

INSPECTION REPORT

WINSFORD HIGH STREET COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Winsford

LEA area: Cheshire

Unique reference number: 111057

Headteacher: Mr B O'Connor

Reporting inspector: Mr J. Sorsby
14042

Dates of inspection: 10th – 13th February 2003

Inspection number: 251744

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 5 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: High Street
Winsford

Postcode: CW7 2AU

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr P Hardwick

Date of previous inspection: 2nd March 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
14042	J Sorsby	Registered inspector	Educational inclusion	Information about the school The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well the school is led and managed? What the school should do to improve further?
19567	M Malin	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school work in partnership with parents? How well does the school care for its pupils?
23079	A Everix	Team inspector	English Information and communication technology Geography Physical education Provision for pupils with special educational needs	
21816	B Thomas	Team inspector	Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage Science Art and design History	
23010	L Watson	Team inspector	Mathematics Design and technology Music Religious education The provision for pupils with English as an additional language	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

Winsford High Street Community School is larger than average, serving 277 pupils aged 5 to 11 from the town of Winsford in Cheshire and 12 pupils aged 5 to 7 from a wider area, including towns and villages as far away as 20 miles, who attend the special Speech and Language Unit for pupils with communications and behaviour related special educational needs. The majority of pupils study in single age classes while others are in mixed age classes. The Year 1/2 class does not operate on Wednesday to Friday afternoons, at which times pupils are distributed between the Year 1 and the Year 2 classes. Pupils in the unit are taught in one mixed age class. Very few pupils are not of United Kingdom heritage, these being of Pakistani or Chinese backgrounds. The four pupils who speak English as a second language do so fluently. Seven per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is lower than usual, and there are a high number of families from low-income households who are not eligible. Thirteen per cent of all pupils joined or left the school during the past year at a time other than normal, which is high when compared with most schools. Seventeen per cent of pupils have special educational needs, which is about average and four per cent have statements of special educational needs, which is above average. All pupils with statements of special educational needs attend the Speech and Language Unit. The majority of pupils with special educational needs have moderate learning difficulties. Children's attainment on entry to reception is well below that expected for their age.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school that is well led and managed. As a consequence, teaching is good taken overall and pupils make good progress from a low base to reach national average standards in most subjects by Year 6. Pupils who attend the speech and language unit are very well provided for and make good progress. Thus, even though running costs are high, the school gives good value for money

What the school does well

- Teaching in most classes is good or better.
- All pupils made very good progress in reception, and good progress in Years 3 to 6 and the unit.
- All aspects of provision in reception and the Speech and Language Unit.
- The school successfully promotes good attitudes, personal development and attendance.
- Leadership and management at all levels.
- The care of pupils.

What could be improved

- The standards achieved by pupils in Years 1 and 2 in English, mathematics and science.
- Teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2.
- The staffing arrangements and pupil grouping on Wednesday to Friday afternoons.

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 March 1998. As is known to OFSTED and the Local Education Authority, no complete version of the report is available from any source, and this account of improvements may therefore itself be incomplete as some comparisons are not possible. Pupils' standards on entry to the school have fallen, particularly in some key areas such as mathematics and English. Pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science have all improved in Years 3 to 6. Standards in music at the end of Year 6 have improved as has pupils' personal development throughout the school. Teaching is less good in Years 1

and 2 because of the arrangements made on Wednesday to Friday afternoons, which are described later and which are now being changed. Teaching in Years 3 to 6 has improved. The curriculum throughout the school has improved considerably as have procedures for assessing what pupils know, understand and can do and the quality of information given to parents. The leadership and management of the school has improved significantly.

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	C	B	A
mathematics	C	C	B	B
science	C	C	C	C

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

Pupils now in Year 6 are on track to achieve standards in line with national averages in English, mathematics and science. This represents good achievement since they entered Year 3 with below average standards, and is the result of good teaching. These results compared to the table above suggest lower achievement than in 2002. However, this is not the case. Current Year 6 pupils have achieved as well as their predecessors, this being a reflection of the different attainment of different year groups. Compared to standards at the time of the last inspection it would appear that standards at the end of Year 2 have fallen overall while those at the end of Year 6 have been maintained. In fact, because their attainment on entry has fallen, significantly in English, mathematics and their knowledge and understanding of the world, pupils have made better progress now than then, throughout the school, attesting to the better quality of teaching they receive in reception and in Years 3 to 6. The trend in the school's results has been broadly in line with the national trend. Despite problems in the organisation of classes for Year 1 and 2 pupils, which are described later, all pupils including those with special educational needs, higher attainers and those for whom English is an additional language achieve equally well by the time they leave the school.

In 2002 the school fell short of its target for the proportion of pupils in Year 6 achieving Level 4 in English, and exceeded its target in mathematics. Inspection evidence indicates that 2003 targets are likely to be achieved. In the 2002 tests for pupils then in Year 2, standards were well below the national average and the average for similar schools in reading, writing and mathematics. Standards in science measured by teachers were also well below average. Current Year 2 pupils are achieving similar standards. In comparing these standards with those described in reception it should be noted that the relative numbers of lower and higher attaining pupils has varied considerably from year to year, affecting the end of Year 2 standards. These test scores are consistent with the inspection judgement that standards in Year 2 are well below average in English, mathematics and science.

Very good teaching enables reception year pupils to make good progress from a low base so that they reach standards that are above those expected for their age in their physical development, as expected in their creative, personal, social and emotional development, and

below those expected in their communications, language, literacy and mathematical skills when they enter Year 1, having achieved well overall.

Standards in design technology in Years 2 and 6 and art and design and music in Year 6 are above expectations. In all other subjects they are in line with expectations except physical education in Years 2 and 6 and history and geography in Year 2, where there was insufficient evidence to judge standards.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils display good attitudes to school and to learning. They are keen to participate in all the school offers.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Satisfactory. While many pupils behave well at all times a small minority sometimes act disruptively in lessons and affect the learning by the majority.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils relate well to each other and to adults. They develop well, acquiring the personal skills necessary for the next stage of their education.
Attendance	Good.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching and learning has improved overall since the last inspection. Teaching in the unit is consistently very good or better, and pupils learn well. The quality of teaching and learning in reception is very good. Teachers know what interests young children and how to encourage them to learn. They manage the two classes well, ensuring that there is a warm and friendly atmosphere conducive to learning. Care is taken to plan lessons that meet the needs of individual pupils, by careful consideration of what they already know, understand and can do. Children start from a very low skills base, particularly in the key areas of their language and mathematical skills. As a consequence of the very good teaching they receive they learn well and make progress.

In Years 1 and 2 the effectiveness of teaching of all subjects is being reduced by the arrangement for a mixed Year 1 and 2 class of lower attaining pupils only being taught as a class each morning and two afternoons each week and being distributed according to age between the other Year 1 and Year 2 classes for three afternoons a week. This has a disruptive effect on the learning of all pupils in Years 1 and 2. In particular, teaching and learning of subjects other than English and mathematics (which are taught in the morning) are affected. But English and mathematics are also affected because by their nature, they are also taught through the learning of other subjects. Consequently, teaching of all subjects, including literacy and numeracy, is only satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. Further factors affecting the quality of teaching in the afternoons are the large class sizes, a lack of teaching

assistants to support the classes and inappropriate behaviour by some pupils. In Years 3 to 6, teaching overall is good, as is the teaching of English and mathematics. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of teaching English and mathematics enable pupils to learn well and make good progress. The teaching of literacy and numeracy, including through other subjects, is good. As with English and mathematics, the teaching of science is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6. Pupils' learning in Years 1 and 2 is sound while in Years 3 to 6 it is good and they make good progress.

Because of the work of teachers, careful planning and the quality of support by the small number of teaching assistants, most pupils, including those with special educational needs, learn equally well as all other pupils. However, higher attaining pupils are not sufficiently challenged in all lessons in Years 1 and 2. This too is partly the result of class organisation, and is rectified in Years 3 to 6 where this group of pupils are well provided for. Overall, the school meets the needs of all its pupils, well.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. Particular strengths include the range of extra-curricular activities and the effectiveness of the school's strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good overall. In reception and Years 1 to 6 it is good and in the unit it is very good. Teachers and the small number of teaching assistants support pupils well, and lessons take good account of their individual needs.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. They receive good support from teachers, teaching assistants and, as required, outside experts. Consequently, they make similar progress to all other pupils.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is well supported through the teaching of a broad range of subjects of the curriculum. Personal, social and health education support pupils' personal development well. Pupils have a good understanding of the multi-cultural nature of society.
How well the school cares for its pupils	This is a caring school where pupils' well-being is of equal priority to their academic success.
How well the school works in partnership with parents	The school works very well with parents in support of pupils' learning. Communications between home and school are very good.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. There is a very clear educational direction that supports the school's aims and values very well. The good leadership and management by the headteacher and senior colleagues have contributed significantly to the improvements in the progress pupils make.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very well. Governors have a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and play a very active role in shaping its direction.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The school uses all available data well to evaluate its performance and to plan actions to deal with areas identified for development.
The strategic use of resources	Good. All available resources are used well to improve pupils' standards. Good attention is paid to achieving best value in all the school does. Staffing, accommodation and learning resources are good and meet the needs of the curriculum well.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That their children like coming to school • That teaching is good and pupils make good progress • They feel comfortable approaching the school with questions or problems • That the school has high expectations of pupils and helps them become mature and responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of homework set • The information they receive about their children's progress • The closeness with which the school works with parents • The range of activities outside lessons.

Inspectors agree with parents' positive views but disagree with their negative comments. The use of homework to reinforce and extend pupils' learning is satisfactory. The information parents receive concerning their children's progress is very good, as is the closeness with which the school works with parents. The school provides pupils with a good range of activities outside lessons, appropriate to their age.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Children join reception with poor standards in their communications, language and literacy, in their mathematical development and their knowledge and understanding of the world. Their personal, social and emotional development is well below that expected for their age and their physical and creative development is below that expected. Very good teaching enables them to make sufficient progress for their standards to be above those expected for their age in their physical development, as expected in their creative, personal, social and emotional development, and below those expected in their communications, language, literacy and mathematical skills when they enter Year 1, having achieved well overall.

2. Standards at the end of Year 2 are well below the national average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. This is consistent with national test results in reading, writing and mathematics and teachers' assessments in science for previous years. In all these subjects standards are below those found at the time of the last inspection. However, pupils are joining reception with lower standards than at the time of the last inspection, and in each of these subjects, pupils are making progress as well as then.

3. Because current pupils' standards when they start Year 1 are well below average, this means that they are achieving satisfactorily in Years 1 and 2 as a consequence of overall satisfactory teaching. However, the quality of teaching in the three classes concerned is inconsistent, because of some relative weaknesses in the teaching in two classes, and the system of splitting the pupils in a mixed age class into the two single age classes for Wednesday, Thursday and Friday afternoons. Higher attaining pupils are not achieving as well as they might, because there is a lack of challenge for them in some lessons. In science, insufficient use is being made of what is known about pupils' knowledge and understanding of the subject, when teachers plan lessons.

4. By the end of Year 6, standards in English, mathematics and science are average, pupils having achieved well. This is the consequence of good teaching, and of appropriate challenge for all pupils. It would appear from the results of Year 6 national tests in English and mathematics in 2002 that standards at the end of Year 6 have fallen. This is an anomaly, because pupils in the current Year 6 were of a lower standard when they joined Year 1 than were pupils in the previous Year 6. Current Year 6 pupils have progressed as well as their predecessors.

5. Standards in design and technology are above expectations in Years 2 and 6 and pupils achieve satisfactorily. Standards in art and design and music are as expected at the end of Year 2 and above expectations at the end of Year 6. Standards have remained unchanged for younger pupils but improved for older pupils since the last inspection. Pupils are achieving satisfactorily in Years 1 and 2 and well in Years 3 to 6. In geography and history, insufficient evidence was available to judge standards at the end of Year 2. As at the time of the last inspection, those at the end of Year 6 are as expected, indicating that pupils achieve satisfactorily overall between Year 1 and Year 6. As at the time of the last inspection, in information and communications technology and religious education, standards throughout the school are as expected for pupils' ages, and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Insufficient evidence was available to judge standards in physical education.

6. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress overall. Those pupils with learning difficulties make greater progress in Years 3 to 6 because teaching and learning are

better in those years and work is more sharply focused to their needs. Pupils with behavioural difficulties also make good progress in this part of the school. In Years 1 and 2, their progress is only satisfactory because, at times, there is not enough extra adult support in classrooms. This is especially significant when teachers have reorganised classes with large numbers of pupils on three afternoons a week. Those who have behavioural problems find it difficult to cope in these classes and too much of the teachers' time is spent dealing with problems. Inevitably, pupils' learning slows.

7. Pupils in the Speech and Language Unit make good progress. Very good teaching ensures that work is carefully matched to individual needs. The complex needs of some pupils mean that their progress is in small steps and not as rapid as others.

8. Pupils for whom English is an additional language make satisfactory progress in the infants and good progress in the junior classes. They achieve as well as other pupils in their year groups. This is a consequence of the good support they receive from staff and the local support services.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. Pupils' attitudes to their work, their behaviour and their personal development are good. As confirmed by respondents to the parent questionnaire and those who attended the parents meeting, pupils enjoy coming to school. Pupils' personal development has improved since the last inspection.

10. The school is successful in encouraging pupils to have positive attitudes to learning, to value and respect each other and to behave well. Most pupils take great pride in the attractive presentation of their work and writing and are keen to show it to anyone who shows interest. Pupils talk enthusiastically about the school and the staff.

11. When the quality of teaching is particularly good and the pace of lessons is brisk, pupils respond well and their behaviour is very good. This has a very positive effect on their learning and personal development as they are generally calm and concentrate well. On occasions, a minority of pupils particularly in Years 1 and 2 behave inappropriately mainly because they lack maturity and have problems with relationships. These instances are most common where the quality of teaching is less strong and there is no classroom support. This becomes a significant problem on Wednesday to Friday afternoons, when a minority of pupils in the Year 1 and Year 2 classes misbehave, affecting the learning of the majority, as teachers are obliged to spend time managing the situation and the pace of lessons slows. This unsatisfactory behaviour by a minority is having a direct effect on the standards being achieved by the majority.

12. Pupils with learning and behavioural difficulties have positive attitudes to school. The behaviour and attitudes of pupils in the Speech and Language Unit are very good. This was evident in the lessons seen, and on a visit to the local library. During this visit, pupils listened with rapt attention to a librarian and their conduct when looking around the shelves of books was exemplary. Pupils for whom English is an additional language also display a positive attitude towards school. They are fully integrated into their classes and participate in all activities.

13. Most pupils have a clear sense of right and wrong. They are confident and show care and concern for each other's feelings and were seen to help each other in lessons when appropriate. Pupils of all ages handle learning resources with care, for example when using books and computers. Pupils are proud of their school and manage to keep it tidy and graffiti and litter free.

14. Relationships between staff and pupils' are good. Pupils approach staff with confidence, and staff respond warmly and thoughtfully. There are good relationships between girls and boys and between pupils of different ages and abilities, all of which contribute to the positive atmosphere of the school. During break and lunchtimes pupils behave well and they enjoy the facilities provided for them. Lunchtime is a pleasant and social occasion that helps to foster good relationships.

15. Personal development is underpinned by the good personal, social and health education curriculum and pupils treat lessons concerning matters such as relationships and reproduction with decorum. The school council, although only represented by Year 6 provides pupils with an opportunity to air their views. This they do with a sense of responsibility that grows during their time in school as they accept opportunities presented to them. For example, two pupils each day choose the music that is to be used for the start and end of assemblies.

16. Overall, levels of attendance are good and are above the national average. However, many parents still choose to take their children on holiday during term time, affecting their learning and the progress they make.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

17. The quality of teaching in reception and the Speech and Language Unit is very good. Although there are variations between classes, the quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory overall. One poor lesson was seen in one of the three classes concerned. The quality of teaching in Years 3 to 6 is good. Five excellent lessons were seen. It is notable that in the Language and Communications Unit, all lessons were very good or better, and with the exception of one good lesson, this was also the case in reception.

18. There is a fundamental problem with the organisation of classes that is affecting the quality of teaching. A class of Year 1 and Year 2 pupils, all of whom are generally less able than other Year 1 and 2 pupils in the school, and some of whom display behavioural problems, ceases to exist on Wednesday to Friday afternoons. The pupils are distributed, according to their age, between the remaining Year 1 and Year 2 classes. This has the effect of making the two remaining classes too large. Pupils, mainly those from the Year 1/2 class misbehave, and teachers have to spend an inordinate amount of time controlling their class. Consequently, less time is available for teaching and the pace of learning slows.

19. Because this arrangement takes place in the afternoon, it has most effect on the teaching and learning of subjects other than English and mathematics, which are taught in the mornings. However, it was observed that this effect was not exclusively felt in other subjects, as the disruptive effect on class dynamics had a knock on effect even when the mixing of pupils was not taking place. The organisation of pupils in this way clearly has a disruptive effect on pupils' ability to concentrate and learn well throughout the day, every day. Further, the effect is being felt on the learning of English and mathematics, and is having a detrimental effect on the standards being achieved, because the teaching of these subjects is not usually restricted to the particular subject lessons. A very important part of developing literacy and numeracy skills is for pupils to practice the skills acquired in English and mathematics lessons in all other subject lessons. The ability to do so is seriously restricted because of the afternoon arrangements.

20. The overall quality of teaching of English, mathematics and science is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6. In addition to the problems described above, in Years 1 and 2 the good range of information collected by teachers on what pupils know, understand

and can do is not used particularly effectively to help teachers plan lessons that challenge pupils, particularly higher attaining pupils, appropriately. Often, lessons take place with no teaching assistants available, exacerbating the problems described above. When they are available, teaching assistants are used well. The teaching of English in the Speech and Communications unit is of a very high calibre.

21. Evidence from pupils' past work demonstrates that the overall quality of teaching of English, mathematics and science has deteriorated in Years 1 and 2 in the short time since the afternoon arrangements have been introduced, but has improved in Years 3 and 4. The organisation of afternoons is now being addressed.

22. Insufficient evidence is available to judge the quality of teaching of art and design, geography, history or physical education. In design and technology, the quality of teaching is good throughout the school, and has improved since the last inspection. Because the available copy of the last inspection report is incomplete, no comparisons can be drawn on the quality of teaching of other subjects at the time of the last inspection and now. The teaching and learning of information and communications technology and religious education is satisfactory throughout the school, as is the teaching of music to Year 1 and 2. The quality of teaching and learning of music is good in Years 3 to 6.

23. The teaching and learning of pupils with special educational needs are good overall. Teachers and support staff usually take good account of the targets in pupils' individual education plans. They ensure that pupils with learning and behaviour difficulties are fully included in lessons, including the introductions where questions are usually directed at them at an appropriate level. In Years 1 and 2, these pupils' learning is not always so good. At times, teachers have no extra adult support and this makes it difficult to deal well with the widely varying needs in classes.

24. Teaching in the Speech and Language Unit is very good. The teachers and support staff work as a highly effective team. Detailed ongoing records enable staff to match work precisely to individual needs. In an English lesson, a brisk introduction to lessons with carefully framed individual questions maintained pupils' full involvement and interest. Individual work catered very well for the varying needs, including those of pupils with complex difficulties.

25. Pupils for whom English is an additional language are taught within groups of similar ability and learn equally well.

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

26. The quality and range of learning opportunities are good overall. Learning opportunities for children in the reception classes are very good. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The satisfactory quality of curriculum provision for pupils in Years 1 and 2 has been maintained. Weaknesses in the breadth and balance of provision for pupils in Years 3 to 6 have been addressed and a good range of learning opportunities is now offered to these pupils.

27. The quality of curriculum planning has improved. There are now policies and schemes of work for all areas of the National Curriculum and Religious Education. The curriculum now includes sex and drug education. Long and medium plans are now clearer and more thorough. The national literacy and numeracy strategies have been well adapted to suit pupils' needs and their implementation has been effective in raising standards. Pupils in

Years 3 to 6 make good use of their literacy and numeracy skills in other areas of the curriculum.

28. The high quality curriculum provided for children in the reception classes meets their needs very well. This contributes significantly to their good achievement and prepares them well for when they enter Year 1.

29. The school provides a good range of additional activities, such as seasonal sport, art and design and music, which take place regularly throughout the year. The curriculum is extended well through a wide range of visits and visitors to the school. Pupils' experiences are enriched by visits to museums, places of worship and the library. Pupils in Years 2,4 and 6 are also given the opportunity to participate in residential visits.

30. The school makes good provision for pupils' personal, social and health education. Since the last inspection, the school has worked hard to produce a coherent programme. This has been successfully implemented and contains elements of citizenship. Younger pupils learn about the value of true friendship and older pupils are given opportunities to learn about Parliament and develop an appreciation of the significance of democracy. The school sensitively approaches sex education and drug awareness and this area of the curriculum is well supported by the community police and school nurse. The school council, which has been introduced since the last inspection, has been involved in raising money for UNICEF and the recently planned outside walled garden area.

31. The school has good relationships with the local community and benefits significantly from its support. Good use is made of the local swimming pool and library and the dance and drama facilities based there. The council donated a bench for the walled garden and the mayor visited the school to mark the occasion. There are strong links with the local churches and clergy regularly visit the school. Pupils successfully participate in local events such as the Vale Royal Show and Chess Tournament. The school promotes healthy eating and benefits from links with the local supermarket. Artists are invited in to work with the pupils and pupils perform and raise money for the local hospice. They have also performed a play at a local factory. Pupils' achievements are regularly reported in the local paper. The school has good links with the local playgroup and pupils benefit from the expertise provided by the secondary school staff and use of their resources. As well as providing a range of learning opportunities that support learning of the curriculum, these events and activities enhance pupils' social development and their understanding of citizenship.

32. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and continues to be a strength of the school. Pupils are valued as individuals and they are encouraged to respect others and the world in which they live. Assemblies are well planned and have time for reflection and prayer. The music selected by older pupils to be played when pupils enter the hall create an atmosphere for reflective thought. Pupils are encouraged to appreciate each other's talents and gifts. At special assemblies, all pupils listen attentively when a selected pupil from each class reads out a special piece of work and is praised by his or her teacher. Pupils take pride in their work and the standard of presentation and display throughout the school is good. They use resources sensibly and move around the school with care and respect for others. There are class and school rules and these are reinforced by an attractive display on the school council notice board.

33. Pupils work together well in groups. They listen to each other's ideas and support each other's learning. Circle time – class discussions held in a circle - is well used to develop pupils' sensitivity to the feelings of others and to explore the importance of true friendship. In religious education, pupils are given good opportunities to explore their own and others' faiths. They learn about the major world faiths, their festivals and the cultures associated with these.

They discuss issues such as the destruction of rain forests, pollution and recycling and consider the impact of such issues on communities around the world. The school has been represented at an event for Eco-schools at Chester Cathedral and the school choir also performs there. Pupils study their own local culture and learn about the achievements of the Victorian age. They study artists such as Kandinsky, Matisse and Cezanne and learn about the cultures in which they worked. They recognize music and instruments associated with different cultures around the world. These events and activities enhance pupils' spiritual awareness, their social and cultural development and their understanding of citizenship and morality.

34. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good in the main part of the school and very good in the Speech and Language Unit. Individual education plans have clear measurable targets that are used well to guide pupils' learning. Teaching assistants are usually well deployed to support pupils with learning and behaviour difficulties. However, in Years 1 and 2, there is not always enough extra support to ensure these pupils make good progress. A particularly good feature is the daily 'nurture' group for pupils with behavioural difficulties. These very well structured sessions enable pupils to discuss issues, such as anger, in a calm and relaxed atmosphere. In the Speech and Language Unit, learning is very well planned to make it relevant and interesting. For example, pupils have visited several shops and businesses in Winsford Shopping Centre. They purchased items, talked to people such as the travel agents and produced a variety of work involving ICT, mathematics, geography and writing.

35. The school ensures that all pupils, including those for whom English is an additional language, have access to all curriculum activities.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

36. The good standards of care identified in the last inspection have been maintained. Arrangements and procedures for child protection are good. The special educational needs co-ordinator is the named responsible person and staff are aware of the procedures to follow in the event of any concerns. Procedures for promoting the health, safety and well-being of pupils are good. Fire drills take place at least every term and the building is evacuated and registers called in under three minutes. External contractors regularly test fire and electrical equipment. Good procedures are in place for recording accidents and incidents and sufficient staff are trained in full first aid procedures. Pupils are helped to develop a good understanding of the importance of leading a healthy lifestyle through science, physical education and personal, social and health education.

37. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are good. There is a behaviour policy that staff consistently apply. This emphasises positive reinforcement as the preferred means of improving behaviour. Pupils are aware of what is expected of them and they know that sanctions will be applied if necessary. There are procedures for dealing with harassment and bullying although staff state that such rare incidents as do occur are mainly verbal and any other forms are very infrequent. The majority of parents who completed a questionnaire agreed that behaviour was good, although a minority feel that bullying behaviour is not always well dealt with. School records and discussions with pupils indicate that this is not the case. No incidents of bullying or harassment were seen during the week of inspection.

38. Procedures for monitoring attendance are good. Prompt and efficient registration at the beginning of the morning and afternoon sessions complies with statutory requirements. The majority of parents advise the school in the event of any non-attendance and if there is no communication the school telephones the home. There are strong links with the

educational welfare officer who visits the school every half term to check on attendance and lend support.

39. Pupil's personal development is monitored well through teachers' day to day observations of their pupils and through individual target setting by both staff and pupils. Individual education plans written by staff for pupils with special educational needs often have behavioural targets included.

40. The procedures, policies and routines that the school has in place, combined with the caring attitude of the staff are very effective in promoting the health, safety and general well being of the pupils and have a positive effect on the standards that pupils achieve. The quality of the support and guidance available to pupils makes a significant contribution to the success of the school.

41. The school collects a range of information on what pupils know, understand and can do. This includes detailed analysis of the results of national and many other tests in English, mathematics and science, to ensure that pupils are making progress in line with their potential. In Years 3 to 6, the results of these analyses are used well to adapt levels of work and design remedial measures that help teachers to meet the needs of individual pupils well, promoting their learning and progress. In all three subjects the main areas for development identified through assessment are being effectively addressed and priorities accurately planned for. However, in Years 1 and 2 less attention is paid to the available data, and pupils are not always appropriately challenged in English, mathematics and science lessons. This particularly applies to higher attaining pupils.

42. Other areas of the curriculum are less formally assessed and sometimes their assessment is inconsistent from class to class and between subjects. The overall good assessment procedures in the school have resulted in an improvement in teaching and learning in Years 3 to 6. However, the use of assessment data overall is judged to be only satisfactory because it is not sufficiently effective in Years 1 and 2.

43. Careful assessment and monitoring of pupils for whom English is an additional language and support provided by outside agencies have resulted in them now being fluent in English and no longer in need of additional support.

44. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is carefully checked. Termly reviews are carried out, targets reviewed and new ones set according to need. The school seeks appropriate advice from those with expertise from outside the school, such as an educational psychologist and members of the local authority behaviour management team. The targets on individual education plans are always shared with pupils to help them understand the reasons for their extra support.

45. All pupils who have statements for their needs are in the Speech and Language Unit. The provision for them is very good. Detailed records check on how well they are progressing and are used very well to guide learning. All staff are well qualified, and effective use is made of a speech therapist. Wherever possible, pupils are included in activities with classes in the main part of the school, for example, in physical education. The aim of the unit is to prepare pupils for 'mainstream' education (i.e. in ordinary primary school classes with support) and in most cases this is fulfilled. Pupils are gradually introduced to classes at Winsford and careful notes check how well they are coping and what extra help they may require. This support is continued until the pupils are fully settled at a primary school. The Speech and Language Unit is very well equipped, with an extra room for small groups or individual work. Work areas are very well organised and stimulating.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

46. The school has very good links with parents and carers and is working hard to achieve further improvement. The overwhelming majority of parents think highly of the school and support it well.

47. The quality of information for parents, especially about their child's progress is very good. Two parent evenings are held in autumn and spring; in summer when the annual reports are sent out parents can telephone for an appointment if they wish. Reports are very detailed and clearly state what pupils know and understand and, in some subjects, set targets for future learning. The school issues regular newsletters and these inform parents of the work to be covered the following term along with other news of the school. There is a school prospectus that deals well with what parents need to know prior to their child joining school and an annual governors' report to parents that meets statutory requirements. The quality of information to parents has improved significantly since the last inspection and the shortfalls highlighted at that time have been overcome.

48. The school operates an open door policy, encourages parents to communicate with them and is committed to its partnership with parents. Parents give good support to their children's learning and many help with work and reading at home. Some parents help in school and many more help with educational visits, some of which are residential. A number of parents have given time at week-ends to help develop the Jubilee Garden. There is a very successful parent teacher association, which organises a range of very well supported fund raising and social events. Other parents were involved in helping to draft the school's drugs awareness policy. Overall, the impact of parents' involvement on the work of the school is very good.

49. The school organises a variety of classes for parents covering topics such as how to help your children at home, computer skills for parents and reading, writing and mathematics for children. There are also curriculum meetings held in the evening, directly addressing a key issue at the time of the last inspection.

Links between reception teachers and home are particularly good. Teachers carry out home visits prior to children joining the school and arrange for parents and their children to visit the school. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are kept informed about pupils' Individual Education Plans. These are sent home for parents to sign their agreement and the special needs co-ordinator is available every week to see parents. Pupils in the Speech and Language Unit come from a wide area of Cheshire. Unit staff make every effort to keep parents informed and ensure there is good communication. A 'chat book' is used to exchange information between parents and teachers, telephone communications are regularly used, and meetings for parents are held at least once a term.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

50. This is a well led and managed school where all concerned keep their eye firmly fixed in the ball – raising standards by working towards the school's aims, in harmony with its values. Highest among these is the determination to meet the needs of every pupil and to enable each to realise his or her full potential. This is striven for through the dedication and commitment of all staff, led by the exemplary personal standards set by the headteacher. As he approaches his retirement this summer, it is a fitting tribute to his many years of service that his school continues to improve, that the leadership and management have improved since the last inspection and that the deficiencies then identified have been addressed and overcome. That the school is well led and managed is confirmed by the views of parents.

51. The headteacher, ably supported by the deputy headteacher and assistant headteacher, governors, other senior staff and subject co-ordinators all make strong and significant contributions to increasing the amount of progress pupils make during their time with the school. The increased progress, which is not always reflected in standards because of pupils' lower standards on joining the school, and the much-improved quality of teaching in Years 3 to 6 attest to the success of all.

52. Good monitoring of the school's performance by reference to all available sources of information coupled with good use being made of the data collected, has led to very effective corporate planning to overcome difficulties and build on strengths. In order to take account of changing circumstances, the school views corporate planning as an ongoing activity and the school improvement plan to be a management tool requiring regular and frequent amendment in the context of the very clear and well-understood educational direction, set by the headteacher and governors. This model, although unusual, is proving to be very effective. It has, for example, enabled the school to respond with impressive speed to those areas identified during this inspection as requiring development.

53. Governors have a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and play a very effective role. They fulfil all of their statutory responsibilities well, and contribute significantly to setting the educational direction. Individual governors have a good understanding of the requirements for development in individual subjects, and use this information well in fulfilling their role as a critical friend of the school. The mutual respect of governors and staff is a firm basis on which the strong leadership and management of the school is built. Financial planning, responsibility for which is shared by the headteacher and governors, gives good support to carrying out the school's priorities.

54. The headteacher and senior staff, faced with a manpower and financial dilemma and with the difficulties of organising the numbers of pupils who join the school each year into classes of appropriate size, devised the scheme that gave rise to there being a part time teacher in a Year 1 and 2 class. The problems this created were quickly recognised by the school and confirmed by inspection, and using the school's very flexible corporate planning mechanism, a solution has been planned for immediate implementation.

55. The school makes good use of all its resources, including its staff, building, learning resources and money. Specific grants, such as those received for the unit, are used well and in accordance with their intended purpose. While the school would benefit from more teaching assistants being available to support the work of teachers, those on staff are satisfactorily deployed within the limitations of their available time, contributing to the progress pupils make. In all its activities, the school applies the principles of best value well, for example, in comparing its pupils' achievements with those of other schools and in seeking to achieve value for money in all its work.

56. The management of special needs has improved since the last inspection and is now good. The co-ordinator now has a much better overview of pupils' progress and this enables her to efficiently direct resources and guide support staff in meeting pupils' needs. The very good leadership and management of the Speech and Language Unit have enabled the high quality of provision to be maintained since the last inspection.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

57. In order to further improve the quality of education provided, the headteacher, governors and staff should:

1. Improve standards reached by Year 2 pupils in English, mathematics and science, by:

ensuring that potentially high attainers are given work that demands more of them;(see paragraphs:)

make more opportunities for pupils to use English and mathematical skills in other subjects. (see paragraphs:)

2. Improve teaching in Years 1 and 2. In particular:

assess pupils' progress more systematically and use the information collected in the planning of subsequent work; (see paragraphs:)

improve techniques for the management of pupils' behaviour (see paragraphs:)

make better arrangements for the allocation of Year 1 and 2 pupils to teaching groups. Ensure that pupils with behavioural difficulties and those whose attainment is lowest are taught in groups of a more consistently appropriate size. (see paragraphs:)

The following minor issue should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- The number of teaching assistants to support the work of teachers. (see paragraphs:)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	59
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	34

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	5	12	27	14	0	1	0
Percentage	8	20	46	24	0	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 one percentage point.

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)	289
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	20

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	12
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	51

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	1

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	21
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	17

Attendance

Authorised absence	Unauthorised absence
%	%

School data	4.8
National comparative data	5.4

School data	0.5
National comparative data	0.5

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

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	22	19	41

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	17	16	19
	Girls	16	18	18
	Total	33	34	37
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	80 (74)	83 (70)	90 (77)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	17	19	19
	Girls	16	18	16
	Total	33	37	35
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	80 (74)	90 (74)	85 (72)
	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	16	25	41

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	13	15	16
	Girls	19	20	20
	Total	32	35	36
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	78 (80)	85 (72)	88 (94)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	14	15	16
	Girls	19	20	20
	Total	33	35	36
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	80 (81)	85 (72)	88 (94)
	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	242	1	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	2	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	2	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	3	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	33	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)	12.7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.3
Average class size	24.1

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	162

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2002
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	£
Total income	551847
Total expenditure	539500
Expenditure per pupil	1847
Balance brought forward from previous year	13400
Balance carried forward to next year	12347

Recruitment of teachers

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

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	289
Number of questionnaires returned	108

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	65	33	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	62	35	1	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	51	42	4	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	45	36	17	2	0
The teaching is good.	59	39	0	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	43	40	17	1	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	67	30	1	2	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	65	31	2	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	39	46	13	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	58	36	2	1	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	53	43	2	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	32	39	11	1	17

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

58. Provision for the 40 children in the two reception classes is very good. Children's introduction to reception is very well managed. Home visits take place and there are good opportunities provided for children and their parents to visit before they start school. Links with Pre School are strong and the teachers welcome the information they provide.

59. The curriculum for the reception classes is rich and exciting. Teaching is very good overall and the management of the class is excellent. Good use is made of information collected through testing children's standards in each area of the curriculum and activities are well matched to individual children's needs. Rooms are colourful, bright and well resourced with interesting and exciting equipment and displays that motivate children to participate and hence to learn. Very positive links with parents are maintained, which further support children's learning. There are no children with special educational needs or children who speak English as an additional language, currently in reception. Because of the attention paid to the needs of each individual, children of all abilities achieve equally well. Despite their lower standards on entry, pupils currently in reception are reaching higher standards than previous years because there are none who have special educational needs.

Personal, social and emotional development

60. Children join reception with skills in this area of their development that are well below those expected for their age. As a consequence of very good teaching, children achieve very well, and by the end of the year they reach standards appropriate for their age.

61. Children's personal social and emotional development in reception is given high priority to very good effect. Teachers are very caring, supportive and encouraging. They are very good role models, listening with interest to what the children have to say and always prepared to spend time talking to children. This promotes children's self esteem and confidence. Classroom organisation and the management of the children are extremely effective. Children quickly learn the routines. The children's "diamond targets" for the term and the simple class rules are understood well by everyone and a sense of community is developed as children learn. Teachers encourage the children to be independent and make choices about their activities, which they do very well. This enables the teachers to work with children in small groups, which helps children make progress in all areas of the curriculum, for example, when the teacher is taking a group for guided reading. Encouragement to speak and work with others and to form friendships is promoted very well, this gives children the confidence to work and play with others, take turns and to share. Behaviour at all times is good. The children take care of their property and the classrooms, hanging up their coats and tidying away, for example, after they have had their milk. The children develop their independence in dressing and undressing and take care of their personal hygiene well.

Communication, language and literacy

62. Children join reception with poor skills in this area of the curriculum. As a consequence of very good teaching, children achieve very well, and by the end of the year they reach standards that are below those appropriate for their age.

63. Teachers plan the main activities together very well indeed taking into account the needs of each pupil. Many teaching techniques are being effectively used. For example,

teachers build children's confidence in listening and speaking through very effective questioning, tailored to the ability of individual children. This builds their confidence in hearing and enables them, for example, to learn the initial sounds being taught that week. During the inspection the letters to be learnt were *g, l, f, and b*. One boy commented about some beads, '*You can't have that it does not begin with a b, it's a necklace.*'

64. Teachers develop early writing well. Children use their knowledge of sounds to have a go at writing simple words and experimenting with sounds and words, for instance, *sunglasz, camrer, swimsoot, and armbanz*. The good clear notices, labels, instructions and poems relating to the themes in the classrooms are helping children to recognise and appreciate the need for writing words and reading them. Structured play activities also give sufficient opportunities for children to copy or write simple words filling in tickets for the journey on The Train. Children have handwriting lessons. Good teaching ensures all children can draw the chosen letter in the air, on the back of their partners and very carefully in their books. Most pupils are able to hold and use a pencil effectively to make recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed.

65. Books have a high profile in all work. Stories are planned to link with each topic studied. Using the Big Book, '*The Train Ride*' by June Crebbin, children learn about the cover, title, illustrator and how to read and handle a book. They are encouraged to join in and repeat '*What shall I see*' '*That's what I see.*' As a result, children have an awareness of books and handle them well. They are encouraged to read, and some are beginning to read simple sentences.

66. Speaking and listening skills are developed well in all aspects of work. The school has adopted the '*Time to Talk*' scheme effectively. This encourages, '*Look with your eyes, Listen with your ears,*' Children are able to listen well to stories, for long periods and they concentrate well, particularly in assembly. Speaking is developed in imaginative play, encouraged through links to the theme being studied. Children make use of a wide variety of audiotapes during their free and planned time.

Mathematical development

67. Children join reception with poor skills in this area of the curriculum. As a consequence of very good teaching, children achieve very well, and by the end of the year they reach standards that are below those appropriate for their age.

68. Most children can count rhythmically to 10 and can recognise the numbers 1 to 5 but as yet some have no concept of the value of the number. Very few children as yet can relate addition to combining 2 or more groups of objects and subtraction to 'taking away' and finding one more or one less than the number from one to ten.

69. Knowledge of two-dimensional shapes is good as most children recognise a square, rectangle and a circle and some can name the three-dimensional shapes. This particular area of learning was built into all activities that children experience, for instance going out, across the road on a "shape hunt". A very good lesson gave the children opportunity to talk about, recognise and recreate simple patterns.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

70. Children join reception with poor skills in this area of the curriculum. As a consequence of very good teaching, children achieve very well, and by the end of the year they reach standards that are below those appropriate for their age.

71. Visits and visitors to the reception classes enhance the curriculum and help children to understand the different jobs people do. Planning shows scientific ideas are developed through the good opportunities provided. Children make good use of the outdoor wilderness area for a mini beast hunt and to watch bulbs grow and the trees change. They enjoy looking at dry icing sugar and noticing the change when water is added. They look closely to see what happens after they have spread it on the biscuit before choosing six dolly mixture shapes for the top. Children are finding out about the uses of everyday technology and using computers and programmable toys to support their learning. They confidently control the mouse to drag and drop, scroll down to identify the shape enhancing their early mathematical skills, or initial letter words, supporting their work in literacy. Teachers introduce them to religious education well and children have taken part in celebrating festivals from different faiths as well as listening to well-known Bible stories, for example, *'The Good Samaritan.'*

Physical development

72. On joining reception, children's skills are below those expected for their age. As a consequence of very good teaching, children achieve very well, and exceed standards expected for their age.

73. Before entering school most of the children have had the opportunity to develop their climbing and balancing skills from visits to the local park or from pre school groups. However, children have had less opportunity to use small objects and tools for practical tasks. Opportunities for the children are carefully planned to systematically develop their skills, for example, controlling a pencil.

74. In a very good physical education lesson, children travel around the room, under, over, and through the large and small apparatus, displaying confidence, good imagination and an awareness of safety. Children jump and land correctly, concentrate well and improve their performance through evaluating theirs and others work. One boy remarked, 'This is a pattern of movement,' as he used his hands, feet and elbows to travel along the bench. Children become aware of their bodies as they cool down, lying on the floor listening quietly to a very well expressed story. Teachers are very successful in developing children's hand and eye coordination. This gives confidence and develops the use of a range of art materials including paintbrushes, pencil, crayons, scissors, pastels, paste spreaders and collage materials. Children have also developed the skills they need to play and work with construction kits and computers.

Creative development

75. On joining reception, children's skills are below those expected for their age. As a consequence of good teaching, children achieve well, and the majority will have achieved the standard expected by the end of the reception year, with some exceeding them.

76. Children enter school with limited skills as seen in their early pictures of themselves. The painting lesson seen and the rich displays in the corridor and classroom reflecting the broader range of their work show good progress having been made. Displays demonstrate the respect teachers have for children's efforts and help to stimulate further learning.

77. In a very good music lesson, children were stimulated by the music and able to spontaneously respond to it making dance movements as they moved into a circle. They recognised this as music from Africa and knew that the drum was made from skin, showing how well they remembered the visit from *Dumasani Drum*. Children played the drums with confidence, scraping, using fingertips and their knuckles. They listened well to instructions and made very good progress developing their ability to play a chosen instrument in a variety

of ways, with very good control, making sounds that were louder, quieter, quicker and slower. Teacher and support staff create good role-play opportunities for children, for example, related to the theme of Journeys. These activities help children to develop their speaking and listening skills as well as in using their imagination. Children have many good opportunities to create their own models from junk materials. This they do very well as the vehicles the children had designed and made from a wide variety of materials show. More able children explain what they have created and why they have made a particular object.

78. No comparisons can be drawn concerning the relative quality of teaching and learning at the time of the last inspection and now, because no information was given in the last report. Standards being achieved are much lower than at the time of the last inspection, but so were standards when children joined reception. Children made similar progress then and now.

ENGLISH

79. The attainment of pupils currently in Year 6 is average overall. Pupils make good progress and all levels of attainment are achieving well. This is borne out by the work seen and by comparing this with the pupils' performance in the 1999 Year 2 tests. The difference between the above average tests results for pupils in Year 6 in 2002, and standards now, is explained by the different ranges of pupils' attainment in the 2002 and 2003 groups. In 2002 there were more higher attaining pupils whereas in the current Year 6 there are fewer. Achievement remains good. Higher attaining pupils are challenged and the needs of pupils with learning and other difficulties are catered for well. Both groups make good progress. Pupils with English as an additional language have their progress carefully checked, and they achieve well.

80. The attainment of pupils in Year 2 is well below the national average in all aspects of English. This is mainly because of the large group of pupils of lower attainment and the small number of higher attainers. This is reflected in the school's performance in recent national assessments at the end of Year 2, which has been well below the national average. Overall, pupils' standards when they start Year 1 are well below average. Evidence from lessons, past work and additional information on progress indicates that most pupils' achievements, including those of pupils with learning difficulties, are satisfactory. However, the more able pupils are not achieving as well as they should, especially in writing.

81. The subject is well led and managed. Reasons for the low attainment of pupils in Years 1 and 2 have been identified and action taken to help raise standards. The strategies are well thought out and have been developed and implemented within the last year. However, they are yet to have a significant impact on attainment. Planning and learning in lessons have been checked, sample lessons given by a 'leading literacy teacher' and support provided to teachers. Nevertheless, some of the teachers are new to the age groups in Years 1 and 2 and the subject managers have identified the need for further support, especially in ensuring that the new strategies for raising standards are being effectively carried out in lessons. Good quality resources are used well during literacy lessons. The good range of books ensures that pupils experience a range of authors and styles of writing.

82. Teaching and learning are good overall. They are satisfactory in Years 1 and 2, and good in Years 3 to 6 where there were examples of very good and excellent teaching. Teaching for the older pupils offered good levels of challenge and work was generally more sharply focussed on pupils' different needs. This enabled them to make good progress and achieve well. When teaching was very good or excellent the pace of learning throughout the sessions was rapid. Questioning was precisely targeted to include all pupils, and a variety of techniques was used to promote learning. For example, in one lesson, pupils were given a

few minutes to think of ideas about how to best grab the attention of an audience. They discussed their thoughts in a set time of a few minutes, then ideas were displayed and shared. Completed work, and teaching in lessons seen, show that in Years 1 and 2 information from the good systems for assessing pupils are not used consistently well in planning work for pupils different needs, especially for those who have the potential for high attainment. Occasionally, teachers in these year groups have to cope with a wide range of pupil demands with no additional adult support. This slows the learning of the whole class. For these reasons, teaching and achievement in lessons were only satisfactory in this part of the school. English teaching in the Speech and Language Unit is of a high quality and is based on detailed analyses of individual needs. Teachers and support staff in the unit work as a highly effective team.

83. A focus on developing pupils' speaking skills forms part of the overall strategy for raising standards. The development of such factors as a wider vocabulary and improved oral expression, feature in lessons and link well to improved competence in writing. The youngest pupils have specific 'talk time' sessions and vocabulary games are played at the start of lessons; as a result, pupils improve their speaking and listening skills. As pupils get older, good opportunities are provided for them to discuss their work in subjects such as science and to speak to the whole class about their ideas. A greater emphasis on investigative work in all subjects is designed to increase oral and written abilities. Pupils learn to listen to adults and to one another with increasing attention, although several of the younger pupils find this difficult to sustain. The interesting introductions to lessons and the way in which many teachers vary their voices encourage pupils to listen carefully. Listening skills are good in the current Year 6. These pupils listen to various views, for example, about animal experimentation, and make relevant comments. Their ability to listen well helps them with all aspects of their learning.

84. Stimulating displays around the school, including attractive presentations of pupils' written work, encourage pupils to read. All pupils who spoke to inspectors were positive about reading. The introduction of a new 'phonics' scheme (where pupils learn the sounds of letters individually and when blended together) is helping pupils to make a better start with reading. A recently improved system for analysing pupils' reading in Years 1 and 2 is guiding teachers when planning for the next stage in learning. Although overall attainment is low, pupils are using appropriate strategies to help them understand the text, such as phonics and reading on to the end of the sentence. Teachers' emphasis on understanding the content of reading is evident throughout the school. For example, in a lesson for older pupils, the teacher constantly probed pupils' understanding of vocabulary or phrases such as; 'In conclusion'. Pupils clearly explained what happened so far in their books and in Year 6 the more able readers talked about the nature of the characters and their influence on the plot. Teachers encourage an interest in books by reading a variety to pupils. Year 6, pupils stated how they have been encouraged to try different authors during their time in school. By Year 6, pupils understand how to use reference books. They explain the function of a glossary and how to 'skim' and 'scan' a text. They are not so clear about the number system for classifying books in the school library. However, part of the school is being reorganised after building works and is not yet used as an area for pupils to find out information independently.

85. In Years 3 to 6, pupils have a wide range of opportunities to write in different ways. These include play-scripts, formal letters, poetry and sets of instructions. Pupils apply and develop their writing skills well in other subjects. For example, in history, pupils write short biographies of famous people such as Charles Dickens, and explore Victorian expressions and in geography present balanced arguments about environmental issues. In Years 1 and 2, there is not enough development of writing in different subjects, especially for the more able pupils. Much of the work is based on worksheets with little opportunity for the more competent writers to develop their skills by writing in greater depth and breadth. Work in

English books has often been set at the same level for average and above average pupils. Teachers expect more from their able pupils but they are not consistently using their good ongoing records to specifically challenge them. On a more positive note, throughout the school there has been a good emphasis on developing pupils' punctuation, spelling and written vocabulary. In younger classes, the introduction of 'word walls' display relevant and helpful vocabulary. In lessons, teachers develop the use of technical terms for language alongside their use to improve writing. For example, in Year 2, pupils learnt about adjectives then contributed examples to the teacher so that a text could be made more interesting. Some of the very well presented writing completed by older pupils shows how this has been successful. Examples of their sensitive and descriptive writing illustrate this: "The ones in the workhouse were badly treated and wished they could turn time back so they could right the wrong" and "sulking clouds dropping their frozen tears". As part of the drive to raise standards pupils' achievements are celebrated and shared in "Writer of the Month" assemblies; the motivation that this provides helps to ensure that pupils work hard and improve their writing.

86. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory. Standards are similar to the last inspection in Year 6 but lower in Year 2. However, more children are now starting at the school with weaker English skills and pupils' overall progress by the time they leave the school in Year 6 is good.

87. The teaching of literacy through other subjects is satisfactory overall. It is good in Years 3 to 6 but, because of the arrangement of staffing in the afternoons, it is unsatisfactory in Years 1 and 2. Satisfactory use is made of ICT to promote the learning of English.

MATHEMATICS

88. Pupils enter Year 1 with standards in their mathematical development well below the national average and those reported after the last inspection. Teaching in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory, but not sufficiently good to raise pupils' standards and by the end of Year 2, standards are still well below average. Achievement in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory. Staffing arrangements in these year groups make the monitoring of pupils' progress difficult. There is a large number of low attainers and the few higher attainers are not being consistently challenged. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 make good progress and achieve well as a consequence of good teaching. By the end of Year 6, standards are average, their standards having been below average when they entered Year 3.

89. By the end of Year 2, a few pupils of average and below average abilities fail to form numbers correctly. The few higher attaining pupils correctly add tens and units and amounts of money up to a pound. A few pupils are unsure when counting beyond ten. Pupils are beginning to recognize o'clock times but few correctly identify half and a quarter past the hour. Most pupils understand 'odd' and 'even', 'more' and 'less than'. Higher attaining pupils estimate lengths and weights well. Most pupils recognise triangles squares and circles but are unable to name rectangles, pentagons and hexagons. Pupils correctly match halves of pictures and shapes when learning about symmetry but many are still unsure of the vocabulary involved.

90. By the end of Year 6, most pupils use their investigative skills well, for example when considering the perimeters and areas of irregular shapes. Lower attaining pupils are less confident but are able to reach conclusions when looking at regular shapes. Most older pupils know their tables and quickly give the squares of numbers to ten and find square roots of given figures. Most understand terms such as numerator and denominator and use calculators to find fractions of numbers. Lower attaining pupils are beginning to understand the relationship between fractions and decimals. Pupils make satisfactory use of their ICT

skills to practise test questions and produce spreadsheets indicating the results of multiplying and squaring a set of numbers. Having produced bar charts illustrating weather conditions, higher attaining pupils correctly use appropriate terms such as mean, median, mode and range when analysing the results. Younger pupils correctly use co-ordinates to locate positions on maps. They use their literacy skills well to create stories to accompany their maps. Pupils take pride in their work and consistently work hard in lessons. They discuss ideas sensibly and are very supportive of less confident members of their groups.

91. Throughout the school, because of the good support they receive, pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language make similar progress to all other pupils.

92. The quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory. The good range of resources is well used to stimulate pupils' learning. Good use is made of the limited support staff time to ensure lower attainers achieve as well as other pupils in their classes. Pupils' progress is regularly assessed but teachers' planning does not always ensure that higher attaining pupils are sufficiently challenged.

93. The quality of teaching in Years 3 to 6 is good and has improved since the last inspection. Teachers know their pupils well and plan carefully to meet their needs. As a result, pupils of all abilities, including those for whom English is an additional language, make good progress developing their numeracy skills. Support staff are well deployed so that lower attaining pupils gain confidence and feel they can achieve equally well. Satisfactory use is made of ICT to support pupils' learning, for example to reinforce concepts and develop skills not fully acquired by individual pupils. Lessons are well planned and conducted at a brisk pace. Activities are stimulating and pupils are encouraged to investigate new ideas and to share their findings. Consequently, pupils are keen to learn from each other and take pride in the presentation of their work.

94. The quality of the curriculum is good and has improved significantly since the last inspection. The National Numeracy Strategy is established and well adapted to meet the needs of pupils. This results from more careful monitoring of the curriculum. The teaching of numeracy through other subjects is satisfactory overall. It is good in Years 3 to 6 but, because of the arrangement of staffing in the afternoons, it is unsatisfactory in Years 1 and 2.

95. Time allocated to the teaching of mathematics is now consistent across the school and improved lesson plans provide more opportunities for pupils to be more active and to work more briskly. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress remain effective. The quantity and quality of resources have improved and are now good. The school has worked hard to successfully raise overall standards since the last inspection.

SCIENCE

96. At the end of Year 2, standards are well below average. This is for three reasons. Firstly, there is a disproportionately high number of lower attaining pupils in the current Year 2 and few higher attaining pupils. Secondly the overall satisfactory quality of teaching is insufficient to raise standards beyond the levels present when pupils enter Year 1. Thirdly, information available from analysis of national test results is not being sufficiently used to help plan lessons that deal with weaknesses in pupils' knowledge. Pupils now in Year 6 began Year 3 with below average standards. They achieved well as a consequence of good teaching and they are on track to reach average standards by the end of Year 6. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language make similar progress to all other pupils.

97. Pupils in Year 2 understand some of the properties of materials. For example, they know that an ice cube left on a radiator melts more quickly than one left elsewhere in a room. There was no evidence to show that the majority understood that ice can become steam and when condensed can be frozen again. They have a developing understanding of forces. A visit to the park to find out about the movement of different things helped them appreciate that the harder you push and pull the faster you go on a swing. They understood that the wind is more effective than a man in pushing a yacht because of its strength.

98. By the end of Year 6, pupils have an understanding of which foods are good for them and which are not. This is well illustrated in their well presented written work on 'Healthy Foods'. Through their 'Investigating Shadows,' pupils have learned that the length of a shadow depends on the position of the light source and that the sun casts longer shadows later in the day when it is lower in the sky. Pupils have a good understanding of what constitutes a fair test, as for example, in a Year 4 investigation they considered '*what can I use so it will be the same, what am I going to measure?*'

99. Overall good teaching in Years 3 to 6 is characterised by well planned lessons, good attention to the needs of individual pupils and good use made of detailed analysis of what pupils know, understand and can do. Teaching places particular good emphasis on pupils learning through experimentation, for example in a Year 3/4 class lesson during which pupils enjoyed finding out which of a range of materials was the most absorbent. Insufficient attention is paid to helping pupils, particularly less able pupils, to use and remember scientific terminology.

100. Very good teaching strategies used in Year 5 helped pupils classify and describe the properties of liquids, gases and solids. '*Ugh, what's that smell?*' '*I can smell vanilla*' the pupils said as the saucer of perfumed oil was wafted when the teacher turned on a fan. This reinforced well, that gases are formed when liquids evaporate. In a Year 6 lesson, pupils demonstrated that they understand the life cycle of plants and the part played by the various parts of plants. This was well linked to earlier studied of health foods, as pupils described the part plants play in the food chain.

101. Pupils' learning in sex education is linked to their study of plants and is good. They remember the life processes common to animals and plants. Using tulips to describe the main functions, and being urged by the teacher to be accurate and look carefully at each part of a plant using a magnifying glass, pupils learnt that the stamen is the male fertilizing organ with the anther containing pollen supported on a slender filament and that the female, carpel, was made up of a stigma, style and ovary.

102. Standards at the end of Year 2 are lower than at the time of the last inspection, but so are standards when pupils enter Year 1. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make similar progress to that at the time of the last inspection. Standards at the end of Year 6 are the same as at the time of the last inspection, and the progress made has improved. The quality of teaching has deteriorated in Years 1 and 2, because of the arrangements in the afternoons. However, the quality of teaching has improved in Years 3 to 6. ICT is used satisfactorily overall in the teaching and learning of other subjects.

ART AND DESIGN

103. Although only two art and design lessons were observed, other evidence was available from teachers' plans, examining pupils' sketchbooks, displays of pupils work around the school and discussions with teachers and pupils.

104. No judgement can be made of the quality of teaching. The standards of pupils now in Year 2 are satisfactory. Given their similar standards when they joined Year 1, their achievement has been sound. Pupils now in Year 6 had satisfactory standards when they joined Year 3. Their standards are now good, indicating that they have achieved well. Since the last inspection, standards have been maintained at the end of Year 2 and have improved at the end of Year 6. Pupils for whom English is an additional language and those with special educational needs make similar progress to all other pupils. ICT is used satisfactorily in the teaching and learning of art and design.

105. There are many artwork displays of good quality around the school that show the range of work being undertaken in art and design. For example, younger pupils have captured the feeling and responded well to the stimuli of Van Gogh's painting of 'Sunflowers.' Year 1 pupils have experienced weaving with paper and pupils in Year 2 have explored texture and tone in black and white (What was the standard?). In assembly, pupils learn about the life of the chosen artist for the term. The work based on Degas shows how well older pupils are able to mix paints and use bright colours to build up an impression. This is link/ed/s well to the science curriculum where pupils explore light and shadows. As part of a project, pupils have learnt well how to join materials, appliqué and create a collage depicting the 'Tale of a journey to a secret land' by Lawrence Antrabus. Work on display linked to mathematics on shapes, line and pattern, squares and circles, shows children's good interpretation of the work of Kandinsky and Mondrian. Year 5 pupils have produced some very good quality sketches and paintings as a result of studying the work of William Morris in their history lessons. The most recent good quality display of observational drawings and paintings of fruit in the style of Cézanne show how well the skills have been developed in Years 3 to 6 as well as in the art club for older pupils.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

106. Standards in design and technology, and the quality of provision have improved since the last inspection. Standards are above national expectations by the end of Years 2 and 6 and all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language achieve satisfactorily throughout the school. It was only possible to observe two lessons during the inspection. However scrutiny of pupils' design books and displayed work and discussions with pupils confirm that their ability to solve problems, design for a purpose and evaluate their work is good.

107. By the end of Year 2, pupils acquire a good? range of skills. When designing and making carts, they thoughtfully select their own colour schemes. They sensibly discuss the difficulty of selecting the most suitable resources, for example which materials make the best wheels. They use the correct terms, such as axle, and understand the need to hold sections of their models together until the glue has dried. Higher attaining pupils explain how their models were made and describe ways in which they would improve them, such as adding windows and an exhaust pipe. Similarly, good knowledge and understanding are demonstrated when pupils make kites and puppets. They observe different types and consider the effectiveness of various styles and materials before selecting their own. Pupils show a good understanding of the merits of joining sections using glue, pins or sewing. All pupils take pride in their work and enjoy discussing their achievements.

108. Older pupils continue to develop their skills and their knowledge and understanding of the need to select designs and materials which best suit the purpose of their models. Their evaluations are very detailed and honest. They learn to use a good range of research methods such as looking through magazines and sending out questionnaires before beginning their designs. Pupils make good use of their scientific knowledge when making alarms to protect a house or garage. They also make use of their studies of different musical instruments when producing their own, for example guitars, drums and wind instruments. Pupils work well together, sharing ideas and responsibilities and ensuring everyone is participating fully.

109. The quality of teaching throughout the school is good and has improved since the last inspection. Lessons are well planned and stimulating and pupils of all abilities make good progress within them. There is limited evidence of the use of ICT in developing pupils' research or design skills. However teachers do have a good knowledge of the National Curriculum requirements and build into lessons aspects of investigation and evaluation. There is a mixture of written and sketching work, which helps pupils to develop and use their basic skills.

110. The school has worked hard to raise the profile of design and technology. Resources have been improved and links within the local community have also contributed to the good quality of provision. Local schools and the design centre have provided expertise and the use of their resources. Local industries award certificates recognising pupils' achievements. A visit from a local ranger resulted in pupils making bird boxes that were placed around the school grounds. Parents are encouraged to support pupils' learning by assisting during lessons and helping pupils to complete work at home. There is now a consistent approach to assessment. Pupils have progress books that they take up the school with them, enabling teachers to plan effectively to meet pupils' needs.

GEOGRAPHY

111. Only one lesson was observed during the inspection, so judgements about standards and learning have been taken from completed work. These indicate that, overall, pupils' learning and achievements are satisfactory and that, by the end of Year 6, attainment is similar to that expected nationally. There was not enough recorded work in Years 1 and 2 to make a judgement about standards in that part of the school. Standards by Year 6 are similar to those at the last inspection but more time is now devoted to the subject in Years 3 to 6 to ensure there is greater breadth in the work.

112. In the lesson observed, pupils in Years 5 and 6 were making satisfactory gains in their knowledge of the location of mountains and the differences between mountains and hills. Completed work shows a progression of skills and knowledge through Years 3 to 6. For example, in Years 3 and 4, pupils gain knowledge of rivers and their formation, and compare their own area with Conwy during a residential visit. There is an appropriate emphasis on environmental matters such as the effect of litter in the locality of the school. Year 6 work includes a study of the rainforests. The work is very well presented and includes a range of appropriate skills and knowledge, including consideration of issues related to the destruction of the forests. Further work on mountainous areas also contributes to pupils' moral development by discussion of changes in the environment caused by skiing.

113. Year 5 and 6 pupils follow the news throughout the year. Teachers use this opportunity to increase pupils' geographical understanding by locating and discussing world events. In Years 1 and 2, there is evidence that pupils have studied different types of transport and are currently looking at the weather. Although more geography is due to be taught in the coming months, the written work is very limited and recorded in the same way

by all pupils. So far, it has not provided enough opportunity for higher attaining pupils to develop their writing skills. The Speech and Language Unit's local study of Winsford is of a high quality and well matched to the needs of the pupils. Shops and businesses have been visited and the follow up work showed that pupils had not only gained a good knowledge of the locality but been given the opportunity to develop a range of literacy, numeracy and ICT skills.

114. Planning is regularly checked to ensure that work is taught in accordance with national requirements, and there are periodic examinations of work to see how pupils are progressing. However, books are usually sent home at the end of the year and there is not a collection of examples showing the standards attained or expected. As lessons have not been observed by subject managers due to priorities in other subjects, this makes it difficult for them to get an overview of how well pupils are taught and to take action to improve learning. The absence of past examples of work means that inspection judgement on the subject in Years 1 and 2 are not possible. A good feature of the subject is the management of educational trips, including residential visits, to enhance pupils' geographical skills and knowledge. ICT is used satisfactorily to support teaching and learning in geography.

HISTORY

115. Standards at the end of Year 6 are satisfactory. This judgement has been made from evidence collected from teachers' plans, analysis of pupils' books, displays of pupils work around the school and discussions with teachers and pupils. Insufficient evidence was available to make a judgement on standards at the end of Year 2 or on the quality of teaching in any year group. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language achieve satisfactorily, as do all other pupils.

116. The work on Transport in Years 1 and 2 shows some understanding of similarities and differences between old and new. There was no evidence of pupils' work on people or events. The very well presented work on Tudors in Years 3 and 4, the Victorians and the local area in Years 5 and 6 demonstrates how well history is taught to these pupils and the progress they make. This is good improvement since the previous inspection when progress was unsatisfactory. Enquiry skills are well developed as pupils write questions to each wife of Henry VIII and consider what changes happened during his reign, when they occurred, who was involved and how we know.

117. A trip to Quarry Bank Mill founded by Samuel Gregg, a textile worker, gave pupils an insight into the lives of children working in a factory. This led to good research about the work of Lord Shaftsbury and Dr. Barnado and a deepening knowledge and understanding about life in the 1800s. The homes and occupations of the inhabitants of Winsford over 100 years ago were well researched using census materials from the Internet. Analysis of the school Logbook highlighted many differences and some similarities with school in 2002. Pupils found that children were absent to help on the farm during harvest time, the school had coal fires, no school dinners and the '*lash*' was a punishment. Good links have been established with literacy; pupils have studied the life of Charles Dickens and *Oliver Twist*, written play scripts about happenings in Quarry Bank, stories of apprentice children, a job description for a king and compiled fact files from their research work.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

118. Standards in ICT are broadly those expected nationally by the end of Years 2 and 6 and pupils' achievements are satisfactory. Attainment is similar to that reported at the last inspection. However, the ICT section of that report is no longer available so it is not possible to make an overall judgement on any improvements since that time.

119. Very few specific ICT lessons were observed although pupils were frequently seen using computer to support their learning in other lessons. These observations, together with work in pupils' books tracking progress over the past few years, indicate that teaching and learning are satisfactory. In the ICT lessons seen, which were in Years 1 and 2, teachers had good subject knowledge and introduced the lessons clearly. As a result pupils understood what they were doing and why. There were, however, weaknesses in the parts of lessons where pupils worked in groups. In one case, the work given to the few higher attainers, who had grasped the main point of the lesson, was insufficiently challenging. In another, where pupils in Years 1 and 2 were regrouped into two instead of three classes, the numbers involved were too large, and this affected pupils' behaviour and their progress in the session. Teachers build ICT into other subjects, including literacy and numeracy, and the work is usually appropriate. On a few occasions some very effective use was observed. For example, in a Year 3 science lesson, activities included the use of an Internet game to sort materials into categories, the creation of a word bank to develop scientific vocabulary and the sequencing of computer video images to develop understanding.

120. A specific programme of work to develop basic computer skills ensures that pupils become confident in using techniques, including those related to operating the keyboard. By the end of Year 2, pupils present their work in different ways, for example by 'painting' their own pictures using the computer's facilities, by writing using different typefaces and producing graphs and charts to show their favourite pets or foods. Pupils have started to use the Internet to find information, and have given instructions to a programmable toy so that it can move around the floor. By Year 6, pupils have become competent users of the Internet, using it to find information in a range of subjects. They have a satisfactory understanding of how to enter and analyse data, and have used 'spreadsheets', for instance, to help them calculate the costs of a party. Higher attaining pupils worked out more complex formulas to assist in this work. Pupils have combined sound, pictures and text to make their own presentations. However, their use of computers to control things that happen on or off the screen, or to control models, is limited and is an area that the school is rightly planning to develop. Pupils with learning difficulties and those for whom English is an additional language make satisfactory progress overall. Special applications on the computer, for example to help with spelling and reading, are used to support these pupils. Pupils in the Speech and Language Unit greatly enjoyed working with programmes to develop their reading and used other specialist equipment such as a 'sound board' to develop their language.

121. The subject is effectively led and managed. The lack of space in the school for a computer suite has been imaginatively resolved by purchasing a bank of mobile laptop computers which are timetabled into each class. These supplement the two class machines. The subject manager checks on learning by keeping a file of work done by each year group and through supporting teachers, especially when they are introducing new work. Staff training has been sensibly focussed to ensure that it is relevant to the individual needs of teachers and their year groups. A particularly interesting feature is the development of animation by a visiting artist. A few pupils in Year 3 were observed changing a "plasticine" model and videoing a few frames to produce an animated film.

MUSIC

122. The music section is missing from the previous report and comparisons concerning teaching and overall provision cannot therefore be made.⁽¹⁾ Standards seen in lessons compared with judgements recorded in the previous report indicate that satisfactory standards have been maintained in Years 1 and 2. By the end of Year 6, standards have improved and are now above national expectations. All pupils in Years 1 and 2, including

those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, achieve satisfactorily while those in Years 3 to 6 achieve well.

123. By the end of Year 2 pupils of all abilities are developing good listening skills. They appreciate the music they listen to and make thoughtful suggestions as to images it creates, for example "Night On A Bare Mountain" makes them think of a wild animal crashing through a jungle or magic building up. Pupils enjoy singing and enthusiastically add their own actions. Many correctly describe the tempo of music but are less confident when discussing the dynamics of a piece. Pupils are beginning to compose their own music and play untuned instruments with sensitivity. Opportunities to listen to each other's compositions contribute well to pupils' spiritual development as they listen in awe to group performances. These performances also contribute to pupils' moral and social development as they take turns and share resources sensibly. There was no evidence of pupils recording their work.

124. By the end of Year 6 most pupils sing with confidence and enthusiasm. There is a good school choir that has performed at Chester Cathedral and the Manchester Evening News Arena. The school regularly puts on musical performances such as Oliver and Joseph and His Amazing Technicolor Dream Coat. These performances are praised in the local paper and the school receives appreciative letters from parents. Pupils develop their listening skills and become more discerning for example when matching tasks to given pieces of music. They listen to the works of a range of composers such as Grieg and Gershwin and successfully produce their own notation for extracts. When listening to Verdi and Bach, they express opinions and discuss their ideas sensibly. They have a good knowledge of orchestral instruments and can distinguish between members of the instrument families. Pupils of all abilities confidently discuss the tempo and dynamics of their own compositions and work very well together when composing and performing their own pieces for example when using body percussion to reflect aspects within the theme of "weather".

125. The quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory. Lessons are well planned, activities are stimulating and pupils enjoy their work. However due to staffing arrangements, large classes and the behaviour of a few individual pupils prevent many pupils from making good progress. The teaching of music in Years 3 to 6 is good. Teachers are enthusiastic and take great care to ensure that pupils of all abilities are fully involved. Good planning ensures that pupils develop their listening, composing and performing skills well. Pupils also gain a deeper appreciation of different types of music. Year 6 pupils demonstrate this well when requesting and selecting a wide range of music for playing in school assemblies. ICT is used satisfactorily to support teaching and learning in geography.

126. There is a good scheme of work offering pupils a broad and balanced curriculum. Planning is monitored and teachers are well supported. The subject is well resourced and the curriculum is enriched by opportunities to join the choir or to learn to play the recorder, violin or brass instruments and by the many public events in which the school participates.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

127. Not enough lessons or aspects of physical education were observed to make an overall judgement on attainment in the subject by the end of Year 6 or on the quality of teaching. The physical education section of the last inspection report is no longer available so it is not possible to make a valid judgement on improvements in the subject.

128. In the lessons seen, which were nearly all in Years 3 to 6, teaching and learning were good overall. Dance was taught well in Years 3 and 4. Teachers created a sense of fun and enjoyment, which ensured that all pupils willingly participated, without inhibitions. Teachers demonstrated skills well and helped pupils to improve the quality of their work. As a result of this good teaching, pupils' dance is of a good standard by Year 4 and they are achieving well. The Year 4 group dances of space creatures were particularly imaginative and pupils' very expressive movements reflected the changes of mood in the music being played. Good use is made of the nearby public pool to teach swimming from Year 1 onwards. The quality of teaching swimming to Year 6 pupils was very good and is helping most pupils to reach the standards required by the end of Year 6 and many to exceed them. During the session observed, pupils listened intently to their swimming teachers and followed the clear instructions and demonstrations carefully. This helped them to sustain a rapid rate of learning throughout the session. In two other outdoor physical education lessons in cold weather, teachers ensured that pupils were kept active and fully involved in developing hockey and ball skills. Although most lessons observed went well, teachers did not always ask pupils to say how their own or other pupils' work could be improved. This restricted their ability to learn from one another. A few younger pupils misbehaved in one lesson and learning slowed because the teacher needed to take time to ensure all the class were co-operating and paying full attention to safety rules. Pupils with special educational needs are fully included in lessons, sometimes with extra support, and those in the Speech and Language Unit often join in successfully with classes in the main school.

129. The subject is managed satisfactorily. The training needs of staff have been identified and courses provided to help them develop the necessary skills for teaching, for example in dance and football. Planning is examined to ensure that all aspects of the curriculum are taught. However, apart from in swimming, there are very few ways in use of checking on how well pupils are progressing or being taught. This restricts the opportunity to identify weaknesses in pupils' learning and take actions to bring about improvement. The provision of resources, especially games equipment, has been managed well to ensure they are wide ranging, plentiful and of good quality. After school activities and a range of competitive events extend pupils' learning and are valuable experiences for those who are more able. Local clubs work with pupils and provide valuable expertise to supplement teaching for example, in football, dance and cricket. All these opportunities, and activities in lessons, help to develop pupils' social skills, including those of co-operation and sportsmanship.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

130. The religious education section is missing from the previous report and no comparisons can therefore be made. Standards are those expected for the pupils' ages by the ends of Years 2 and 6. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, achieve satisfactorily.

131. By the end of Year 2, pupils are familiar with stories from the Bible, such as Noah's Ark and the Parable of the Lost Sheep. They write about special events in the Christian year, such as Christmas, and learn about the Sacraments to which they can relate, for example, Baptism and Marriage. They understand the meaning of "special occasion" and describe the emotions associated with them. These experiences contribute well to pupils' spiritual and cultural development.

132. By the age of eleven, pupils have broadened their knowledge and understanding of the Christian faith. They benefit from visits to the local church and learn the significance of the different colours to be found in church throughout the Christian year. They also increase their awareness of other faiths, such as Islam. They learn about Muhammad and his works and express views about his desire to improve the world. Pupils are respectful of people's faiths

and cultures. They support each other and share in celebrations throughout the year. These experiences contribute well to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

133. The quality of teaching is sound and pupils make satisfactory progress. Lessons are well prepared and good use is made of the wide range of resources available in the school. Planning and scrutiny of pupils' work indicate that the locally agreed syllabus is covered adequately. However there is limited evidence in displays around the school of the work pupils have covered. Parents of different faiths are encouraged to talk to pupils and share their beliefs with individual classes and the whole school. A procedure for assessing pupils' progress through the school has yet to be established. However teachers make assessments at the end of each unit of work. No evidence is available for the use of ICT in supporting the teaching and learning of religious education.