satisfactory in English, including literacy, mathematics, including numeracy, information and communication technology, history, geography, art, music and religious education. They were unsatisfactory in science, design and technology and physical education. Where comparisons with the findings of the school's last inspection are possible for Years 1 and 2, teaching has improved in English, declined in science, design and technology, music and physical education and remained the same in all other subjects.
19. A Year 1 lesson about recognising coins and giving change illustrated the satisfactory nature of the teaching of mathematics and the satisfactory way in which the school has implemented the National Numeracy Strategy. The lesson began with the pupils counting in twos to 20 and recognising odd and even numbers. There was a good rapport between the teacher and the pupils, which helped their social development as they enjoyed correcting the deliberate mistakes made by the teacher. The teacher showed good knowledge of mathematics by the careful use of correct mathematical language. She reinforced the pupils' learning by varying her questions to ensure their understanding. A good range of visual aids was used to keep the pupils' attention. However, the introduction to the lesson was too long and some pupils became restless and fidgety because of the slow pace. Pupils with special educational needs were provided with work matched to their needs which ensured that they were able to take a full part in the lesson.
20. In Years 3 to 6, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory as it was in 1998. During the inspection, 26 lessons were seen. One was very good, nine good, 15 satisfactory and one unsatisfactory. Teaching and learning are strongest in Year 4

where, of the seven lessons seen, one was very good, four good and two satisfactory. Teaching in Years 3 and 6 is consistently at least satisfactory and, in both year groups, two of the five lessons seen were good. In Year 5, almost all of the teaching was satisfactory although one good and one unsatisfactory lesson were also seen. In this year group and to some extent in Year 3, the behaviour of the pupils has some shortcomings. In Years 3 to 6, the quality of teaching and learning is good in history and satisfactory in all other subjects, including literacy and numeracy, where there was sufficient evidence to make a judgement, except design and technology where it is unsatisfactory. No judgements were made in music and physical education. Where comparisons with the findings of the school's last inspection are possible, teaching has improved in English and history, declined in design and technology and remained the same in all other subjects.

21. A Year 6 lesson about constructing an argument, illustrated the satisfactory nature of the teaching in Years 3 to 6 and the satisfactory way in which the school has implemented the National Literacy Strategy. The teacher settled the class quickly, was well prepared, and the good relationships which existed set a good ethos so that all the pupils listened carefully and tried to follow the argument. However, although the teacher gave clear explanations using well-chosen vocabulary, initially only the more able pupils answered and the teacher had to try to encourage others to contribute. The class enjoyed working together in pairs highlighting text and this aided their social development. However, the task was too difficult for all except the most able with the result that some found it difficult. Nevertheless, good support by the teaching assistant, especially for pupils with special educational needs, ensured that all were fully and effectively included in the lesson. Information and communication technology was also used well to support the work of two pupils with special educational needs.
22. The quality of teaching and learning for pupils with special educational needs is good. Individual education plans are well formulated with appropriate targets and are regularly reviewed. This contributes significantly to the progress made by these pupils. As was noted by the school's 1998 inspection, teaching assistants make an important contribution to the progress of pupils with special educational needs. In lessons, the needs of the pupils are carefully considered and small group, paired or individual teaching is planned where appropriate. A well-equipped special educational needs room provides a good base for the part-time teachers to withdraw pupils for short periods when this is likely to lead to more effective learning. At other times, pupils follow the same curriculum as their peers as far as possible. Oral activities present problems for many special educational needs pupils and withdrawal ensures that the time is better spent concentrating on their individual needs. In classes, group work involves appropriate tasks and additional support for these pupils.

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

23. Curricular provision is satisfactory. The curriculum meets the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum and the Halton Agreed Syllabus for religious education. The curriculum fulfils the school's aims by providing a broad and balanced programme of work for all its pupils, by emphasising personal, social and health education, and by including sex education and drugs education. Lessons provide a good variety of interesting and relevant activities. There has been a good improvement since the previous inspection, because there is a better balance between subjects and the school has strengthened the English and science programmes. There is a weakness in the provision for design and technology, because pupils do not have enough opportunities to design, test and evaluate.

24. The school's current approach to implementing the National Literacy Strategy is satisfactory and results in good progress in English. Pupils have a range of opportunities to use and extend their writing skills in most other subjects, although this is much more evident in history than anywhere else. The school's implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy is satisfactory, but it is not as firmly in place as the strategy for literacy. As a result, standards in mathematics are below average.
25. The school is developing its policy for personal social and health education and citizenship. This is being implemented through some aspects of the life of the school. Pupils are encouraged to be aware of the effect of their actions on themselves and others. In an assembly on the theme of friendship, pupils were encouraged to think about the need sometimes to make decisions which may be unpopular with their friends
26. A key issue from the last inspection was to put in place a clear structure for the planning of the curriculum for the under-fives. The school has made good progress on this issue and teachers have introduced schemes of work from new national guidelines. Other issues from the previous inspection were to use a more structured approach to the teaching of reading and to provide training and a new scheme of work for science. For reading, the school has adopted the approaches in the National Literacy Strategy and pupils make good progress by Year 6. In science, a new scheme is in place and almost twice as many pupils reach average standards in the end of Year 6 national tests as they did in 1997.
27. The final key issue in the previous inspection was to clarify the roles and responsibilities of teachers with curriculum responsibilities. The school has done this. However, new issues, for example, in the workload of the deputy headteacher have developed.
28. Curriculum and lesson planning has improved since the last inspection. Teachers generally plan work which builds on what the pupils have learned before. This was a weaknesses in the previous inspection. Teachers record clearly what they want pupils to learn, although they do not always make clear enough distinctions between work for pupils of differing attainment in each class. In some lessons, the curriculum for more able pupils does not match their needs because the teachers' expectations are not high enough. There is a homework policy which is being followed.
29. Curricular provision for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. All of the recommended areas of learning are planned and taught and a strong emphasis is placed on first-hand experiences for the children. Children are given good opportunities to make independent choices from a good range of tasks. However, the methods of recording which tasks they have attempted do not sufficiently encourage responsible choice. In addition, too many of the tasks are often free unguided activities. The school lacks an appropriate designated outside play and work area for Foundation Stage children, which limits the provision for the full range of the curriculum and learning opportunities. There is also a lack of some large outside equipment. The facilities which the school does have do not provide adequately for children to move spontaneously between indoor and outdoor environments. As was noted in the 1998 inspection, plans to link the Foundation Stage curriculum with the National Curriculum and the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are not developed well enough.
30. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from good support that enables them to have the same curriculum as others in their classes. Well-kept and appropriate

individual education plans set targets for pupils' next steps in learning and teachers and other adults generally match work in lessons to these targets. These pupils make good progress.

31. The policy setting out the school's position with regard to the inclusion of pupils with special educational needs is clearly written, explains the arrangements made for the pupils and the role of the special educational needs co-ordinator. It outlines the procedure for assessment and the profiling system in use in the school describing the stages of the Code of Practice and the role of the Local Education Authority. Strategies to encourage good behaviour, the inclusion of pupils in the National Curriculum and the preparation of individual education plans are fully described. Equality of opportunity for all pupils is satisfactory overall, although there are variations in the achievement of some pupils.
32. Extra-curricular provision is satisfactory. The school has a narrower range of after school activities than that normally found in similar schools. It is aware of this and is planning, in some cases with the help of the Education Action Zone, to increase provision. However, a good range of visits, for example, to Norton Priory and the Roman remains at Chester, broadens the curriculum. In addition, visitors such as local clergy, a guitar teacher and artists, enhance the pupils' learning well. These visits and visitors also illustrate the school's satisfactory links with the community as does its participation in the Healthy Schools initiative. The school's links with other educational establishments are also satisfactory. For example, it has good links with the independent on-site playgroup and Year 6 pupils visit Grange City Learning Centre each week. In addition, the school takes part in football, netball, athletics and rounders events with other schools and participates in the local swimming gala.
33. The provision for social, moral and cultural development is good. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection. Provision for spiritual development is satisfactory, this was also the judgement at the last inspection.
34. Relationships in the school are good and pupils feel valued and supported. This gives pupils the confidence to talk about their feelings in lessons and helps them to gain a spiritual awareness. Teachers encourage this through their good questions and obvious concern for the pupils' well being. Questions such as "How would you feel if this happened to you?" make pupils think about the effects of their actions on others and to put themselves in the place of others. Pupils in Year 6 are particularly good at this when they look at the events in novels from the point of view of different characters. Pupils are also encouraged to explore their thoughts and feelings in a number of different ways, such as through art and poetry. There are other opportunities for spiritual development through assemblies, lessons and the day-to-day life of the school which teachers do not always make the most of. In assemblies, for example, teachers use good stories but sometimes do not give enough time for pupils to relate these to their own lives and experiences. In some lessons, teachers are too anxious to move on, and do not give enough time for the special moments to last.
35. Provision for moral development is good. The school's behaviour code emphasises the care and respect that pupils are expected to show one another, and most pupils are rarely in trouble. Teachers generally deal well with the small minority who have behaviour problems, and use the agreed sanctions consistently and fairly. Teachers provide regular opportunities to discuss moral issues during personal, social and health education and during 'circle time', when pupils discuss matters which are important to

them. In subjects such as history, pupils learn about wider moral issues and they are taught to respect the beliefs of others in religious education.

36. The school's provision for social education is good. Many opportunities are provided for pupils to work together co-operatively in subjects such as science, art and physical education. A highlight in this is the annual musical production, which parents and pupils love. Very good relationships between adults and pupils help to contribute to the caring community that is evident within the school. Pupils' achievements are rewarded and sometimes celebrated in assemblies when the school shows how much it values their efforts. Consideration for others is promoted through charitable work. Pupils enjoy many visits outside school and these provide chances to mix with others and represent the school. Pupils take part in local sports events and this helps them to gain a sense of fair play. A strong contribution is made by a learning mentor provided by the Educational Action Zone. This tutor leads exciting sessions in which pupils in Year 6 explore the feelings and conflicts in their own lives, using games, drama and discussion. Pupils look forward to these and gain many new insights into behaviour and relationships.
37. Provision for cultural development is also good. Pupils enjoy regular visits from musicians and hear music from around the world, although the school's own collection of such music is insufficient. Teachers plan opportunities for pupils to encounter and understand the traditions from different cultural backgrounds in subjects such as art, history and geography. Pupils study faiths such as Judaism and Islam. The school has regular links with a local Jewish community centre. The school promotes interest in good quality literature written for children and invites authors and storytellers to visit and talk to pupils about their work. The school library is well stocked with books which give information on other cultures and other ways of life. A strength in the provision is the recent purchase of suitable books for guided reading lessons. These introduce issues related to many cultures, and, because they are discussed in small groups, the pupils learn a lot. Teachers are aware that the pupils' understanding of Britain as a multicultural society is not adequately developed.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

38. The school has policies and satisfactory procedures in place to ensure that pupils are properly cared for. There is a health and safety policy and one member of the governing body has expertise in health and safety matters that have been recognised by the appropriate outside agency. The school has recently had a health and safety audit carried out by the local education authority. There are written guidelines for staff relating to health and safety on school visits, and risk assessments are required for such visits. Some minor health and safety issues were reported to the school during the inspection. Suitable procedures for child protection are in place, and there are trained first aiders on the school staff. Good links with appropriate outside agencies are established and used as necessary. The school buildings are clean and bright and the grounds are free from litter.

39. The monitoring of pupils' personal development is satisfactory, although there is no consistent system throughout the school for setting personal targets for pupils to guide their future development. Through the school council, pupils are able to express their views on many aspects of the life of the school. This gives them an opportunity to "make a difference" and to gain some speaking and listening skills. There is also an opportunity for school council members to serve on the Education Action Zone committee, which enables them to gain an understanding of the place of their school in its wider context. The Education Action Zone is implementing a training programme to improve the transition of pupils between Years 6 and 7.
40. The behaviour policy is the result of a consultation process between teaching and non-teaching staff, parents, children and governors. The implementation of this policy throughout the school results in the good behaviour evident in most lessons and at breaktimes. Registration is carried out at the start of both morning and afternoon sessions. Pupils' attendance is monitored daily by the school secretary and late arrivals and absentees are recorded. Parents or carers are contacted by telephone in cases of unauthorised absence and the education welfare officer carries out home visits. The school management is aware of the need to improve the attendance record. Class rewards for good attendance are given and the school council has discussed the issue of low attendance.
41. Children in the Foundation Stage are very happy to come to school. They are well cared for and have good relationships with their teachers, support staff, other adults in the school and their peers. Children are assessed on their entry to the school and good use is made of the information obtained and of the judgements representing the standards that most children reach at the end of Year R. However, insufficient use is made of the more detailed steps in learning which help them to reach these standards to ensure that the work always makes appropriate demands on them.
42. The assessment of all pupils with special educational needs is well monitored by the special educational needs co-ordinator. Regular updates are given in staff meetings to keep all staff aware of developments in the provision of special educational needs. As a Year 2 teacher, the special educational needs co-ordinator is aware of possible needs of pupils entering the school and later referrals are made known by class teachers and non-teaching staff. Details of pupils' movement up/down or off the special educational needs list, however, are not recorded and this measure of progress is not available to demonstrate the overall success of the school's provision. At present, the school does not make use of the small steps in learning known as the P Scales to assist the progress and assessment of pupils with special educational needs. However, it plans to bring these into use shortly.
43. Overall the school has developed sound procedures in English, mathematics and science and most of the other subjects to assess the standards that pupils attain and record the progress they make. At the last inspection, it was reported that there was no systematic approach to assessing pupils' progress as they move through the school so satisfactory progress in addressing this issue has been made. Assessments are now take place according to an agreed yearly timetable and a co-ordinator has been given responsibility for this aspect of the school's work. Some of these assessment procedures are still under development and have not had time to influence the school's work. Procedures are particularly effective in English where data are used to set individual and group targets. Teachers make useful day-to-day assessments on, and evaluations of, their lessons on their daily lesson plans but little evidence was seen during the inspection of teachers who used these assessment data to refocus teaching successfully in the next lesson.

44. An important shortcoming in the assessment procedures is that the data collected are not being effectively used to plan the pupils' work. The detailed analysis of statutory tests identifying weaknesses in numeracy has yet to be applied to planning and class teaching. There are no apparent strategies to correct identified deficiencies. Class teachers and subject co-ordinators are not sufficiently aware of attainment trends and the school's tracking and monitoring systems have not provided a clear view of the level of underachievement by the end of Year 6. A further shortcoming in assessment practice is that there are insufficient procedures in all subjects other than English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology to record the attainment of pupils and the progress that they make through the elements of the National Curriculum.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

45. The results of the pre-inspection questionnaire to parents and the comments made at the parents' meeting indicates that they are happy with the work that the school does. Parents appreciate the school's open door policy and the school has a sound relationship with parents. The school regularly ballots parents to obtain their views of the school.
46. Homework is used well to reinforce what is taught in lessons and, through this, parents make a good contribution to their children's learning. Parents have a formal opportunity each term to discuss their child's progress with the teachers, and they are also welcome to discuss any concerns with staff at any convenient time. Annual reports on pupils' progress are issued to parents before the final parents' evening of the year. However, the reports do not give parents sufficient information on what their children know and can do in individual subjects. There is no indication in the reports of targets to guide pupils' future progress, and there is no formal procedure by which parents can make a written comment on the reports. The school is aware of these issues and plans to address them.
47. The school values parental help in the classroom. Courses run by the school for parents in subjects such as mathematics and English were appreciated by those parents who took part. The parent teacher association raises some funds to provide useful resources for the school.
48. A well-produced prospectus provides helpful information about the school. The governors' Annual Report to parents is published at the end of the school year. However, there are some omissions from the required information and the report does not entirely fulfil the statutory requirements.
49. Most children join the Reception class from the independent on-site playgroup which the school was instrumental in establishing. This provides a strong basis for its good induction procedures for these children. In the term before the children start in the Reception class, the teacher visits the playgroup to meet them and they visit the school both with and without their parents. Parents also formally visit the school and receive appropriate written information. The school also provides a "goodies bag" for parents and children which contains activities for them to undertake together before starting school. The children attend school on a part-time basis for their first two weeks in the school. Parents are provided with information about what their children are to be taught each half term. These procedures ensure that good partnerships are established between parents and the staff in the Reception classes, which helps every child to feel secure and to learn. The school's Education Action Zone has comprehensive plans to assist the improvement of parenting skills.

50. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are well informed about the work of their children. Information about strategies to encourage good behaviour, the inclusion of pupils in the National Curriculum and the preparation of individual education plans is provided for parents in a specially produced leaflet. The pupils' profiles include samples of work, and detailed records of progress are available for reference. Contributions from other agencies are included and the twice yearly reviews include parental contributions. The continuing experience in meeting the needs of pupils and the contributions of outside agencies contribute to increasing the expertise of carers and improving the quality of provision.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

51. The school's 1998 inspection found that there were significant weaknesses in the way the school was managed and led. The school was judged to be too focused on the pastoral nature of its responsibilities and not to give sufficient weight to the need to raise standards. Management responsibilities, particularly in the area of curricular management, were said to lack clarity. Although there have been satisfactory improvements in leadership, some of the weaknesses concerning management raised in 1998 still exist.
52. Satisfactory leadership has ensured that a focus on the pastoral responsibilities of the school has continued and that its aims are well met in this respect. However, in addition, standards have been improved in Year 6 and Year R and pupils now make good progress by the time that they leave the school. Improvement since the school's last inspection has been satisfactory. A good team spirit, good relationships and a sound commitment to improvement, and a similar capacity to succeed, have been generated.
53. However, standards are still not high enough as progress in Years 1 and 2 is unsatisfactory. More able pupils do not always have suitable provision made for them and gifted and talented pupils have not been identified. For these reasons, the school's aims are not met well enough in terms of the pupils' achievement and its management is unsatisfactory. This also means that, although equality of opportunity is satisfactory overall, there are variations in the achievement of some pupils. This is exactly the same finding regarding equality of opportunity as that made by the school's 1998 inspection. The Education Action Zone has several programmes to help the school raise standards. The school has recently introduced a policy for racial equality.
54. Teaching and learning are not monitored rigorously enough to ensure that they get better. The school identifies most of its weaknesses accurately, but does not always address them effectively. This is because the school does not challenge itself sufficiently and does not, therefore, implement strategies to address the problems identified. For this reason, its self-evaluation is unsatisfactory. The school development plan does not have raising standards as its overriding priority. Even though the school is committed to continuing to raise standards, how this will be done and measured is not specified rigorously enough.
55. Although management responsibilities are now largely clarified by job descriptions, management roles are not always effective. Six subjects have new co-ordinators and, in two of these subjects, this role is currently a caretaking one. Management of the special educational needs provision is satisfactory but the clarification of roles, referred to in the previous report, is still necessary. Examination of the job specifications of those involved does not reflect the responsibilities undertaken by them. The deputy headteacher teaches Year R on essentially a full-time basis, is Key Stage 1 co-ordinator, science co-ordinator and a member of the senior management

team. This heavy load prevents some of these functions from being carried out adequately. For example, the effective monitoring of teaching and learning in Year 1 and 2 and the production of an action plan for Year R,

56. Many of the governors are relatively new to the role. They have, however, attended appropriate training and carry out their duties satisfactorily. The governors have taken suitable steps to gain a sound understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They have ensured that all statutory requirements apart from a few minor omissions in the information provided for parents have been met. However, as was found in the 1998 inspection, their involvement in effective strategic planning for the school to improve is limited. In addition, their role as critical friends to the school is underdeveloped, for example, in challenging it to improve standards.
57. The use of the school's resources is satisfactory. Budget planning is careful and suitably linked to educational priorities. Spending is carefully monitored. As in 1998, the contribution of the school's administrative officer is significant in this respect. The school makes good use of new technology both in the curriculum and administration. Funds for pupils with special educational needs are well used. Use of money for the training of staff is satisfactory. The headteacher has a clear understanding of the principles underpinning the school's ability to give value for money. However, the governors are less sure about this matter. They are, therefore, unclear that challenging its existing practices and standards effectively in order to improve them is an important aspect of improving the value for money the school gives.
58. Staff are appropriately qualified and there is an adequate number of staff to meet the demands of the curriculum. The teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to the learning opportunities of the pupils with whom they work. The school has procedures for the induction of newly qualified teachers, and these are currently being put to good use. It has a satisfactory capacity to train new teachers. The performance management process is securely in place. However, although staff development is linked to this process and the needs identified in the school development plan, there are still significant training needs for some staff. This was also the case in 1998 when the influence of training was judged to be ineffective. Training needs exist in English, mathematics, science, design and technology, physical education, behaviour management and the role of the co-ordinator.
59. The accommodation overall is good and suits the needs of the curriculum well. For example, there is a large library and a room for provision for pupils with special educational needs. However, the hall forms a through access route between the entrance and the library and classrooms. This is unsatisfactory when the hall is in use, especially during physical education lessons. The school has spent recent grants well by providing external steel shutters to the windows which has significantly reduced damage from vandalism. The buildings are kept clean and are well maintained. Externally, there are suitable hard and soft play areas, and the school has plans for resurfacing some of the worn hard surface areas. The school has easy access and toilet facilities for the disabled. It has recently been surveyed for accessibility and the results of this survey are awaited. The teaching and learning resources are good. However, there is a shortage of large clambering apparatus for children in Year R and the school does not have an outdoor area that these children can use spontaneously.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

60. In order to improve the quality of education offered to the pupils, the headteacher, staff and governors should raise standards of achievement particularly in English, mathematics and science especially in Year 2 and for more able pupils throughout the school by:

(1) Improving the quality of teaching where this report identifies the necessity through:

- raising teachers' expectations of what the pupils can achieve;
- ensuring that, throughout the school, pupils of all abilities are always given work which is challenging but attainable;
- the knowledge which some teachers have of some of the subjects that they teach;
- using their writing skills appropriately in those suitable subjects of the curriculum where this does not currently happen.

(Paragraphs 2,3,4,6,13,14,16,18,23,78,80,81,83,85,88,91,93,94,96,99,100,101,110,113)

(2) Improving the accuracy of teachers' assessments relative to National Curriculum levels and using the information obtained successfully to plan the pupils' work.

(Paragraphs 14,18,21,43,44,61,65,89,98,100,113,118,122,134,139,144)

(3) Increasing the effectiveness of the school's management by:

- the headteacher, senior management team and governors ensuring that raising standards is clearly and effectively perceived as the school's most important priority, for example, by making this clear in the school development plan;
- improving the co-ordination of Key Stage 1 and developing the monitoring role of subject co-ordinators;
- enhancing the governors' role as critical friends;
- reviewing the number of management roles allocated to the deputy headteacher;
- clarifying the management and progress of pupils with special educational needs.

(Paragraphs 27,51,52,54,55,56,90,98,103,113,118,122,128,134,139,144)

(4) Improving attendance. (Paragraphs 8, 40)

OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL

- Developing the pupils' understanding of Britain as a multicultural society. (Paragraph 36)
- Improving provision and resources for children in the Foundation Stage as already identified by the school. (Paragraphs 1,29,59,74)
- Showing a greater awareness of an understanding of the principles of best value. (Paragraph 57)
- Improving the pupils' behaviour in those instances where this report identifies that this is necessary. (Paragraphs 8,14,82)
- Giving more information in the annual reports to parents about their children's progress. (Paragraph 46)
- Addressing the health and safety issues mentioned during the inspection. (Paragraph 37)
- Identifying and meeting the needs of gifted and talented pupils.

(Paragraphs 6,16,18,53,98)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	46
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	38

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	1	14	24	4	1	0
Percentage	0	2	32	55	9	2	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than two percentage points. Two of the lessons observed were not grade for teaching as they were less than thirty minutes in length.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	206
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	85

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	5
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	73

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

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

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.9
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1.7
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	12	15	27

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	7	7	9
	Girls	10	10	11
	Total	17	17	20
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	63 (77)	63 (60)	74 (80)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	7	9	11
	Girls	10	11	8
	Total	17	20	19
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	63 (74)	74 (80)	70 (66)
	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	12	20	32

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	9	12
	Girls	16	15	19
	Total	26	24	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	81 (85)	75 (59)	97 (93)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	9	12
	Girls	17	15	19
	Total	27	24	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	84 (59)	75 (63)	97 (81)
	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	204	3	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	2	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)	8.8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25.5
Average class size	29

Education support staff: YR– Y6

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	90

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2
	£
Total income	543,206
Total expenditure	532,736
Expenditure per pupil	2,611
Balance brought forward from previous year	6,183
Balance carried forward to next year	16,653

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2.4
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1.4
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	206
Number of questionnaires returned	90

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	57	35	6	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	53	42	2	2	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	45	40	9	6	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	39	34	19	6	2
The teaching is good.	68	29	3	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	57	32	10	1	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	70	23	6	1	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	69	29	2	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	51	39	8	1	1
The school is well led and managed.	66	29	2	1	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	58	37	4	1	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	21	29	34	8	8

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

61. The school's provision for children in the Foundation Stage has improved since it was last inspected in 1998. Progress, including that made by pupils with special educational needs, which was described as "erratic" in 1998, is now good in all areas of learning because of improved teaching. Planning has also improved and is now securely based on the recommended areas of learning for children of this age. In addition, good use is now made of the assessment information obtained when the children start school. However, insufficient use is made of the more detailed steps in learning which help them to reach these standards to ensure that the work provided is at a different level.
62. Children are admitted to the Reception class in September each year. They attend on a part-time basis for the first two weeks of term in order to assist them with settling in. Most children admitted to the school have previously attended the independent on-site playgroup which also eases their transition to full-time education. They are taught in a caring and supportive manner and quickly establish very good relationships which make them feel safe, secure and fully included in all activities. When the children enter the school, their attainment is generally very low particularly in communication, language and literacy.

Personal, social and emotional development

63. The teaching and learning in personal, social and emotional development are good. This gives rise to good progress and the children are on track to reach similar standards to those found in most schools by the time that they start Year 1. Personal, social and emotional development is promoted well in all areas of learning. Very good relationships exist between adults and children. The adults provide very good role models for the children, and treat them with courtesy and respect. This helps the children to feel secure and they respond positively and are confident about what they can achieve. The children's behaviour in and around the school is good. They work together in a happy and relaxed way and rarely disagree about the use of equipment or who whose turn it is. At the end of activities, for example, in the role play area, children tidy up and clear away readily in a co-operative manner.
64. The children have a good understanding of classroom procedures and most respond well to them. Trust and care are apparent at all times and the children learn to separate themselves from their parents and carers due to the good links with home. Most children can already dress and undress themselves independently for physical development. Additionally, good routines and encouragement help children to manage their own personal hygiene. When given the opportunity to choose activities for themselves, they do so in a sensible way and most sustain concentration well for their age. Most settle well to the more structured activities, such as literacy and numeracy, and show ability to concentrate for an appropriate length of time. However, the lack of a freely available outdoor play area places limitations on the children's independent learning. On occasions, the work provided contains too many free activities.
65. There is no easy and accurate system which allows the teacher to keep track of the activities the children have carried out or for them to take responsibility for helping in

this matter. They are given responsibility for varied jobs in the classroom and beyond. All children, including those with special educational needs, are confident and friendly.

Communication, language and literacy

66. The quality of teaching and learning in communication, language and literacy is good. Although children are on track to reach well below average standards by the time that they start Year 1 this is good progress from their very low starting point. Most children listen carefully to things that interest them and join with what they enjoy, for example, favourite songs. All adults working with them communicate with the children in Year R well. They talk to the children in varied situations and show them that they value their efforts at communicating. Some children are eager to talk about the things that interest them, such as what they are painting or making. However, many use a limited range of words and simple statements supported by gestures and expressions in order to communicate. A few are confident about starting a conversation. This was exemplified by a child who, quite naturally, asked the visiting inspector, "Please can you open this pot for me?"
67. Children are provided with a good range of purposeful activities to develop their use of language whatever their stage of development. For example, the children are provided with good role-play areas where they enjoy, for example, shopping and paying with coins and switch cards. Teachers and assistants often ask good and challenging questions to extend the children's learning.
68. Planning shows good development of the children's phonic skills. However, although some recognise some individual letters, few are able to read print but most realise that pictures convey meaning. When phonic work is linked with correct letter formation, this is good, as this helps to reinforce the children's understanding of both concepts. Most children draw and paint and give meaning to their work. Some are in the early stages of developmental writing and give meaning to the marks and patterns that they make. In a small number of cases, letter formation is satisfactory and a small number of simple words are spelt in a phonetically acceptable or accurate way. There is a well-organised writing area. Many of the children have difficulty with their pencil control, although adults constantly reinforce the correct grip. Classroom displays are not sufficiently rich in language clues intended to reinforce and extend learning rapidly.
69. In a focused literacy lesson observed during the inspection, the children's language, literacy and communication skills were appropriately developed. The children watched a video recording of a programme designed to improve their phonic understanding of the letter s – *Spaghetti for Suzy*. They were quiet and attentive and wrote the letter s in the air. At the end of the lesson, the teacher asked the children to identify the focus letter and most were able to do so. The letter was then related to their names and to items inside of a bag. This interested the children who enjoyed naming the items removed from the bag – all of which began with the letter 's'. However, opportunities to reinforce learning the sound through repetition were missed at this stage of the lesson. The focus writing activity following the lesson was the same for all of the children engaged in it and was, essentially, writing the letter 's' on a template provided by the teacher. The children's free writing when asked to write their names on the back of their papers indicated clearly that this activity was not hard enough for some of them to make significant progress.

Mathematical development

70. Teaching and learning in mathematical development are good and promote good progress. The children are on course to reach well below average standards in their mathematical development by the time that they start Year 1. Nevertheless, this represents good progress from their very low standards on entry. The children develop their mathematical understanding well through a structured programme of practical experiences. The analysis of their work shows that they have undertaken tasks of matching objects, naming basic shapes such as circles and recognising numbers. The analysis of work indicated that most pupils work at the same level rather than at a level suitable to individual needs. However, work on understanding numbers is extended in the classroom, for example, by working with adults playing simple board games. In another small group activity, some children with support of a Nursery Nurse extended their understanding of numbers by playing skittles. The children were able to say how many of the ten skittles they had knocked down and how many were left standing. Most did this by counting and thus demonstrated an ability to count to ten and early subtraction skills. Many were able to write the numerals representing the number of skittles correctly.
71. The children's understanding of the measurement of the weight of different objects was well extended by a practical group activity. The adult leading the task used questions skilfully to encourage children to organise their thoughts and build on their understanding. They were asked to indicate if they felt one object was heavier than another and then this was tested on balancing scales. This activity also extended their mathematical vocabulary through reinforcing their understanding of words such as "lighter". In their work with sand, the children filled and emptied differently sized containers and extended their ideas of varied quantities. The children gain an early understanding of the measurement of height by attempting to stack construction materials to one metre, the height of Otto the Penguin. They have recorded their findings about which fruits they like and dislike on a simple chart showing smiling and unhappy faces.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

72. The quality of teaching and learning of knowledge and understanding of the world is good. Children make good progress from a below average starting point and are on course to reach similar standards to those found in most schools when they enter Year 1. Topics such as clothes and a local study are closely related to what the children already know, and build on this understanding through first hand experience. For example, they have learned about the weather in winter and how plants and materials are affected by the cold. The children understand that water freezes to become ice, that trees lose their leaves and that they need to dress warmly in winter. They have observed and fed birds, know that some animals hibernate in winter and that penguins live in Antarctica where it is very cold. This type of work extends their knowledge and understanding of the world around them effectively and promotes their cultural development well.
73. The children's work shows that they are able to use the computer mouse to move items on the screen to dress the teddy and to draw patterns. They extend their scientific understanding by using their sense of touch to investigate the texture and properties of sand and by testing objects to see if they float or sink. The children have begun to identify things they like and dislike, for example, different types of fruit, using their sense of taste. They listen to music with enjoyment and make an appropriate response. Construction toys and materials are provided for the children to explore

and use their skills to make models. They select and use varied collage materials to make pictures.

Physical development

74. Teaching and learning in physical development are good. However, although this promotes good progress, the children are on course to obtain below average standards in their physical development by the time that they enter Year 1. This is because limitations in the school's provision for the pupils' outdoor physical development reduce the effect of the teaching and learning. The school does have a designated outdoor area for the children. However, as was noted by the school's 1998 inspection, this does not allow spontaneous access for them. There is some shortage of large apparatus for them to use. The school is aware of these shortcomings and has plans to improve provision. It also does what it can to overcome the problem. For example, in a physical education lesson observed, the children showed confidence and pleasure when moving on the floor in a range of ways such as hopping and sliding. They copied hand movements made by the teacher accurately and with suitable control and also moved following a team leader by copying his or her movements. The children were also able to hold simple balancing positions with sound co-ordination. However, they bunched together frequently rather than making full use of the space available and, sometimes, got in each other's way. The teacher gave clear instructions which the children followed carefully and the lesson had good pace and challenge. However, opportunities to help the children to recognise the changes that happened to their bodies when they were active were not taken.
75. Children have ample opportunities to develop their co-ordination skills in all aspects of the indoor curriculum. They demonstrate increasing hand control in the use of a range of tools, such as, paintbrushes and scissors. The children competently pick up and use small items of equipment such as dice. When engaged in play activities they manipulate and cut play dough to make cakes and cut and stick materials to make a collage. They explore the properties of sand by, for example, by filling a bucket and emptying it to make sand pies. The children dress and undress themselves independently. They are on track to reach similar standards to those found in most schools in this aspect of their physical development.

Creative development

76. The quality of teaching and learning of creative development is good. Children make good progress from a below average starting point and are on course to reach recommended levels by the time that they start Year 1. They are provided with, and enjoy, a good range of first hand experiences which allow them to explore and experiment creatively and imaginatively. In the role play area, children dress up and act out imaginary situations. They enjoy these experiences when, for example, "shopping" and use appropriate body language and facial expressions to show their feelings. In most cases, adults support these activities well. However, in rare instances, there is too much intervention which restricts the development of the children's imagination. The children experiment with colour in a wide range of situations, for example, collage, painting and computer art software programs. They produce imaginative work such as paintings of a tornado, people and patterns. The children explore shape and form, for example, when making "cakes".

77. In the music lesson observed, the children listened to and identified a number of musical instruments such as maracas and bells. They were very excited by this activity and found it difficult to wait to use the instruments. The children successfully completed a rhythm exercise to *Walking in the Jungle* with actions and sounds. They sang the song *The Bear went over the Mountain* and accompanied their singing with percussion instruments. Most of the children were able to beat in time. The children found scraping sounds more difficult to control than striking or shaking. The teacher's experience and knowledge was used to good effect to promote the children's listening and performing skills. For example, by encouraging them to play loudly or softly. The children made good progress in their understanding of rhythm.

ENGLISH

78. Standards in English are average in Year 6 but well below average in Year 2. In the school's previous inspection, standards at both these stages were judged to be below average. Since then, there has been a good improvement by the end of Year 6, due to consistent teaching which is always at least satisfactory, the successful introduction of the National Literacy Strategy and pupils who mostly work hard and want to learn. There has been a decline in Year 2 because there are weaknesses in the teaching and management of the subject.
79. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 achieve well. In the most recent national tests, pupils in Year 6 were average when compared with all schools but well above when compared with similar schools. This matches the work seen during the inspection. Pupils with special educational needs also make good progress, they are supported well and take a full part in lessons. Some of the more able pupils are working at higher than expected levels. In recent years, boys have performed better than girls in English, but the school's assessments and the latest tests show that there is now no significant difference. Many pupils enter the school with weak skills in English. By the time that they, leave the school, all pupils have made good progress in reading, writing, speaking and listening.
80. In contrast, pupils do not make enough progress in Year 2. They make a good start in the Foundation Stage and in Year 1 but do not build on this sufficiently in Year 2. This is because the teacher's expectations are too low and so many pupils could do more. The work in literacy lessons is not challenging enough and some time is wasted. A significant number of pupils is not working at the expected levels in reading and writing and very few reach the higher levels. In the national tests last year, over one third of the pupils did not reach the expected level. There was a number of pupils with special educational needs in this group, but the results in other years show that standards have been falling since 1999, particularly in writing.
81. Standards in speaking are broadly average in Year 6 but below in Year 2. Across the school, some more able pupils express their ideas confidently and have an adequate vocabulary. However, even some of these are hard to hear when they speak to the whole class. A significant number of pupils in all classes has difficulty explaining what they mean, particularly when they have to say what they feel about things. The school is aware of this and teachers try to create the best conditions in lessons for pupils to improve. Relationships are good, teachers listen well and give pupils enough time to think and answer. They provide interesting things to talk about in many lessons, for example, pupils in Year 4 were outraged by a news item on irresponsible dog owners and gave their opinions in no uncertain terms. In a lesson in Year 3, the pupils worked hard on a modern King Midas story. They were pleased with this and several shared their idea with the class. This was effective in building confidence because the

teacher insisted that the other pupils listened in silence. In one very good lesson by a learning mentor from the Education Action Zone, pupils in Year 6 were exploring emotions and using words like 'insecure', 'vulnerable' and 'frustrated'. Most pupils make at least satisfactory progress in speaking by the end of Year 6, because of lessons like these and the important contribution of teaching assistants and volunteers.

82. Most pupils across the school listen carefully and politely, they are keen to respond as well as they can. Teachers often help pupils to follow what is being said by using large posters or projectors. In one good lesson in Year 1, the teacher used puppets in a very entertaining way and so had the whole class listening and joining in. In Year 5, there is a very small number of pupils who are restless and do not listen well. These are mainly boys with special educational needs. They take up too much of the teacher's time in some lessons and prevent other pupils from listening properly. The support of adults is sometimes available but it is not always used in the best interests of the majority who are keen to listen and learn.
83. Reading skills are average overall in Year 6, although some pupils are reading at a higher level than this. In Year 2, standards in reading are below average. The early stages of reading are now taught systematically in Years 1 and 2, with an appropriate emphasis placed on the development of phonic skills. Pupils learn to use a range of strategies to help them read unfamiliar words. This is an improvement since the previous inspection and is helping to raise standards. However, pupils in Year 2 do not make the best use of their new skills in some lessons. For example, in one guided reading lesson, the teacher dealt with a stream of requests for spellings from other groups and so the readers did not make much progress. Despite this, most pupils enjoy reading and want to succeed. More able pupils read with understanding and some expression. They can talk about the story and some can describe the characters. Slower readers recognise many words and most know how to use the sounds when they meet a new word. However, there are still a few pupils with weak phonic skills. These are receiving good support and most are making a little progress.
84. Pupils make good progress with their reading in Years 3 to 6. They read with increasing confidence and enjoyment, for example, a girl in Year 4 found it hard to decide whether to take the book or the film of Harry Potter to her desert island. Some pupils say they read at home for relaxation and pleasure and use the local library, in some cases to look for books on what they are learning in history. In Year 6, most pupils reach at least the expected level. They are able to use research skills to find information from non-fiction books, or from the Internet. The more able readers read challenging novels of their own choice and can discuss the plot, characters and style of the books. They talk enthusiastically about their reading, although few pupils can compare books they have read or explain why they enjoyed them.
85. Skills in writing are average in Year 6 but well below average in Year 2. Pupils in Year 2 write for a range of purposes, which include instructions, poems, stories and descriptions such as a profile of the Sleeping Beauty. A few pupils do these well, but overall the standard of punctuation, handwriting and spelling is weak. Pupils write fairly short pieces and their descriptive vocabulary is limited. Some of the best writing is seen in history, where the class enjoyed learning about the Great Fire of London. Almost one third of the pupils wrote a whole page on this, with some punctuation and reasonable spelling. However a similar number were unable even to begin this work without help.

86. By Year 6, pupils' writing is generally lively and thoughtful. They punctuate accurately and handwriting is nearly always good. Pupils understand how to change their style for different purposes and are able to write from different points of view, for example, when pupils in Year 5 write convincingly as survivors, victims, or captains of the Titanic. Pupils learn a lot about writing styles in their literacy lessons, for example, when teachers provide guidance for newspaper stories or help pupils to analyse text for examples of descriptive language. Pupils in Year 6 know how to redraft and improve their work and can do this well with a word processing program. A measure of the progress that pupils make is the quality and variety of writing in their extended study of *The Secret Garden*. Pupils of all abilities take great care in this work when they write moving diaries as different characters or compare the film version with the book.
87. In all classes, standards in literacy are the same as those found in English. However, the development of literacy skills across the curriculum is uneven. A strength is the variety and quality of writing evident in history. This helps pupils to understand and remember what they learn and, as a result, standards in history are good. In other subjects, such as religious education and geography, pupils do not get enough chances to use their writing skills. An exception is the thoughtful writing in geography by pupils in Year 4. They bring their work on an Indian village to life by making comparisons, listing advantages and disadvantages and writing about what different lifestyles have to offer. Across the school, there is good use of information and communication technology to enhance and celebrate writing, but insufficient use in some classes to improve pupils' editing skills.
88. The quality of teaching in English is satisfactory in Years 3 to 6 and in Years 1 and 2. The lesson seen in Year 2 was unsatisfactory and that observed in Year 1 was good. In the school's previous inspection, one third of the lessons were unsatisfactory and the teachers' understanding of how to teach literacy was judged to be weak. Teaching has improved since then and this is one of the main reasons why pupils make good progress.
89. In nearly all literacy lessons, the teachers manage pupils effectively; they introduce lessons in an interesting way and explain clearly what pupils have to do. Most pupils work hard and are keen to show what they can do. They co-operate sensibly when required to work together and take a pride in their work. Teachers know the pupils well and are constantly looking to raise self-esteem by praising small achievements. One boy in Year 1 almost burst with joy when the teacher remembered what he had written for homework. Teachers' marking is always positive, but rarely makes it clear why the work is good, or what has to be done to make it better. A strength in the teaching is the use made of teaching assistants in lessons. These are a good team, well-prepared and encouraging and lower-attaining pupils appreciate the help they get. The provision for more able pupils is not always as good and these pupils are not adequately challenged in some lessons. Another weakness in the teaching is that the learning objectives for some lessons are not clear and some teachers lack sufficient knowledge of the subject. Time is not always used well and the final part of the lesson is rushed. In these lessons, there is not enough time to remind pupils about what has been achieved and what they have to do next to improve.
90. Leadership in English is satisfactory; most of the criticisms made in the previous report have been dealt with and standards have been raised. There are now good procedures for recording what pupils know and can do, and checking that they are learning fast enough. The subject co-ordinator and the senior team analyse the results of the national and optional tests carefully and make changes to the teaching

and curriculum where needed. The headteacher and advisers have done some monitoring of the quality of teaching, but the co-ordinator has not had the opportunity to do this in a systematic way. Resources in the subject are generally good. Books, both fiction and non-fiction, are well chosen and up to date. There is a good selection for guided reading and some of these help pupils to improve their understanding of Britain as a multicultural society. The library is an attractive and inviting space, although no classes used it during the inspection. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, particularly through literature and the pupils' own writing. There is a good range of opportunities to discuss the lives and actions of characters in the books they read together.

MATHEMATICS

91. In Year 2, pupils achieve standards that are well below average. Pupils in Year 6 attain below average standards. Since the last inspection, standards have fallen in Year 2 and in Year 6. There are no marked differences in the performance of girls and boys. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards their own learning targets because of the additional support they receive from classroom assistants who follow the individual education programmes and evaluate weekly progress. The school did not meet its targets for the percentage of pupils reaching Level 4 in the 2002 national tests and has set less ambitious targets for 2003. In 2002, the school's results compared with similar schools were well below average at the end of Year 2 with a significant number of pupils working at Level 1. In Year 6, results were average compared with all schools and above average compared with similar schools.
92. The achievement of pupils in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory and, due to the very low level of entry into the school, they make satisfactory progress. There is an emphasis on their understanding and use of number and many are able to deal confidently with numbers up to 100 and some use numbers up to 1000. They have a good appreciation of numbers which added together make ten and 20 and can count on in ones, fives, and tens, from different starting points. They are able to order numbers on the metre stick and predict sequences of odd and even numbers. They work out simple money problems recognising coins up to 50p and use the pound sign. Most pupils know the names and can draw regular two-dimensional shapes, such as a square, rectangle and triangle. They tell the time in quarter and half hours but there are limited opportunities to develop skills and knowledge in data handling and investigations.
93. The achievement of pupils in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory as they make satisfactory progress from the low levels of performance at the end of Year 2. Progress over time is good. However, pupils are not sufficiently challenged or instructed to allow higher-attaining pupils to achieve as well as they should. By the end of Year 6, most pupils have a good knowledge of multiplication tables and are making satisfactory progress in number work. They order four digit numbers accurately and understand place value. Most pupils work successfully with fractions and decimals; they measure accurately and calculate areas and perimeters of rectangles well. However, not all areas of the curriculum receive full coverage. There is very little evidence of data handling techniques and statistical calculations. Other areas of the curriculum are not developed to sufficient depth nor taught at a sufficient pace to enable high standards to be consistently achieved. For example, work done in Year 6 on fractions and money was not sufficiently extended to enable pupils to achieve the higher Level 5 attainment and averages and probability are not touched on.

94. Problem solving and investigative skills are very much underdeveloped throughout the school. Pupils do not have sufficient opportunity to devise their own investigations, to explore number patterns or to develop skills to solve real life problems.
95. Pupils' attitudes are satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good overall in Years 3 to 6. They work well individually and are eager to answer questions. They enjoy using their white boards to display answers in oral and mental activities and enthusiastically erase previous answers in eager anticipation of the next question. When called upon, older pupils work collaboratively and take turns. They are generally polite in their behaviour with adults and take responsibility for handing out books and equipment when asked.
96. The quality of teaching and learning throughout the school is satisfactory overall with some good lessons observed. Teachers plan their lessons according to the National Numeracy Strategy format and pupils are managed satisfactorily. However, sufficient attention is not always given to ensuring good use of the oral and mental start and the final plenary session. Where teaching is good, teachers use these sessions well to motivate pupils and promote mental agility with quick and searching questioning or reinforce learning with stimulating examples. Teachers use praise and encouragement to help to maintain pupils' interest and motivation but lessons often lack pace. Teachers spend too long on detailed explanations leaving insufficient lesson time for pupils to explore and learn for themselves. Expectations of the level and quantity of pupils' work are often too low. Evidence from the sample of pupils' work indicated that topics had not been extended sufficiently to cater for the needs of higher-attaining pupils. Teachers use marking positively to celebrate pupils' work but it is used infrequently.
97. Numeracy skills are used to support work done across the curriculum in time charts in history and drawing bar charts in science. Lessons in information and communication technology use databases and illustrate results graphically.
98. The current management of the subject lacks the firm control necessary to ensure full coverage of the National Curriculum. The monitoring of teachers' medium term and weekly planning and the sampling of pupils' work are taking place but with little effect. Monitoring of teaching has taken place in the past but not during the current academic year. Procedures for assessment are satisfactory and termly targets are set for groups within each class. Formative assessments are made in each year and the analysis of the results of national tests is carried out. However, this analysis does not always inform planning and areas of the curriculum such as problem solving and the development of skills in investigations remain underdeveloped. The school is not aware of how the needs of higher-attaining pupils in Years 3 to 6, nor of gifted and talented pupils across the school, are to be met. Information and communication technology skills are not used sufficiently in this subject. There are training needs for some teachers in this subject. Resources are very good and assist the pupils' learning very well.

SCIENCE

99. Standards in Year 2 are well below average. This is the same finding as the 2002 end of key stage assessments made by teachers in science. Progress in Year 2, including that made by pupils with special educational needs, is unsatisfactory. These judgements differ from the findings of the school's 1998 inspection which found standards to be average in Year 2 and progress to be satisfactory. The difference is

due to changes in the quality of teaching and learning. In Year 6, standards are below average as they were in the end of Key Stage 2 national tests in 2002. This is because although most pupils reach the average Level 4 in the subject, the percentage reaching the higher Level 5 is below average. Progress in Year 6 is good for pupils with special educational needs because of the provision made for them. It is satisfactory for pupils of average attainment but unsatisfactory for more able pupils. Standards are the same as they were in 1998 but progress is better because of stronger teaching and the lower standards at which the pupils now start Year 3. Compared with 1998, almost twice as many pupils reached average standards in the end of Key Stage 2 national tests in science in 2002 as they did in 1997. Throughout the school, there are no differences in the achievement of boys and girls.

100. Throughout the school, the weakest aspect of the subject is scientific enquiry. The school is aware of this and is working to address the situation. Developing investigative science is the key focus on the subject's good action plan. However, most investigative work currently consists of pupils repeating tasks that the teachers have demonstrated to them. The other aspects of the subject are appropriately covered, but there are weaknesses in assessing the standards that pupils have achieved in their work accurately. This particularly affects more able pupils and Year 2 where the work set often fails to extend them sufficiently and is the same as that given to other pupils.
101. Taken together, the quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2 is unsatisfactory, although teaching and learning in Year 1 is satisfactory. In the school's 1998 inspection, teaching was judged to be satisfactory. Standards and progress in Year 1 are also satisfactory. Weaknesses in teaching and learning in Year 2 included a slow pace which made the pupils restless and inattentive. Furthermore, most of the work was set at too low a level and the pupils were well aware of the answers before they carried out any investigative work and so made little progress. Conversely, the task of using a simple thermometer was too hard for many as it was not explained to them. Also investigative work was not addressed systematically in terms of the scientific process of predicting, investigating, drawing conclusions and recording. In addition, although the work set lent itself readily and easily to working at above average levels, this did not happen. For example, the concept of fair testing was discussed after the work had been completed and the linked idea of changes in materials being reversible or not, was not mentioned. This cast doubts on the teacher's level of expertise in the subject.
102. Teaching and learning in Years 3 to 6 are satisfactory. This is the same judgement as that made in the school's 1998 inspection. A Year 6 lesson about separating by filtering, illustrated the satisfactory nature of the teaching and learning in these year groups. The teacher demonstrated separating dry material using a sieve and that this process was less successful with wet mixtures. One pupil suggested using a filter paper and the teacher demonstrated the process using sand and water. Groups of pupils were then given the task of filtering dirty water and recording their findings. Different demands were made of the pupils for the recording work and pupils with special educational needs were well supported by the teaching assistant so that they were fully included in the activity. However, the scientific enquiry element of the work was overly directed by the teacher and the pupils had little chance of carrying out their own investigative work. The pupils worked well together and shared equipment and ideas willingly which promoted their social and moral development well. Their speaking and listening skills were also developed well as they described their findings using good scientific vocabulary. The lesson was supported by the setting of suitable homework. Pupils behaved well throughout the lesson.

103. Since the school's last inspection, standards and the quality of teaching in Year 2 have declined. This is unsatisfactory because it means that pupils are not reaching their full potential. Taken in conjunction with the fact that teaching and standards are the same as they were in 1998 in Year 6, improvement since the last inspection is unsatisfactory. For this reason, the management of the subject is unsatisfactory. However, the specialist co-ordinator has such a heavy burden in terms of management roles that carrying them all out effectively presents great problems. Inadequate time is available to carry out the monitoring and support of teaching in order to use the co-ordinator's expertise to raise standards in Year 2 and for the more able throughout the school. However, the school has links with a beacon school in order to observe science lessons. Assessment procedures are good in that assessments are made and recorded individually at the end of each unit of work. However, not all assessments are accurate and the information is not well used to plan the pupils' work. Links with mathematics are made when, for example, the pupils produce block graphs after measuring the temperature in the classroom. The pupils' literacy skills are not always fully extended in science. Links with information and communication technology included Year 1 pupils recording how they used their five senses. The subject is satisfactorily resourced.

ART AND DESIGN

104. Standards in art are average in both Year 2 and Year 6. A few of the older pupils are achieving higher than this, particularly in their sketching and painting. Those with special educational needs achieve well in this subject. They are well supported and in many cases their artwork makes a significant contribution to their self-esteem. All pupils make satisfactory progress as they move up the school. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. The main reasons for this are the enthusiasm and hard work of teachers and the school's investment in good quality materials and support.
105. No lessons were seen in Years 1 and 2. The analysis of pupils' work and teachers' planning indicates that teaching and learning are satisfactory overall at this stage. Pupils make a good start in Year 1, where the teacher provides opportunities for them to use a good range of materials and techniques. Pupils explore these with care and attention to detail, for example, when they make precise printed designs with card and wood, or paint large portraits confidently. The teacher encourages pupils to try their ideas rather than rushing to finish. For example, in a design and technology lesson, pupils spent a long time cutting and arranging the sections of their stained glass window before reaching for the glue. Pupils in Year 2 respond to stories and events that capture their interest, for example, when they mix pastel colours and computer graphics to illustrate the Great Fire of London, or make forest sculptures after a visit.
106. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory in Years 3 to 6. Pupils make good progress in drawing because teachers show them how to look closely and try different ways to record what they see. Pupils in Year 3, for example, make life-like pictures of flowers in crayon and pastels, whilst in Year 6 they can make impressively large, bold studies of lilies with charcoal, paint and chalk. All teachers provide a good range of starting points and images. This helps pupils to learn to collect ideas and develop them in their own way. Pupils in Year 4 were stimulated by good photographs of Ancient Egyptian art before they began to sew and dye their fabric pictures. Pupils in Year 5 looked at the construction and purpose of various vessels and this helped them to decide on the shape of their coil pots. This is effective teaching, so that by the time

pupils reach Year 6 they are able to select elements of Islamic tile patterns and use these in their own way for some good batik pictures.

107. Most teachers introduce the work of well-known artists to suggest new ways of working. Pupils in Year 3 are able to add movement to their figures after studying paintings by Degas, and pupils in Year 6 show good skills in sketching tone and space when they look at drawings by Escher. Some pupils know about other artists such as William Morris and Lowry. However, very few can say anything about their work or what they think about it. The school is aware of this and is improving its collection of prints and photographs.
108. The school is beginning to use information and communication technology effectively to help improve standards in art. Teachers use digital photographs to record and celebrate pupils' work and this helps pupils to compare examples and say what they think and feel about them. A good example of this was in Year 5, where the teacher displayed photographs of work in progress on a large screen, so that pupils could share ideas about what works best and how it might be improved. However, most pupils are not very good at this, particularly when speaking to the whole class. Pupils can import computer images to enhance their work or to provide ideas; there are good examples of this in Year 6 where poems, graphics and paintings are displayed together to great effect.
109. Improvement in art since the school's last inspection has been satisfactory. The subject co-ordinator is enthusiastic and leads by example. There are appropriate plans to raise standards further. The scheme of work is being updated in line with national guidelines. The school enriches its art curriculum by making links with other subjects, visits and events. Pupils' work is often represented in local competitions and exhibitions. Talented adults, including parents, are invited regularly to share their expertise. There is a popular art club. Visits to museums and galleries inspire some sensitive work, for example, pupils in Year 6 paint sad portraits of child labourers after visiting a Victorian apprentice house. Teaching assistants make a good contribution by helping small groups with materials and equipment such as sewing machines. Resources are generally good to support the teaching and learning of each unit. The subject makes a good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through, for example, the opportunity to work co-operatively with others, explore the work of artists from other ages and cultures and develop an appreciation of the many forms of art.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

110. During the inspection, it was possible to see only one lesson in design and technology and there was very little work on display. Judgements are based on the analysis of pupils' work throughout the school, planning, and discussions with teachers and pupils. The indications are that standards are below average by Year 2 and remain so by Year 6 and that the progress made by all pupils is unsatisfactory. Pupils do not have enough experience of the design requirements for this subject, such as analysing what is needed, trying alternative solutions, seeing how well they work and then making changes. They are better when it comes to making things, but even here there are gaps. They do not have enough knowledge of mechanisms and structures and they use a restricted range of materials. In many of the examples seen, decisions are made by the teacher and so the pupils do not have a chance to develop their skills and understanding.
111. In some classes there are a few satisfactory examples of the designing and making process, but pupils do not make enough progress overall because these are not

frequent or consistent enough. Pupils with special educational needs attain similar standards to their peers, but the more able pupils are not given enough opportunities to show what they can do, so that they make poor progress. In the lesson seen there was no difference in the achievement or involvement of girls and boys. Standards have fallen since the last inspection when they were judged to be average. One reason for this dip is that teachers do not give enough time to the subject, particularly the design part. Another reason is that some teachers are not familiar or confident with the new curriculum. As a result, their expectations are sometimes too low, or too much time is spent on the decorating parts of the work.

112. The indications are that teaching and learning are unsatisfactory throughout the school. However, there are some strengths to the teaching and learning. When pupils are encouraged to try their own designs, they respond well. In Year 4, for example, pupils make pop-up books for a younger class to read. These work well, using wheels and levers, and have a reasonable standard of finish. Pupils in Year 3 take apart some sweet boxes to see how they are made before using a graphics program to design their own. The most complete example of the design and making process was seen in Year 5, where pupils made biscuits. They examined and analysed some popular products, then made their own and collected opinions about them. They acted on this information by changing ingredients and trying again before deciding on a marketable name and working on the packaging. This helped pupils to understand the importance of considering people's needs and evaluating their product before making the final version. In contrast, pupils in Year 6 were given a complete set of instructions when they made a Christmas angel. These were very well made and the pupils were proud of them. In this work, they learned about using materials, and tools such as sewing machines, but did not have any scope for developing or explaining design ideas.
113. The new subject co-ordinator is well qualified and knows what needs to be done to raise standards. The school has introduced a useful new curriculum, but is aware that teachers will need time and training before this has an effect. A collection of pupils' work from all classes has been started. It is intended to grade these examples against the National Curriculum levels of attainment. The present system for checking that pupils learn everything they should is too general and is not always accurate. The co-ordinator looks at teachers' planning, but no one has been keeping an eye on the quality of the teaching and there is no agreed whole school system to record what pupils know and can do. Standards in design and technology have fallen since the school was last inspected and so its improvement has been unsatisfactory.

GEOGRAPHY

114. It was not possible to see any lessons during the inspection. Judgements are based on analyses of pupils' work, planning in the subject and discussions with teachers and pupils. Indications are that standards are average in both Years 2 and 6. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. By the time that they leave the school, they have built up a satisfactory fund of knowledge of where places are and what it might be like to live there. They can interpret maps and plans of different scales and are developing the skills needed to find out more.
115. The evidence from pupils' books and folders indicates that teaching and learning are satisfactory in all classes. There is an adequate range of work and pupils take care with their writing, maps and diagrams. Teachers mark with plenty of encouraging comments, although, too often, these refer to the appearance of the work rather than to the skills and knowledge shown. This does not help learning in the subject. The

quantity of pupils' own writing varies from class to class. There are good examples in Years 1 to 4, and these help pupils to understand and remember. Pupils in Year 2, for example, write about the travels of Barnaby Bear on holiday in Portugal with the headteacher. This helps them to interpret photographs and look for significant features so that they are then able to make careful maps of their island in the next unit of work. However, too much of the older pupils' work is from the teachers' notes or photocopied sheets. One result of this is that the higher-attaining pupils do not have enough chances to extend their learning.

116. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make satisfactory progress. They develop mapping skills by looking at their own area, for example, in Year 1 they make a good map of their route to school and the things that they pass on the way. Pupils in Year 2 build on this when they explain what they saw on a forest visit and draw their maps of the isle of Struay. Teachers encourage pupils to compare and contrast environments, for example beaches and countryside in Year 1, or Portugal and Runcorn in Year 2.
117. In Years 3 to 6, pupils widen their atlas skills; most can locate some places in different parts of the world or in Britain. A good feature of the teaching is the use of local, large-scale maps which pupils can relate to their own experience. Teachers link pupils' knowledge of physical geography, such as the journey of a river, with the River Mersey. This brings the theory to life and helps understanding. There is effective teaching of human geography in Year 4, where the pupils have looked at the way of life of people in an Indian village. Pupils are able to compare this with their own lives and present their ideas on the advantages and disadvantages in an organised way. No evidence was available of pupils investigating local environmental or social issues, or carrying out a geographical enquiry. As a result, there is little use of pupils' mathematical skills. However, teachers' planning indicates that these will be done later in the year.
118. The subject co-ordinator is new to the post but has already managed to make improvements to the planning and the curriculum. These are now in line with national guidelines. There is a helpful new policy and appropriate plans for development. These include the suggestions of the advisory service after visits to lessons last year. No monitoring of teaching has taken place since, although the subject leader examines planning and looks at pupils' work. There is a portfolio of examples of pupils' work, although these do not show the National Curriculum levels reached and so are not useful in helping to check on standards. The school has correctly identified as the next priority, an audit of how geographical skills are developed through the school.

HISTORY

119. In Year 2, pupils achieve standards that are average and they are above average in Year 6. This is an improvement on the previous inspection, when standards were broadly in line at the end of both key stages. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and achieve appropriate standards relative to their previous attainment. Progress is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 but good in Years 3 to 6. Overall, pupils make good progress due to the appropriate curriculum coverage, visits to places of historical interest and the quality of teaching. Pupils' historical skills improve appropriately as they move through the school.
120. The quality of teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory. An analysis of the pupils' work indicates that the teaching of history enables pupils to attain average standards. Pupils in Year 2 have gained a good knowledge of the Great Fire of London. They understand how the fire started and how it got out of control and can

compare the way fires are fought today. They have a satisfactory understanding of chronology. Their knowledge of famous people in history is appropriately developed. This was evident in their work on the Great Fire of London when they referred to Samuel Pepys and the diary he kept of the events he saw. They also acquire an understanding of how famous people from the past have changed things for the better by studying people such as Florence Nightingale.

121. In Years 3 to 6 the quality of teaching and learning is good. It ranged from satisfactory to very good. Pupils are encouraged to think critically about the importance of the quality of evidence and to raise their own questions for research. In Year 4, pupils were examining copies of artefacts relating to Ancient Egypt and recording their research findings. This was following a visit to the local museum where they had been allowed to handle some of the original specimens. In Year 6, pupils were able to discuss the lives of Victorian children knowledgeably and with empathy, making comparisons with their own lives. Visits to other museums had given them the opportunity to taste life in the past through exhibitions of working as an apprentice in the mill and experiencing the problems of washing day at home. Pupils were able to recall the events in detail, naming implements such as the 'mangle' and 'scrubbing board'. In class they were able to compare their experiences with other sources, for example, stories from Dickens.
122. The co-ordinator has been in post for less than a year, and so has not had time to evaluate the subject fully. She has, however, updated the policy and scheme of work and is developing assessment procedures. An appropriate start has been made on a collection of pupils' work to show coverage of their historical studies. Excellent displays around the school make good use of artefacts and celebrate the pupils' work. Good links are made with pupils' work in other subjects, such as art and literacy where they develop their skills in research and analysis of information. Information and communication technology does, in general, support teaching and learning in history appropriately, through the opportunity to research and gain information from CD ROMs.
123. Resources for teaching history are good. Although the school has few artefacts, they are supplemented by the library project loan service. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, for example, through their understanding of the legacy of ancient civilisations to modern society and discussions about the morality of actions carried out in the past. Curricular provision is enriched by visits to places like Halton Museum, Wigan Pier, Norton Priory and the Roman remains in Chester.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

124. Because of timetabling constraints, very little teaching of information and communication technology was seen during the inspection and none was seen in Years 1 and 2. Judgements are, therefore, based on this limited amount of teaching and the analysis of pupils' work, teachers' planning and documentation, and discussions with teachers and pupils. This evidence indicates that standards are average in Years 2 and 6 and that there are no differences in the attainment of boys and girls. This is the same judgement as that made by the school's 1998 inspection. In both year groups all pupils make satisfactory progress although their keyboard skills are often underdeveloped.

125. In Year 2, pupils program and control the movements of a robotic toy, use an art software program, word-process and create pictures using geometric shapes. In Year 6, they use websites to find information, combine text and graphics and change the size of the pictures and the font, word-process and use power point.
126. Throughout the school, information and communication technology is used to support the teaching of many subjects. For example, pupils in Year 1 have collected information about their homes, presented it as a pictogram and answered questions about it. Pupils in Year 2 have designed Christmas cards and those in Year 3 have word-processed poems. In a link with history in Year 4, pupils have used an art program to draw a Tudor Rose and, in Year 5, they have used spreadsheets to budget for a holiday. Pupils in Year 6 have used the Internet, for example, to find out information about Christmas. Information and communication technology was also seen to be well used to support the progress of pupils with special educational needs in other subjects. The subject thus makes a significant contribution, for example, to the pupils' cultural development, for example, as the pupils research historical facts.
127. The evidence available indicates that the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. No judgment of teaching and learning was made by the school's 1998 inspection. The lesson observed in Year 3 exemplified the satisfactory nature of the teaching and learning. The teacher had set up an interactive whiteboard with a data base and made good use of the effects made possible by this equipment. This gained the pupils' attention immediately. There was a good review of previous work and some pupils remembered the term "fields". The teacher showed good knowledge of the subject and used the interactive board effectively to explain the purpose of a data base although, at this stage, nothing was said about its use in the real world. Pupils of all abilities were fully included in the lesson although the work for some of the more able did not have enough challenge. Additionally, the teacher's style resulted in some noisy and inappropriate behaviour as some pupils called out. However, the teacher controlled this and, by the end of the lesson, most pupils could find and use information with help, and understood how to present it in different ways.
128. The subject is well managed by a knowledgeable and enthusiastic co-ordinator. Since the previous inspection, curricular provision has been greatly improved and the subject has made a good improvement. The school has good assessment procedures and the co-ordinator plans to standardise these in order to ensure consistency and accuracy. Monitoring of teaching and learning has not taken place but this is planned for the summer term. The subject is very well resourced and receives strong support from its Educational Action Zone. Year 6 pupils benefit from using the resources at the Grange City Learning Centre. There is a good plan for the further development of the subject, including, for example, making information and communication technology facilities available to parents. The school has a suitable policy for Internet access and has established an email link with a school in the United States.

MUSIC

129. The structure of the timetable during the inspection meant that only one full music lesson could be observed. One other possible observation was severely curtailed due to the late return of the class from swimming. In addition, singing was heard in two assemblies, and one lesson given by a visiting instrumental teacher was visited. No other evidence, either written or recorded, was available in school.

130. Discussions with pupils and teachers showed that attainment in Years 1 and 2 remains broadly average as reported in the previous inspection. The attainment of pupils in Year 3 is also average and remains at the standard previously recorded. Due to lack of evidence, it is not possible to make a reliable judgement at the end of Year 6. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs are fully included in, and well supported in, lessons. All pupils observed enjoy making music. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory.
131. The limited evidence indicated that teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 are satisfactory. The quality of teaching and learning in Year 3 is good. The lesson observed was well planned and prepared and suitably challenging. After exercises in clapping rhythms, pupils were invited to compose their own pieces according to the simple three line structure outlined by the teacher and to work independently making their own choice of instruments. Previously determined symbols to represent instruments were used to record the sequence of instruments to be used. One boy was very anxious to find ways of indicating sustained notes and loud and quiet passages on his score. The response of the pupils was good but, in performance, they lacked practice and had little control over their chosen instrument to vary the sounds made.
132. Guitar lessons for a small number of pupils are delivered by a visiting teacher who is developing good standards of playing to enthusiastic pupils who enjoy the experience and take pride in their performance. The quality of singing in assembly is above average with a good sense of tune and pitch.
133. Pupils are given little opportunity to listen to the music of different composers, performers and cultures. Opportunities to promote listening and appraising skills in assemblies are overlooked and limited resources of recorded music have to be supplemented by class teachers from their personal libraries when required.
134. The co-ordinator is a practising musician and has the support of two other teachers who are competent pianists. She has only been in post for one term and, as such, has not had time to affect the outcomes in music in the school. The music consultant from the Local Education Authority is helping to set up a scheme of work which makes use of published material. Future developments include updating the policy, evaluating the new scheme of work and introducing formal assessment procedures. There is an adequate supply of tuned and untuned percussion instruments but recorded music resources are still inadequate as reported in the last inspection. There was no evidence of the use of information and communication technology in music. The low priority given to music in the school does not reflect the above average level of expertise amongst the teaching staff. A choir of Year 5 and 6 pupils is being prepared to take part in a schools' concert organised by Halton music consultants.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

135. In the gymnastics lesson seen in Year 2, standards were below average. The pupils' jumps showed a lack of poise and co-ordination, particularly on landing. Their balances were unstable and their sequences, although showing some imagination, were uncontrolled. In the school's 1998 inspection, standards in physical education in Year 2 were judged to be above average. The difference is explained by different judgements about the quality of teaching and learning between the two inspections. In the Year 1 lesson seen, the pupils showed average levels of accuracy and control when aiming a ball at a target.

136. No physical education lessons were seen in Year 6 as the subject was not taught in that year during the inspection. No judgements about the standards achieved in Year 6, or comparisons with the findings of the school's previous inspection can, therefore, be made. In the Year 5 swimming lesson observed, almost all pupils were on course to swim at least 25 metres safely and unaided using a recognisable stroke by the time that they leave the school. In the Year 5 games lesson seen, the pupils controlled a ball using a hockey stick appropriately and showed a good understanding of the effects of exercise on their bodies. They worked together well in pairs and this enhanced their social development. In Year 3, pupils showed suitable co-ordination and control when travelling using varied routes and movements. In this lesson, the teaching assistant gave good support to pupils with special educational needs which made sure that they took a full part and made the same progress as other pupils. In the games and gymnastics lessons seen in Years 3 and 5, the pupils did not always make the best use of the space available, their evaluative skills were not fully developed and their technical vocabulary was not sufficiently enhanced.
137. Teaching and learning were poor in the Year 2 lesson seen and promoted unsatisfactory achievement. The shortcomings included insufficient emphasis on improving the quality of the pupils' work, for example, by praising work of a below average standard. In addition, the control and management of the pupils was unsatisfactory and there was insufficient emphasis on safety. The teacher's expectations of the pupils and her knowledge of the subject were inadequate.
138. Teaching and learning in the gymnastics and games lessons seen in Years 1, 3 and 5 were satisfactory and promoted similar achievement. In the swimming lesson observed in Year 5, where use was made of swimming instructors, they were good and so was achievement. The Year 5 games lesson illustrated the overall satisfactory nature of this teaching and learning. The lesson started promptly so that no time was wasted. The pupils entered in an orderly manner and sat sensibly in an open space. They listened carefully to the teacher's instructions and took part in the warm up activity energetically. The teacher made good use of technical vocabulary when encouraging the pupils to use a variety of jumps and there was a good discussion of the effects of exercise on the body. A strong emphasis was placed on the need for safety before hockey sticks were given out. The pupils showed sound levels of control when dribbling using a hockey stick. However, as the lesson went on, they lost concentration and application. This meant that the teacher had to spend time correcting their behaviour and that the lesson lost impetus.
139. The subject is co-ordinated by a newly qualified teacher, who is a physical education specialist, on a caretaker basis. This teacher is also caretaking the management of another subject. This is a heavy load for a newly qualified teacher. Nevertheless, she has started to work on assessment procedures in the subject and is working on other curricular matters. This is good and the school development plan outlines procedures to support the caretaker co-ordinator and evaluate the subject. However, it is unsatisfactory that the subject does not have a fully effective co-ordinator to guide its improvement at present as improvement since the previous inspection has been unsatisfactory. In 1998, both standards and the quality of teaching and learning were better than they are now. The subject is supported by some extra-curricular games and the school takes part in local competitive events, for example, in netball and athletics. Learning resources for physical education are good and the school has adequate hall, field and hard surfaced area. The hall is used as a corridor which sometimes interrupts lessons. No differences in the attainment of boys or girls were seen.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

140. In both Year 2 and Year 6, pupils' knowledge and understanding meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus which is the same as that reported at the previous inspection. Religious education makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development and, overall, a satisfactory contribution to pupils' spiritual development. Pupils who have special educational needs are included fully in all activities.
141. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory and promotes satisfactory progress. Pupils have a confident knowledge of a variety of stories from the Bible and they are able to retell them in great detail. In Year 2, the story of 'The Good Shepherd' was related by pupils in their own piece of extended writing. However, in general, there is little written religious education work in Years 1 and 2. Opportunities in circle time and assembly are used to extend knowledge and understanding of religious education for younger pupils.
142. Pupils in Year 4 are working towards building a reference base of local places of worship. They are compiling a list of suitable questions to identify the roles of people in charge and establish the function and services they offer. There were very good relationships in the classroom and pupils worked effectively together both in pairs and in whole class activities, confidently expressing their ideas and opinions. By the end of the lesson, pupils had made gains in their understanding of Christian beliefs, explored their own responses to the world around them and enhanced their spiritual awareness. Work in Year 5 involved the study of Islamic patterns and the importance of the prayer mat. Pupils were asked to design their own mats and were brought to understand the importance of Mecca. The scrutiny of work shows a good coverage of Christian and other religions in topic books which are well presented. Pupils show their understanding of comparisons of faiths and festivals.
143. Teachers plan in appropriate detail for the elements of the different faiths studied. There are good links with the local church and local clergy visit the school and make a positive contribution to the life of the school and to pupils' appreciation of the Christian faith in their community. The curriculum is based on that produced locally. Other faiths are appropriately represented. The school is aware that pupils do not have sufficient experiences of the practice of other faiths in the wider community and it is planning to develop these opportunities further.
144. The co-ordinator for the subject is recently appointed to the post but has a clear understanding of how the subject should be further developed. She has used her non-contact time well to develop a co-ordinator's file, collect samples of work, monitor planning and rewrite the school policy. There are no assessment arrangements for the subject and this aspect is unsatisfactory. Information and communication technology is not sufficiently used in the subject. Resources in the subject are satisfactory.