

INSPECTION REPORT

THELWALL COMMUNITY INFANT SCHOOL

Thelwall

LEA area: Warrington

Unique reference number: 111168

Headteacher: Mrs J Snelson

Lead inspector: Mrs J E Platt

Dates of inspection: 26th - 28th April 2004

Inspection number: 258178

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	110
School address:	Pelham Road Thelwall Warrington Cheshire
Postcode:	WA4 2HF
Telephone number:	01925 267172
Fax number:	01925 861757
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr C Daniels
Date of previous inspection:	23 March 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Thelwall Community Infant school is smaller than most schools, having 110 boys and girls on roll. Pupils travel considerable distances to attend the school and their overall social and economic background encompasses a wide range. Attainment on entry to the school is average. A very small number of pupils are from minority ethnic groups and none of these need help because English is not their first spoken language. An average (10%) number of pupils are entitled to free school meals. Sixteen pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs and two pupils have formal Statements of Special Educational Need. The needs of these pupils include speech and communication and moderate learning difficulties. The school has a Basic Skills Quality Mark and received an Achievement Award for improved results in national tests in 2003.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
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22740	Mrs M Leah	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Humanities Areas of learning in the Foundation Stage

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a very effective school with many very good features. Standards in mathematics and English have been consistently well above the national average and achievement is very good. The overall quality of teaching and learning is very good; pupils enjoy school and work hard. Leadership and management are very purposeful. This leads to a thriving community with staff very successful in providing a most stimulating range of experiences. **The school provides good value for money.**

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Children get off to a good start in the reception classes and make good progress.
- Teaching of English and mathematics is especially very good and leads to high standards.
- Standards in Year 2 in science and information and communication technology are above average.
- The headteacher and key staff provide very good role models for other staff, leading by example and expertly sharing their skills and enthusiasm.
- The focus on learning through practical activities makes learning interesting. Occasionally, tasks do not encourage independent learning and the library is underused to further these skills.
- Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported and achieve very well.
- The school makes very good use of assessment information to plan work to match pupils' ability. Targets are being set for pupils in literacy but not yet in other subjects.

Improvement since the previous inspection in 1998 is very good. Standards have risen faster than the national trend and the school received a nationally recognised Achievement Award in 2003 to celebrate its success. Teaching has greatly improved, with the adoption of new planning systems so that teachers build systematically on pupils' skills and knowledge. Governors are now closely involved with the work of the school and have increased their links through an active curriculum committee and closer links with subject leaders. Accommodation and resources are much better.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
reading	A	A	A	A
writing	A	A	A	A
mathematics	A	A	A	A

*Key: A - well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average
Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals*

Overall achievement is very good.

Test results in reading, writing and mathematics have been consistently well above average. These figures show very good achievement for all abilities, with a very small proportion not reaching the level expected for their age and a very high proportion of pupils exceeding this level. Current standards in Year 2 show these very high standards have been sustained and achievement is very good. Results of national tests indicated boys were not doing quite as well as girls. Action has been taken to check that work is suitably exciting for boys. Current standards suggest boys and girls do equally well over time. Higher attaining pupils continue to be challenged and exceed the level

expected for their age. Pupils with special educational needs are set work that matches their needs and make very good progress not only academically but also with their very specific needs. Children in the reception classes make good progress and exceed the goals children are expected to reach by the end of the reception year.

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is very good. There are strengths in social and moral development and these lead to a friendly and caring school. Pupils' behaviour is good; they relate well to others and are eager to learn. Attendance and punctuality are very good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a very good quality of education.

The overall quality of teaching and learning is very good. In the vast majority of lessons teaching is at least good and often better and in one lesson seen teaching was excellent. The teaching of English and mathematics is consistently very good. Lively activities capture pupils' interest so that basic skills are rapidly acquired and used in problem solving, reading and writing. Teaching and learning in the reception classes are good. Staff have a good understanding of the needs of these children and ensure learning is based on first hand experiences. Assessment procedures are good and information is being used effectively to match work to pupils' ability. This is especially beneficial for pupils with special educational needs, who are supported very well by skilled assistants and teachers. Staff have attended special training so that they can fully include these pupils in all aspects of school life. Pupils have targets in literacy so that they are starting to be more aware of what they need to do to improve. This practice is not yet in place in mathematics. Marking of work does not always make clear to pupils how to improve.

The curriculum is very stimulating with a careful balance between academic, physical and creative experiences. Accommodation and resources are very good. The library is attractive although currently underused. Staffing is good. Care and support are good and pupils feel secure in school. The monitoring of personal development and the involvement of pupils in their work is satisfactory. Partnership with parents is very good and many help both in school and at home. Links with the community and other schools are good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The overall quality of leadership and management is very good. Leadership from the headteacher and key staff is very good. They have a very clear vision for the school based securely on evaluation of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Management is very good and actions taken are monitored closely to see they lead to improvements. Governance is good and ensures all statutory requirements are met. Governors willingly share their many experiences. This includes supporting financial management, which is very good. Money is spent in the best interest of the pupils.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are very positive about the education their children receive and the school is held in high esteem in the locality. Pupils are very happy. All parents who responded to the parents' questionnaire are unanimous that their children like school.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

This is a very effective school with no substantial areas for improvement. The school should consider the following points:

- extend the practice of setting targets and including comments in the marking of pupils' work;

- provide more opportunities for independent learning, including further use of the library.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Overall achievement is very good. Standards in Year 2 are well above average in reading, writing and mathematics.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children in the Foundation Stage¹ make very good progress in their literacy and personal and social skills and this enables them to get off to a flying start to their education.
- Results in national tests have been consistently well above average when compared with all school and schools with a similar intake.
- Standards in Year 2 in science and information and communication technology (ICT) are above average.
- Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported and make very good progress.
- Improvement in standards since the previous inspection is very good.

Commentary

1. In the reception classes teaching and learning are good and every day includes stimulating tasks. Consequently, children are eager to get to work and overall progress is good and children exceed the early learning goals² expected for their age. In response to very good teaching of literacy and personal and social skills children achieve very high standards. They are well launched into early reading and writing by the end of the reception class. This makes a significant contribution to the high standards in the school. The focus on personal and social development is very effective in establishing good attitudes to learning and behaviour and this sets a firm foundation for future learning.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores³ in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	17.5 (17.9)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	16.7 (15.6)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	18.1 (17.9)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 44 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. The grid indicates that results in national tests in 2003 were well above the national average in all three areas. This has been the picture of results over the last three years and the trend in progress has been above the national trend. When compared with similar results, results were also well above average in 2003 showing that achievement of many pupils is very good.

¹ Foundation Stage begins when children start in the reception classes and finishes at the end of that year.

² Early learning goals are the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the Foundation Stage. They refer mainly to achievements children make in connection with communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; personal, social and emotional development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical and creative development.

³ The average point score provides schools with a single statistic to compare the overall grades by all of their pupils with the grades attained by all pupils in another similar school as well as an average for all schools nationally. The score is obtained from the National Curriculum level attained by pupils in the national assessments. For example, in mathematics pupils are awarded 9 points for a level 1, 15 points for level 2 and 21 points for level 3. The average score is then calculated by adding up all of the points and dividing by the number of pupils who were tested.

The school received an Achievement Award in 2003 in recognition of their high performance in national tests. These high standards in literacy and numeracy have also been rewarded with a Basic Skills Quality Mark.

3. Current standards in Year 2 show these high standards have been sustained and are well above average in all aspects of English and mathematics. Achievement of pupils of all abilities is very good. Test results show a significantly high number of pupils are working at levels above that expected for their age. This continues to be the case and in part can be attributed to the school's system of grouping children according to their ability for one lesson a week. Pupils benefit from these group sessions with an extra teacher input at all levels, enabling teachers to give an extra boost to pupils' learning. This system also benefits pupils with special educational needs, who are identified early and receive very effective support. These pupils make very good progress and almost every pupil in the school reaches at least the early level of what is expected for their age. Staff are very alert to the needs of pupils with very special physical and communication needs and have attended training to ensure they can provide the best support to enable them to play an active part in all that is on offer.
4. The school's effective assessment systems do not identify any pupils as academically gifted in the current intake. In previous years extra support has been provided and these pupils have reached exceptionally high standards. Pupils with talents in art, music and physical activities thrive on the stimulating variety of experiences. Test results showed boys were not doing as well as girls in writing. The school has adjusted the curriculum to ensure boy's interests are met and boys and girls are now doing equally well.
5. The rich curriculum and effective teaching enables pupils to make good progress in other subjects. Teacher assessments in science were average last year although an impressive 52% exceeded the national average. The new co-ordinator has effectively started to raise the profile of science in the school and current standards are higher and are above average and achievement is good. In response to better teaching and resources, standards in ICT are now above average. Standards in religious education are in line with the requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are **good**. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects of their personal development are **very good**. Attendance is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils get on very well together and know that the way they treat others affects their feelings.
- Pupils know the school's rules and keep to them.
- Staff help pupils to understand that people have different beliefs and live in different ways.
- Pupils are very eager to come to school, demonstrated by the very high attendance figures.
- Pupils' social and moral development is very good.
- Children in the reception classes make very good progress in their personal social and emotional development.

Commentary

6. Pupils like school because they are interested in the work and enjoy being together. Teachers encourage pupils to accept responsibility by giving them additional duties. Consequently, each class has willing volunteers who help with, for example, preparing and tidying up after lessons. Pupils eagerly wait for their turn to perform these duties and conscientiously discharge them properly. Staff are good listeners so pupils happily share their ideas and

concerns and this effectively extends their speaking and listening skills. In lessons, pupils help each other. Pupils with special educational needs are fully included in play and work activities, both because of staff's sensitive support and pupils' recognition of their classmates' different needs.

7. There have been no exclusions in the school. The school sets out clear guidelines for pupils' behaviour and the consistently high expectations are rewarded so that lessons and play times are orderly occasions. Pupils use the play equipment sensibly to sustain games together and resolve any difficulties that arise without undue fuss. Rules for the classrooms are drawn up in consultation with pupils and so they see the sense of these and know why they are necessary. Parents are happy about behaviour in school and appreciate the way their children grow in confidence. A small number of parents expressed concern about bullying. However, no incidents of bullying, racism or sexist incidents were seen during the inspection. Pupils assured inspectors they are happy in school.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	3.4	School data	0.0
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

The table gives the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

8. Attendance is well above that found in most schools and attendance figures are in the top ten per cent across the country. The school is active in informing parents of the potential disruption on children's education of poor attendance and efficiently follows up any unexplained absences. Punctuality is very good. The overwhelming majority of pupils arrive in time for a prompt start to the day. Parents are encouraged to settle their children at the start of the day so this is friendly time and staff often make good use of it to have informal contact with parents.
9. There is a very high regard for both moral and social development. Consequently, pupils have a clear understanding about fairness and honesty. The good role models of the staff promote an awareness in pupils of the consequences of their actions. When required, teachers talk quietly to pupils about how their actions can upset others and so pupils are usually responsible and considerate. This makes a positive contribution to the personal development of pupils and their overall attainment and achievement.
10. Pupils successfully develop their own spiritual awareness because provision is good. Teachers and support staff grasp every opportunity to boost self-esteem and conclusions of lessons often celebrate achievement so pupils work hard to succeed. They show a real appreciation of the world in which they live because of the many exciting activities they experience. The amazement and trepidation in pupils' faces was testimony to this when a tarantula visited the science lesson in Year 2. Assemblies meet statutory requirements. Visiting speakers often provide an added dimension, although a focal point to develop a spiritual awareness to these occasions is missing and the time to pause and reflect is too brief to develop a spiritual feeling.
11. Pupils' understanding of their own and different cultures is extended imaginatively through visits and links with other schools. The close contact with a school in Ireland is part of Warrington's peace project to strengthen links and develop friendships. This is celebrated in photographs and exchange visits as well as much very useful topic work about different ways of life. Pupils also enjoyed taking part in a whole-school project, *Around the World*, in which they learned about dance, music, costume, food and art from several cultures and countries.

Imaginative use is made of the school's close proximity to the Liverpool and Manchester Ship Canal so that pupils learn about the local industrial culture. The other side of their culture is not forgotten as they take part in the village's Rose Queen celebrations. Pupils learn about other faiths in religious education but had limited knowledge of this in discussions.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The overall quality of education is **very good**. Teaching and learning are **very good** and play a major part in sustaining the high standards. Pupils enjoy school because of the **very stimulating** curriculum. **Good** attention is given to the pupils' safety and welfare. Links with parents are **very good**. The school has **good** links with the community and other schools.

Teaching and learning

The overall quality of teaching and learning is **very good**. The use of assessment is **effective**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Resources are used very imaginatively so that lessons are exciting and based on practical activities which capture pupils' interest.
- Planning is very good and teachers are clear about what they want pupils to learn.
- Teachers have very high expectations of pupils and tasks are challenging.
- Pupils with special educational needs are very well taught by support staff and teachers.
- Teachers have very good knowledge about how pupils learn and teaching methods are varied so that lessons are stimulating.
- Assessment procedures are good and teachers match work accurately to pupils' needs. Marking and the setting of individual targets are not always effectively involving pupils in their learning.

Commentary

12. It is very apparent on entering the school that the education provided is based on enjoyment and practical activities. This leads to a busy learning atmosphere and this is a major reason for the school's success.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 23 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1	8	10	4	0	0	0

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.

13. In the vast majority of lessons seen teaching was good and often better, and in one English lesson seen the teaching was excellent. Although it was not possible to make a judgement about teaching and learning in all subjects during the inspection, the review of pupils' work indicates that very good teaching is more widespread because of the very rich range of experiences planned. Teaching has significantly improved since the last inspection in response to new planning guidelines and better assessment procedures.
14. During the inspection all of the teaching seen in the reception classes was good, with very good features in the teaching of writing and personal and social skills. Staff ensure children are happy and provide many opportunities for children to develop positive relationships. The imaginative role-play areas and resources quickly alert visitors to the focus on learning through first hand experiences which stimulates children's interests and results in good progress.

15. Throughout the school the teaching of reading, writing and mathematics is consistently very good and leads to very good achievement. These lessons go at a brisk pace that sustains pupils' concentration. The active approach to teaching letters and their sounds and basic numeracy skills promotes pupils' enjoyment and is a significant factor in the very high standards achieved. Teachers are enthusiastic about reading and transmit this to their pupils so that many pupils not only read confidently but have a love of books.
16. Teachers plan carefully with a clear understanding of what they want pupils to learn. This is usually shared with pupils at the start of lessons and revisited at the end to celebrate achievement as well as check on pupils' understanding. Another strength in planning is the promotion of literacy, numeracy and ICT in other subjects. This allows pupils to consolidate new learning in purposeful activities very effectively. A weakness in the previous inspection was too many tasks leading to teachers managing the tasks rather than focusing on pupils' learning. This remains a concern in a few lessons, especially when teaching assistants are not available. Occasionally, tasks are too directed by the teacher and opportunities to allow pupils to work independently or come up with their own ideas are missed.
17. Teachers' very secure subject knowledge combined with a good understanding of how children learn allows them to make learning conditions especially relevant to the needs of this age range. Classrooms are exciting places with imaginative displays which celebrate achievement as well as provide useful prompts to aid pupils as they work. Every class has a role-play corner and a range of practical resources which provide a focus for the current topic. This leads to pupils being keen to come to school to discover what new adventures await them.
18. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is very good. Individual education plans give staff precise advice so that lessons are closely linked to pupils' needs. Support staff are especially supportive of pupils with formal Statements of Special Educational Needs. Their sensitive and unobtrusive guidance enables these pupils to take full advantage of all the school has to offer.
19. Throughout the school teachers encourage pupils by positive responses. Relationships are harmonious and classes are happy places where pupils are eager to learn.
20. Lessons are often challenging, with teachers having very high expectations of their pupils. These expectations are realistic because they are rooted in good assessment procedures and knowledge of pupils' capabilities. This enables teachers to give effective advice as pupils work. Marking of work is up-to-date and often identifies pupils' on-going progress but does not always tell pupils how they can make their work better. Assessment procedures in mathematics in Year 1 and in science are being adapted to provide closer links to National Curriculum levels to further aid teachers with the tracking of individual progress. Assessment in other subjects is satisfactory. Assessment information is being used well to set targets for the school and for individuals. The school is in the early stages of sharing individual targets with pupils in English. The current system is being tested in Years 1 and 2 and is meeting with some success although pupils are finding it difficult to recall their targets. As yet pupils do not have targets in other subjects.

Example of outstanding practice

In a literacy lesson in the mixed Year 1 and 2 class the on-going saga of the imaginary character Percy the Park Keeper captured pupils' imagination and helped raise interest in literacy for boys.

The scene was set with an amazing *potting shed* in which pupils wrote a diary of events as well as planted seeds. Throughout the week the imaginary Percy had made his presence felt in the class. He caused chaos one day by putting onions in pupils' trays and then blaming it on the sheep. In the excellent lesson seen this scenario was extended when the secretary delivered a letter from Percy. Pupils were intrigued and questioned her in detail about his appearance. They were very eager to read the letter. From this moment on their attention was assured. By ensuring Percy had made grammatical and spelling errors in his letter the teacher expertly developed the points made in the earlier part of the lesson. This revealed a very good understanding of the new spelling pattern as pupils quickly corrected Percy's mistakes. The brisk pace and imaginative activities that followed this stimulating opening led to excellent learning with all being fully involved and eager to fulfill their tasks. Relationships in the class are excellent and firmly based on trust and an appreciation by the pupils that the teacher makes learning exciting.

The curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is **very good**. Provision for extra curricular activities is **good**. The accommodation is **very good**. The curriculum is supported by a **very good** range of high good quality resources.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The planning of the curriculum has been very much improved since the last inspection.
- The school provides a rich and lively curriculum with particular strengths in English and mathematics.
- The school makes very good arrangements to ensure all pupils are fully included.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- Although there are no after-school clubs, opportunities for enrichment are good.
- The ICT suite is an effective feature in recent improvements to the accommodation and resources.
- The library is attractive but underused.

Commentary

21. Statutory requirements are met in all subjects. Since the previous inspection, the school has improved the curriculum by implementing national guidance to ensure that skills are systematically developed in all subjects. These subject guidelines, allied to carefully planned topics, provide an effective and cohesive curriculum which clearly meets the pupils' needs very well. Links between subjects are especially well developed. Literacy, numeracy and ICT are used with great success to promote learning in other subjects.
22. The curriculum in English and mathematics is very well planned and promotes very good progress. The school has responded to a perceived weakness in writing. Increased emphasis on this area through the establishment of clearly focused, attractive role-play areas and informal story writing activities, in all classes, is raising standards. Focus in numeracy lessons, on choosing and using appropriate strategies and on explaining how problems have been solved is increasing pupils' expertise in mental mathematics.
23. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is firmly rooted in practical first-hand experience so that children make at least good progress in all areas of learning. There are particular strengths in the provision for personal, social and emotional development and in the promotion of communication, language and literacy skills.

24. The school is successful in ensuring that all pupils are fully included and make as much progress as they can. Careful tracking of individuals highlights areas of need which are quickly addressed. Staff know their pupils very well and make sure that work is closely matched to their abilities so that all can succeed. Curricular links with local pre-school provision and with the junior school are well developed to ensure continuity of learning.
25. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Staff are alert to the needs of these pupils and additional small group sessions provide activities that match their needs set out clearly in their individual education plans. This enables them to achieve very well, with many reaching the early stages of the level expected for their age. Resources and facilities have been adapted to ensure full access to all aspects of the curriculum.
26. Whilst there are no regular after-school clubs, the curriculum is enriched by a wide range of interesting experiences within and beyond the school day. Educational visits and visitors clearly enhance achievement. For instance, recent visits to Manchester Airport and to Llandudno support the curriculum in geography very well. Theatre visits, for example, to the Lowry Theatre, provide exciting stimuli for learning. The curriculum in art and design is especially rich when supported by events like whole school *Arts Week* where pupils learn a wide variety of exciting techniques. Visits from artists, such as Miso'shi, add a further dimension to the subject. A residential visit for Year 2 and frequent links with other schools through events, such as the celebrations of the Chinese New Year, broaden pupils' horizons.
27. The school has recently been refurbished and now provides very good facilities for learning in all subjects, both indoors and out. The computer suite is used very well to promote ICT skills and interactive white boards help sustain motivation in lessons. The library is attractive but was not used effectively during the inspection to extend pupils' independent research skills. The good number of teachers and teaching assistants are effectively deployed to make best use of individual talents.

Care, guidance and support

Pupils' care, welfare and health and safety are **good**. Provision of support based on advice and monitoring is **satisfactory**. The involvement of pupils in the school's work is **satisfactory**.

- There is a strong family caring ethos within the school.
- Children benefit well from the positive introduction to the school.
- Very good relationships throughout the school mean that pupils can readily turn to the staff if they need help.
- Pupils are not always clear enough on what they have to do to improve.

Commentary

28. The school provides a good level of care for its pupils on a day-to-day basis. Children settle happily because of the warm welcome and encouragement given in the reception classes. Good systems help children quickly become familiar with the routines of the school day. A taster session and guidance for parents helps them prepare their children for school. This emphasis on helping pupils through supportive relationships continues throughout the school.
29. Staff put the pupils first. They know the pupils well and are sensitive to their needs. Academic progress is monitored effectively. The teachers have a good understanding of pupils' personal needs although there are no formal procedures to record their progress in this aspect of their development. Pupils feel comfortable to express opinions or talk about problems because they know that adults will listen to them and take them seriously. These factors contribute to pupils' very good progress. Pupils with specific special needs are equally well catered for and included in all activities. The school seeks and acts upon advice from outside agencies when necessary so that it can better support all pupils.

30. Child protection has a high profile. Staff are well trained and understand the need to be aware and maintain constant vigilance. Good systems are in place to support attendance and punctuality. Governors have a dedicated health and safety policy, which includes regular risk assessments both internally and externally that are carried out with great thoroughness. Pupils are aware of their own responsibility to be safe in school. For example, in the playground they take extra care in looking out for others as well as themselves.
31. Pupils feel part of the school. They are given opportunities to draw up class rules and so feel a responsibility to abide by them. As yet, there are limited other examples of formally seeking pupils' views. The school is trying to include pupils more in their own learning by setting individual targets. This is being trialled in English before being extended to other subjects.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has **very good** links with parents and **good** links with other schools and the community.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents have very favourable views of the school.
- They receive very good information about their children's progress and about general school matters although the school lacks formal procedures to canvass parents' opinions.
- Parents contribute well to their children's learning at home and at school.
- The school uses the local community well to widen pupils' experience and to support their education.

Commentary

32. Parents are very supportive of the school and are understandably very happy with the education provided for their children. Parents consider the school to be well led, with very good teaching and strongly promoting a work ethic. They see their children liking school and being helped as they mature and become more independent. Parents appreciate the welcoming atmosphere in the school and the guidance that they get to enable them to support their children at home.
33. The school provides very good information to parents on their children's progress and on general matters. Particularly impressive are the pupils' annual reports. These give good detail of attainment and progress in all subjects and inform parents about the next steps their children need to take to improve. Termly topic sheets are issued and have suggestions to enable parents to help their children move forward in their learning. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are kept very well informed about the progress their children make and are invited to all relevant meetings. Other statutory documentation, including prospectus and governors' annual report, is well presented, useful and informative. The school has gone that extra step to put the prospectus on video so that new parents and pupils can get a visual impression of the school.
34. Many parents help their children with their work at home and this has a positive effect on pupils' progress. The school has a band of willing parent helpers. Parents also provide willing help on visits out of school. The school's friends' association raises significant funds by arranging events that are well supported by many parents. Such funds benefit the pupils and go towards learning resources and improving the school environment.
35. The school uses the local area effectively to further the pupils' experiences and learning. Such experiences support the curriculum well and widen the pupils' knowledge and social skills. Visitors in school from local services, including police and fire, tell pupils what they do and help them to learn to recognise and deal with some of the dangers of life. Links with other

schools have been further improved by the Network Learning Community which is enabling schools to meet together and share experiences. As yet this has been most helpful for the headteacher but future initiatives include training for teachers. The link with a school in Ireland has been developed most effectively to extend Warrington's peace initiatives with that country.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall leadership and management are **very good**. The school is governed **effectively**. Leadership from the headteacher and key staff is **very good**. The school is **very well** managed and the school runs smoothly.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Governors are supportive and willing to share their experiences with the school.
- Leadership from the headteacher is very purposeful and she has high aspirations for the school.
- Key staff manage their subjects very effectively with a clear focus on sustaining high standards.
- The school manages the needs of pupils with special educational needs very successfully.
- Monitoring of the school's performance and teaching are effective in identifying areas for improvement.
- Financial management is very good and money is spent prudently with good attention to gaining best value.

Commentary

36. The headteacher has earned the respect of all as she has very successfully brought about many changes in the school which have had a significant impact on the overall quality of education. These include the development of a strong team of teachers and support staff, all working together to provide the very best for their pupils. Parents greatly appreciate the improvement to the school building which now provides a stimulating learning environment. The headteacher is eager to embrace new initiatives which will sustain the momentum in the school. This has been most effective in the Network Learning Community which is enabling staff to gain from the experiences of other local schools.
37. The deputy headteacher provides very effective support for the headteacher. She provides an excellent example of good practice in her teaching as well as in leading mathematics successfully. She rises to the challenge when a weakness is identified in the school. For example, attending training to learn how to ensure boys are achieving well and devising a mathematics test for Year 1. Both initiatives have been effective in raising standards.
38. English, mathematics and ICT are managed very effectively because staff are empowered to fulfill their roles in full. Co-ordinators provide very good role models and are most willing to share their skills and enthusiasm with their colleagues. Through analysis of work and lesson observations they have gleaned a good picture of their subjects. It is clear that changes and new ideas have been thoroughly aired among staff and this leads to a consistency in approaches which enhances pupils' confidence in their teachers. Other subjects are effectively led and good action plans in place.
39. The school is committed to providing an all round education for pupils with special educational needs. This is a strength in the school and is supported by all involved in leading the school. The special educational needs co-ordinator manages the provision very effectively.

40. Management of the school is very good. The school's priorities are firmly based on self-evaluation which is providing an accurate picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Effective analysis of assessment information and monitoring of teaching both play an important part in ensuring success of this evaluation process. Identified priorities are recorded in the school's development plan which sets out clear roles and success criteria and is a useful vehicle to bring about change.
41. The governing body ensures all statutory requirements are met and fulfils its role effectively. A policy on race equality has been effectively put in place. Since the previous inspection governors have extended their links with the school through an effective committee system and links with subject co-ordinators. As a result, they are well informed about the school's strengths and weaknesses. Governors share the school's priorities prior to the completion of the school's development plan but are not fully involved in setting these priorities or in regularly evaluating progress to meet them.
42. Governors are more challenging when financial decisions are made. This ensures financial management is very good and close attention is given to gaining best value and checking that spending has a positive effect on standards. For example, the spending on refurbishment has greatly enhanced the learning environment and so made school more enjoyable for staff and pupils.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	365,589
Total expenditure	352,732
Expenditure per pupil	3,266

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	29,937
Balance carried forward to the next	12,857

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **good** and has improved since the previous inspection. Teaching and learning are good. From an average starting point achievement is good and children are on course to exceed the early learning goals set for them. Pupils with special educational needs are supported very effectively and make very good progress towards their personal targets. Leadership and management are effective in developing a stimulating and integrated curriculum in the two reception classes. Strongest aspects are personal, social and emotional development and communication, language and literacy. The accommodation, indoors and out, is particularly well planned and resourced to create an attractive environment where children learn successfully. High quality, imaginative, role-play areas are skillfully organised and contribute significantly to children's achievement across the curriculum. Assessment systems are thorough and data collected is used purposefully to track individual progress and plan appropriate work.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in personal, social and emotional development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The wide range of carefully organised, whole class activities promotes personal development very well.
- Very good relationships inspire confidence and generate enthusiasm for learning.
- Staff establish rules, routines and responsibilities so that children know what is expected of them and are keen to co-operate.
- Stories and role-play are used very effectively to explore feelings and relationships.
- There are few opportunities for children to organise their own work independently in language and mathematical development.

Commentary

43. Teaching and learning are very good. Children achieve very well and most exceed the early learning goals by the end of the reception class. Frequent, clearly focused, whole class sessions are especially well organised and promote personal skills. For instance, in Circle Time,⁴ rules are clearly established so that children listen attentively to each other. They are thoughtful in their response as each one contributes their own ideas about how they share in school. In role-play and well-managed ring games, or activities with the parachute, children take great enjoyment in applauding the success of others. Whilst they are clearly keen to take part themselves, they learn to accept the need to wait their turn and the benefits of co-operating with others. All staff listen carefully to children and show respect for their ideas. They use praise effectively to promote self-esteem. As a result, children grow in confidence and in enthusiasm for learning. Children behave well in response to clearly established rules and routines. Good opportunities are provided for individuals to take responsibility. Children are keen to put out the apparatus for physical education. Whilst children follow instructions well there are few chances for children to select tasks independently at group time in communication, language and literacy and mathematics sessions. Stories are used imaginatively to explore topics such as friendship, and children reflect what they have heard in their imaginative play.

⁴ During Circle Time pupils discuss a wide range of personal and general issues. It is agreed by all pupils that no interruptions should occur and only one person at a time will speak. Respect for other pupils' views will occur at all times and therefore pupils feel confident that they can talk with ease and free from any form of interference of interruption from other pupils.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision in communication, language and literacy is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Early language skills are taught very well with particular emphasis on writing.
- The teachers' high expectations are used to set challenging work.
- Group targets are clear and shared with children.
- Role-play areas are well organised to promote language development.

Commentary

44. Teaching and learning are very good. Almost all children are in line to reach the early learning goals and a good number will exceed them by the end of the reception class. Writing was revealed to be a relatively weak area in tests of children soon after they started school. In the light of this, staff have adjusted the curriculum to give particular emphasis to this area. As a result, children are achieving very well. The National Literacy Strategy has been carefully adapted to meet the children's needs. Well-focused introductions are used purposefully to make teaching points clear and plenary sessions at the end of lessons reinforce these points successfully. Group work is specifically planned to meet differing needs. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and give children strategies, for instance, *re-reading work*, *chopping up words* and this is very successful in raising standards. Play activities in the excellent role-play areas promote language and literacy skills very well. In the *Vet's Surgery* or in *Cinderella's House* children communicate purposefully with each other. Children enthusiastically practise their emerging writing skills in recording appointments, or composing messages in giant speech bubbles. The teaching of letters and their sounds is very good and most use this information successfully in their independent reading and writing. Most spell simple regular words like *cat* or *dog* accurately and are beginning to write a short sentence with correctly formed letters and spacing. Higher attainers are aware of basic punctuation and enjoy pointing this out as they confidently tackle their first reading books. Teachers use questions perceptively to help children extend their ideas verbally. Stories are told dramatically and children listen enthralled.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good knowledge and understanding used to plan lively practical activities which are clearly focused on skills.
- Good use is made of number action rhymes.
- Resources of good quality and quantity, including information and communication technology, support learning well.
- The rotation of groups sometimes interrupts learning.
- Occasionally pace is slow and teaching is not challenging enough.

Commentary

45. Teaching and learning are good. Children achieve well. Almost all children are in line to reach the early learning goals with a good number exceeding them by the end of the reception class. Teachers provide a stimulating mathematical environment with a range of displays which encourage children to count and sort incidentally throughout the day. A wide

range of practical activities ensure children have interesting first-hand experiences on which to build concepts soundly. This is very helpful for the children with special educational needs, who benefit from this practical approach. Most children count objects reliably to 10 and are solving simple addition and subtraction sums. Higher attainers record what they have done. When counting to 20, most confidently identify numbers before or after a given number. Higher attainers do this mentally and work accurately with numbers to 100. Lively action rhymes effectively promote counting and calculation skills. The interactive white board holds children's attention very successfully and provides stimulating opportunities for sorting and matching, including practising subtraction. Information and communication technology programs on the computer are specially chosen to promote learning and provide daily opportunities for reinforcement as children work successfully in pairs. Group work is generally well organised but learning is sometimes disrupted when groups are rotated in the middle of lessons when individuals have been given too much or too little time to complete tasks. Occasionally activities are not sufficiently challenging. This was seen when too much time was spent in reinforcing knowledge of shapes when children could already name the shapes correctly and refer to corners, straight or curved sides in their descriptions.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Clearly focused input from teachers together with exploration through focused play supports learning well.
- There are particular strengths in the use of information and communication technology.
- Visits and visitors successfully extend children's knowledge and understanding of life.

Commentary

46. Teaching and learning are good. Children achieve well. Almost all children are in line to reach the early learning goals with a good number exceeding them by the end of the reception class. Children learn meaningfully about the needs of living things by observing their goldfish. They listen intently as the teacher uses a large reference book purposefully to find out how to care for a pet. Well-focused play in the *Vet's Surgery* with effective intervention by staff reinforces their understanding well so that they know how basic needs are met. Their knowledge of *pushes* and *pulls* is enhanced by practical activities like pushing toy cars on a track, or engaging in a *tug-of-war*. Due to frequent well-planned opportunities to use the computer, the interactive whiteboard and a programmable toy, children have become particularly competent at using ICT to support their learning. In particular, they are adept at using the computer independently, logging on, and controlling the mouse skilfully. Visits and visitors successfully widen the children's experience. For instance, children joined with another school to celebrate the Chinese New Year and learned to respect the diversity of cultures through a valuable first-hand experience.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The outdoor play area is well organised.
- Good use is made of the school hall for physical education lessons.
- Teachers manage children very successfully and children respond energetically to the teachers' clear instructions.

Commentary

47. Teaching and learning are good. Children achieve well and most children exceed the goals set for them by the end of the reception class. Staff manage children well in the play area and provide daily opportunities for children to share in this large attractive space. Consequently, children play with consideration for others and have good co-ordination in controlling the large wheeled toys. Because of the teachers' good organisation, children are competent in getting out large apparatus to set up activities for a physical education lesson in the hall. They follow clear instructions to crawl confidently along and under benches, balancing, jumping and landing safely with good co-ordination. In class, children use tools like pencils and even sewing needles with growing control to fulfill their own purpose.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Musical development is taught very well.
- Resources of high quality are well organised to provide a wide range of learning opportunities.
- Opportunities are sometimes missed to involve children in decision-making.

Commentary

48. Teaching and learning are good and overall achievement is good. Children are on course to exceed the early learning goals by the end of the reception class. Carefully prepared resources enable children to explore imaginatively a variety of creative media. Similarly, clearly focused art and design tasks lead to children designing their own pictures and working sensibly with others. For instance, children collaborate to produce an attractive *Noah's Ark* wall hanging. They show good imagination and control in their use of fabric crayons to draw animals for the ark. Children respond enthusiastically to the teacher's high expectations in music. In a lively lesson they sing several songs enthusiastically from memory, repeat sound patterns accurately, and respond to symbols. Through clear demonstration by the teacher, they are learning to appreciate dynamics and play percussion louder and softer with growing control. Some opportunities for independent learning are missed when the teacher over directs the composition when children could have been more creatively involved in making their own choices.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 1

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well above average and pupils' achievement is very good.
- Pupils with special educational needs are fully included in all activities and make very good progress.
- A strength in the very good teaching is the variety of activities that make learning enjoyable.
- Management is very good with a clear plan to sustain high standards.
- Resources are very good, including library books, but the library is not used sufficiently to extend pupils' independent research skills.

Commentary

49. Improvement since the previous inspection has been very good. Results in national tests have been consistently well above both the national average and the average for similar schools. Higher attaining pupils do particularly well and in 2003 a half of the pupils exceed the level expected for their age. Compared with similar schools this placed the school in the top five per cent in the country. This very good achievement is evident in the current Year 2, with standards being well above average in all aspects of English.
50. Teaching and learning are very good. Teachers are very well informed about teaching literacy and are enthusiastic to share this information and make learning exciting. A significant strength is the provision of imaginative role-play areas in every class. These stimulate conversations as well as providing imaginative writing opportunities. In lessons, teachers provide opportunity for sharing ideas with a partner so pupils have a good understanding of taking turns in discussions and in asking pertinent questions. Teaching of letters and their sounds is very good and builds successfully on the skills taught in the reception classes. Pupils not only acquire this information quickly but also use it confidently in their early reading and writing. Teachers make very good use of resources and the choice and quality of books used in lessons has developed a love of books as well as confidence in reading fiction and non-fiction books. Role-play areas include imaginative ways for pupils to practise their early writing skills. As a result, pupils in Year 2 become increasingly confident, independent writers in a range of modes for a variety of purposes. Most lessons go at a brisk pace but occasionally too much time is spent in group activities and some tasks are not as stimulating as others and interest wanes a little. Excellent teaching was seen when a whole scenario of *Percy the park keeper* had been stage managed most effectively by the teacher. Information and communication technology is used effectively to promote literacy in lessons in the ICT suite but computers in class were not used as much as expected during the inspection. Marking is up-to-date and often includes comments to aid teachers in their tracking of pupils' progress. However, comments are not always relevant to pupils to inform them how to make their work better.
51. Assessment is used well to track pupils' progress and to set work to match their ability. For one lesson a week pupils are taught in smaller groups matched to their ability. This has raised achievement of all abilities as it allows teachers to focus closely on specific needs. It especially provides challenge for higher attaining pupils and examples of their work are of a high standard. Pupils with special educational needs also benefit from work linked to their individual needs. Staff follow detailed individual education plans and support staff lead practical activities in small groups, which enable them to make very good progress.
52. Leadership and management are very good. Very effective use is made of assessment information to analyse how pupils perform in national assessments and adjust the curriculum when a weakness is identified. This has been most effective in correcting the apparent underachievement of boys. The school now ensures topics and resources are relevant to boys and girls and current standards show boys and girls do equally well. Assessment information is also used to track progress and predict targets for the future. The school has started to include pupils more in their learning by sharing these targets with them. Pupils in Year 2 have a list of targets which is useful for them to see how well they are doing. Because there are so many targets they are less helpful in improving standards on a day-to-day basis as pupils cannot recall them all. Effective management has led to an improvement in resources and the very good range of books has greatly increased the pupils' enthusiasm for reading. The library is an identified priority and is currently underused for independent research.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

53. Teachers are very alert to providing a variety of ways to promote language and literacy in other subjects. For example, in science, pupils are learning about different habitats and research their information and record it in simple tables.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Improvement since the previous inspection is very good.
- Pupils achieve very well and in Year 2, standards are well above average.
- Teaching is strongly focused on the systematic development of skills.
- The monitoring of teaching and learning is very well developed.
- Pupils are not always sure how to improve their work.

Commentary

54. Standards in Year 2 are well above average. They are much higher than the average standard seen in the previous inspection, when pupils in Year 2 made unsatisfactory progress due to insufficient challenge. Standards rose considerably in 2000 and have been maintained at a high level since then. Current standards are close to the school's results in statutory tests in 2003, when the proportion of pupils reaching the expected and higher levels was well above both the national average and the average of similar schools.
55. Pupils achieve very well due to the very good, clearly focused teaching and to the well-planned curriculum, rooted in practical activities, which successfully promotes the step-by-step development of skills. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress towards their personal targets due to carefully directed support in class. There is no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls.
56. Teaching and learning are very good. All teachers communicate their high expectations clearly and set challenging work for different attainment groups in class, so that pupils try their best and all do as well as they can. Careful questioning encourages pupils to think about the tasks set and to explain their methods of solving problems. There is a very strong emphasis on ensuring that pupils learn a range of strategies and then decide on the most appropriate for the task. Very good relationships are carefully fostered and praise is used most effectively. Consequently, pupils are confident in putting forward their ideas. Good quality, interesting resources are prepared well. As a result, pupils learn through practical first-hand experiences which promote their understanding of concepts very well. Learning objectives are very clear and are shared with pupils at the beginning of lessons so that pupils generally know what is expected of them. Teachers use ICT effectively to promote mathematics. In the Year 1 class, targets are used very successfully to focus pupils' efforts. This is less well developed in Year 2 and opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their own learning are missed. Marking of work in books does not show individual pupils how to improve and some pupils, in discussion, are unsure of what they need to do next.
57. The subject is very well led and managed. Teaching and learning are monitored efficiently and good practice shared. The curriculum co-ordinator has been responsible for extending assessment procedures. This enables standards to be monitored carefully as pupils move through the school and the curriculum adjusted to meet identified needs. The National Numeracy Strategy has been carefully adapted and provides a consistent framework to support learning. The one lesson each week where pupils work in small groups of similar attainment boosts standards successfully.

Mathematics across the curriculum

58. The careful planning of topic work which integrates all subjects meaningfully ensures good use of mathematics across the curriculum. For example, pupils use their data handling skills to record information efficiently in pie charts and graphs when making comparisons in science or geography. Accurate measuring skills are promoted effectively in design and technology and time lines in history consolidate mathematical thinking.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average in Year 2.
- Teaching is good and the focus on investigation is very good in some lessons.
- Pupils enjoy science but are not always enabled to suggest ways to find out for themselves.
- Leadership and management are good.

Commentary

59. Although the new co-ordinator has not yet had the opportunity to observe science taught in lessons she has quickly got to grips with the subject. The subject action plan shows a clear and accurate vision for future improvements. This especially improves procedures for assessment so that teachers will have a clearer picture of standards linked to National Curriculum levels. Improvement since the last inspection is good. Standards and teaching have improved because teachers have detailed guidelines to support their planning.
60. The statutory teacher assessments in 2003 were in line with the national average. However, half of the pupils exceeded the level expected for their age and this was well above both the national average and the average for similar schools. Standards are above average this year, with a slightly higher number of pupils reaching the level expected for their age. Teachers provide challenging activities and so higher attaining pupils continue to reach above average levels. Overall achievement of pupils of all abilities is good.
61. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good. In the best lesson seen in the mixed age Year 1 and 2 class the focus was more on allowing pupils to find out for themselves. Mini-beasts were available from a grassland and a pond habitat and pupils selected a creature to name and research. Many were working at higher levels than expected as they started to identify how the creature was adapted to its habitat. The teacher's confidence in using ICT greatly enhanced learning as pupils could use the microscope attached to the computer to observe and photograph their creatures. This information was used very effectively in the conclusion as pupils compared their findings. The excitement in Year 2 was clear when pupils had the opportunity to see a spectacular range of creatures brought in by a visitor. However, the task failed to make the most of these creatures and pupils had to draw a mini-beast from a picture and research in books. This did not fully extend pupils' learning or encourage selection of a creature of their choice. Investigation in Year 1 was carefully planned and built effectively on pupils' previous knowledge of materials. By relating the tasks to an everyday event- *what materials the class teddy bear would find best to build a house, wrap a parcel or make curtains?* - pupils understood the purpose of their investigations. However, some tasks were led too much by staff and questioning did not always encourage pupils to come up with their own ideas to test out their thoughts. Marking of pupils' work is up-to-date but comments are often more relevant to the teacher for assessment purposes than to the pupil.

62. Mathematics, literacy and ICT are promoted very well in science. For example, ICT and mathematical knowledge is used effectively to record in a graph the colour of pupils' eyes and favourite foods. Literacy skills are used for research and for writing up results in a variety of styles.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is good and pupils reach above average standards in Year 2.
- Teachers' planning is clearly focused on the development and use of skills.
- Very effective leadership and management have led to very good overall improvement since the previous inspection.
- Very good use is made of ICT as a tool for learning in other subjects.

Commentary

63. Standards in Year 2 are higher than in most schools and improvement since the previous inspection is good. Pupils achieve well. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress because they are supported effectively on a one-to-one basis or in small groups in class. This overall good achievement is due to good teaching which clearly focuses on the step-by-step development of skills, and is particularly strong in consolidating these skills in most subjects across the curriculum. Teachers make very good use of the interactive white boards and give clear demonstrations and instructions so that pupils are enthusiastic to learn and know how to succeed. Lessons are usually well managed and clear objectives shared with pupils. However, there are occasions when class organisation is not efficient enough to meet the needs of all groups. As a result, a few pupils do not receive enough adult attention, lose concentration and their progress in the lesson slows.
64. Leadership and management are very good. The curriculum co-ordinator is very knowledgeable and provides effective support for colleagues. Standards are monitored efficiently through careful assessment and tracking procedures and ensures the curriculum is developed to meet the school's needs. The monitoring of teaching and learning is well developed and ensures a consistency of approach across the school. Resources have improved tremendously since the previous inspection and teacher expertise is better because of staff training. Frequent access to hands on experience in the well-equipped computer suite is proving valuable in raising standards. However, computers in class are not always used as effectively as they might be.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

65. The use of ICT across the curriculum is a particular strength.
66. Teachers' plans show that ICT is effectively integrated as a tool for learning into all topics so that skills are consistently reinforced. Good use is made of the interactive whiteboards, programmable toy, and digital camera as well as computers. There are particularly good examples of ICT being used in literacy, numeracy and science as well as in music and art.

HUMANITIES

67. In humanities, work was sampled in geography and history. Only one lesson was seen in history, and none in geography. It is, therefore, not possible to form an overall judgement about provision in these subjects. There is every indication from pupils' work that the broadly average standards seen in the previous inspection have been maintained.

68. In **geography**, visits, for instance, to Llandudno to study a seaside location, and visitors to school, enhance learning effectively and generate enthusiasm for the subject. Particularly good use is made of the local area. In the **history** lesson seen, Year 2 pupils made detailed observations of photographs to find out about the past. Role-play, for example, in the *Victorian house*, is supported by interesting artefacts and brings the subject to life. Pupils in Year 1 have a good understanding about life in Victorian times as they ironed with the flat iron *because there was no electricity then*.

Religious education

No lessons were seen and so no judgment is made on overall provision. Teachers' plans, a review of pupils' work and pupil discussions indicate that the expectations of the Agreed Syllabus are met.

69. Standards in Year 2 remain in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus, as they were at the time of the previous inspection. Achievement overall is satisfactory. In discussion, pupils in Year 2 show good knowledge of Christianity for their age. They have a reasonable understanding of the significance of Christmas and Easter to Christians and of symbols, such as the Cross. They retell some parables with reference to their inner meaning. Almost all are developing thoughtful attitudes when considering such issues as feelings, rules or friendships. However, they are much less confident in talking about the comparative religion studied (Judaism) and their recall of Jewish traditions or their links with Christianity is insecure.
70. The co-ordinator has a good overview of the school's work through monitoring teaching and learning in class, but a formal system of assessing progress and attainment is not fully in place. Visitors and visits, for instance, to the church, and visitors like the Rhema Theatre Company, make the subject more relevant to pupils.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

No lessons were seen in art and design, design and technology or music and only one lesson was seen in physical education. It is not therefore, possible to make a firm judgement on provision. Evidence from teachers' planning and work on display indicates that statutory requirements are met in each subject. Planning has improved since the last inspection because the school now follows national guidelines and adapts them to the school's needs so that teachers can focus on developing the necessary skills. Leadership and management of these subjects are effective because staff have time to visit other classes so that they have an informed picture of what is happening in school. These observations are important because assessment in the early stages of development so records to identify progress are not yet fully in place.

71. In **art and design** pupils benefit from visiting artists during themed days and weeks, which greatly enhance their variety of skills. Examples of work show pupils learn effectively from the opportunity to work in groups including large models and collages. An imaginative variety of resources are used showing pupils are creative with straws, feathers and different fabrics. Fabric weaving and weaving with sticks has led to fascinating end results. Photographs of these special occasions show work of a high quality and visitors' comments about the ensuing exhibition are extremely complimentary.
72. In **design and technology**, limited evidence is available. Photographs show Year 2 pupils have made strong looking lighthouses. Examples of work show teachers have a good understanding of the need to design and evaluate models and pupils have been presented with choices of materials. Close links are made with science and pupils have finished off their lighthouses with a working light.

73. No **music** lessons were seen in Years 1 and 2 but displays of work and the good range of instruments suggest the composition skills developed in the Foundation Stage are further developed in Years 1 and 2. Singing in assembly is tuneful and pupils enjoy including actions to *He has the whole world in His hands*. Although the school does not have a choir, pupils practise as a group and perform in the local school music festival.
74. In **physical education**, pupils experience a variety of activities including dance, games and gymnastics. Because of the age of the pupils and small number of teachers no after-school activities are arranged but pupils enjoy taking part in the annual sports days. In the lesson seen in the mixed Year 1 and 2 class pupils were working at a level higher than normally seen for their age. They confidently joined their movements together to make a short sequence and showed great confidence and agility as they performed on the large apparatus. They know that exercise is beneficial for them.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

75. Only one lesson was seen during the inspection and so it would be inappropriate to make an overall judgement on this limited evidence. However, it is clear this aspect of the curriculum receives significant attention. Every class has a personal, social and health education target, such as *always to speak politely*. A specific lesson is allocated to personal, social and health education. Circle Time is carefully planned in the reception classes. In the lesson seen, children learned about the importance of friendship and they show an understanding of how they can raise the self-esteem of other pupils. In Years 1 and 2, the opportunities to work with others in groups and in the role-play areas encourages sharing and pupils are aware of how their actions can affect others. For example, pupils in Year 2 have discussed anger and how they can react positively to their feelings. The school raises considerable funds for charities and pupils understand they have a role to play in helping those who are less fortunate than themselves. The school has a focus on healthy lifestyles including eating healthy food.
76. Teachers link their plans to the themes used in the whole school act of worship but the school does not have a planned scheme of work or a system to assess and record pupils' progress. The school gives very good attention to pupils with special educational needs and focuses on recognising the importance of the individual.
77. Leadership and management are good. Staff meetings regularly discuss this aspect of the curriculum.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	2
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	2
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	2
Pupils' achievement	2
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	2
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	2
The quality of teaching	2
How well pupils learn	2
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	2
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	2
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	2
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	2

Inspectors make judgements on a scale: excellent (grade 1); very good (2); good (3); satisfactory (4); unsatisfactory (5); poor (6); very poor (7).