

INSPECTION REPORT

CALLANDS COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Warrington

LEA area: Warrington

Unique reference number: 111214

Headteacher: Mrs Kate Hamilton

Reporting inspector: Mr Jean-Pierre Kirkland

4483

Dates of inspection: January 14th – 17th 2002

Inspection number: 48662

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: 4 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Callands Road
Callands
Warrington

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs Sue Kirby

Date of previous inspection: June 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
4483	Jean-Pierre Kirkland	Registered inspector	Geography History Music Equality of opportunity Provision for pupils with special educational needs Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Information about the school The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
9928	Alan Dobson	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
18143	Bernice Magson	Team inspector	English Religious education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
17710	Maureen Sillifant	Team inspector	Areas of learning for children in the foundation stage Science Art and design Design and technology	
15015	Michael Wehrmeyer	Team Inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Physical education	How well is the school led and managed?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Callands Primary School has 326 pupils on roll, which is higher than the national average. Boys outnumber girls, especially in the junior classes. Although a majority of the pupils come from white family backgrounds, a small minority of just over 2 per cent have English as their additional language, speaking mainly Urdu, Chinese and Punjabi. Five pupils are at an early stage of language development and receive special support. The school is situated to the north of Warrington town centre and serves a relatively newly built estate. The pupils come from a mixture of owner-occupied and rented houses. Currently, fourteen per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, a figure which is rising year on year. A significant number of pupils enter the school or leave at other than the normal entry or leaving times. This mobility has increased considerably during recent years. Attainment on entry is broadly average, although the school has been admitting a wider range of ability levels recently. The school has experienced a considerable building programme during the past year due to rising numbers.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school with many strengths. Teaching is good and this leads to good achievement by the majority of pupils. Standards are above average in many subjects by the time pupils reach age eleven. Learning in classrooms and through additional out-of-school activities is also good. The school provides a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum which enhances learning effectively. The school is well led and managed with a good input from governors. As a result, the school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Enables pupils to achieve well and reach above average standards in English, mathematics, science, art and design, design and technology, geography, history and music by age eleven;
- Provides good teaching overall, leading to effective learning by pupils;
- Ensures children make a very good start to their education in their reception year;
- Successfully establishes a positive atmosphere for learning, fostering excellent attitudes from pupils and providing them with very good opportunities for personal development and independent learning;
- Has good leadership and management with clear understanding of how to lead the school to further growth and success;
- Has established very good, productive links with parents, the community and the high school.

What could be improved

- Standards in information and communication technology (ICT);
- Use of information gathered from assessments to help pupils make more progress through setting precise and realistic targets;
- Providing staff with clear criteria for identifying and helping pupils with special educational needs;
- Providing subject co-ordinators with more opportunities to monitor teaching and learning in their areas of responsibility so that standards may be raised further;

*The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.
All these areas for improvement are in the current school development plan.*

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made good progress in addressing the issues raised in the last inspection report in 1997. There are now schemes of work for every subject, which enable clear progress to be made throughout the school. The procedures for assessing pupils are good, but this information is not yet being used to full advantage. There has been an increase in the

amount of monitoring of the curriculum, especially in the introduction of literacy and numeracy. Standards are broadly similar to those confirmed during the previous inspection, although there have been improvements in certain areas, such as design and technology, geography and music. There have been significant improvements in the provision for children in the Foundation Stage, and in pupils' attitudes to work and their behaviour. Teaching has improved and there is now better learning in most classrooms. Progress of pupils with special educational needs is now generally better than at the previous inspection. Standards in ICT are not as high as they should be. The school is aware of this and the other issues for improvement and has plans in place to deal with them. As a result, the school is well placed to make further improvements.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	C	A	B	B
mathematics	B	B	C	C
science	D	A	B	B

Key

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

Standards for the oldest pupils are above average levels in most subjects. The national test results in 2001 showed standards to be above average in English and science and broadly average in mathematics. Current Year 6 pupils are reaching similar standards in English and science but there have been improvements in mathematics, where standards are now above average. These achievements show pupils making good progress overall within the school. Children begin the Foundation Stage with broadly average standards. Their learning is very good, especially in literacy and numeracy. Many are ready to start the National Curriculum early, having achieved their goals before the end of the reception year.

Standards for seven year olds in the summer 2001 national tests and teacher assessments were well above average in reading and mathematics, and above average in writing and in science. Currently, pupils in Year 2 are not reaching such high levels, except in science, where the above average standards have been sustained. Standards are broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics.

There are above average standards by age eleven in art and design, design and technology, geography, history and music. Pupils achieve well in all these subjects. Standards meet average levels in physical education and in religious education. In ICT, pupils do not reach the expected level by age eleven and there is underachievement in skills development. This is in part due to problems with installing the new ICT suite and with staff training, but also through a lack of incorporating computers into all curriculum areas.

Achievement by pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language is good, given their starting points. The school has recently identified a small number of gifted and talented pupils, whose achievement is satisfactory.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Excellent. Pupils are happy, hard working and concentrate well on learning.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils show respect for one another and mix well in a harmonious atmosphere. There were no exclusions last year.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils develop very good levels of independent learning. Relationships are very good throughout the school and lead to improved learning in classrooms.
Attendance	Very good and well above the national average with very little unauthorised absence. Punctuality is generally good.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	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.

Teaching is good overall. In the Foundation Stage, teaching is very good. A strong focus on developing the skills for all children in all areas of learning enables them to make a very good start to their education. Teaching up to the age of seven is satisfactory overall, but with some good features. The best lessons enable pupils of different abilities to make equally good progress due to good planning which matches work appropriately to their needs. In the remainder of the school, teaching is good with some very good features. The best lessons inspire pupils and stir them into doing their own research and investigation. Very good lessons are thoroughly planned and prepared and take account of the different levels at which pupils are working. This enables them to make better progress, since the work matches their needs. Less successful teaching, although at least satisfactory, is often the result of not matching the work to meet pupil's needs. However, in these and all other lessons, pupils are very well managed and organised, and learning is generally good.

Throughout the school, literacy is taught well, and the National Strategy has been effectively implemented. Numeracy is very well embedded into teacher's planning, and is successfully extended in other areas of the curriculum, such as design and technology and science. The teaching of ICT skills is not as consistent across the school as it should be; not all teachers are making the best use of computers in their classrooms to raise standards. Once the new ICT suite comes into regular use, the school has plans to rectify this situation. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are supported well in their learning and progress is good. The school has recently identified several gifted and talented pupils in the infant part of the school and teaching is enabling these pupils to make satisfactory progress.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The curriculum meets requirements and is designed throughout the school to ensure that pupils make good progress in learning. This is supplemented by very good extra-curricular activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision is satisfactory overall. However, there are no shared criteria to help staff identify pupils at an early stage. Those pupils on the school's register generally receive good support and make good progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. The few pupils in the school in need of additional help are well supported in language development and take a full and active part in all lessons.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall, with very good provision for moral and social development. This leads to very good levels of independent work, pupils taking responsibility for tidying up or for showing their creativity in writing in history and music, for example. Not all pupils attend a daily act of collective worship.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good care and welfare procedures are in place. Assessment of pupils is done well, but the information gathered is not being used as effectively as it might.
How well the school works in partnership with parents and carers	Very good links exist with parents and carers who make a very positive contribution to pupils' learning. Many help actively in the school and are made welcome.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good overall. Very good leadership by senior management ensures the school is continuing to improve. The role of co-ordinators in helping to raise standards in their own subjects is insufficiently developed.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. Governors provide effective support and have good knowledge and understanding of the work of the school. There are some gaps in the information provided in the school prospectus and annual governors report to parents.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good – the school has a clear view of its strengths and weaknesses and regularly assesses its performance and analyses its data.
The strategic use of resources	Good overall. The school is benefiting from new accommodation which is providing greater space and better facilities. Resources are used well in all subjects except ICT, where there is insufficient use of computers to enhance classroom work. Great care is taken to ensure that spending decisions are fully evaluated and that best value for money is obtained wherever possible.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• children enjoy coming to school and make good progress• behaviour is excellent• teaching is very good and staff are approachable• the school has high expectations of children• the school is very well led and managed• the headteacher makes herself available to parents by standing at the gate at the start and finish of the school day• the new ICT suite is a very good addition• new classrooms have improved the accommodation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• better information on how children are progressing, especially in the form of consultation evenings

The inspectors are very happy to endorse all these positive views of parents. Due to technical problems beyond the school's control, very limited use was being made of the ICT suite during the inspection. Information on pupils' progress was judged to be very good, with high quality reports on individual pupils.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Inspection findings show that standards for the oldest pupils are above average in most subjects. The national test results in 2001 showed standards to be above average in English and science and broadly average in mathematics. For schools with similar numbers of pupils entitled to free school meals, the picture was the same in the summer 2001 national tests. Current Year 6 pupils are reaching similar standards in English and science but there have been improvements in mathematics, where standards are now above average. These achievements show pupils making good progress overall within the school. The school's results have been rising since the previous inspection at a broadly similar rate to the national trend. In 2000, pupils at the school achieved particularly good results. There was a fall back last year in all three subjects. Much of this was due to several pupils with lower prior attainment or special educational needs joining the school mid-way between the tests at age seven and age eleven. Pupils at the school perform in line with the national picture at the higher levels in all three subjects. In some years, there has been some variation in the achievements between boys and girls, with girls generally outperforming boys. This again has been largely due to the relative proportion of boys to girls with regard to special educational need. Over time, based on prior attainment at age seven, pupils in the 2001 group made satisfactory progress, when those who entered or left at other than the normal time are removed from the comparison. The school has recognised that higher attaining pupils in particular could do better and has recently introduced a new policy for its gifted and talented pupils.

2. Standards for seven-year-olds in the summer 2001 national tests and teacher assessments were well above average in reading and mathematics, and above average in writing and in science. Based on a comparison in schools where pupils are in receipt of a similar proportion of free school meals, last year's results for seven-year-olds were very good. Standards in reading and mathematics were very high and standards were above average in writing in the 2001 national tests. Pupils achieved standards well above average in the teacher assessments in science. Overall, current results for seven-year-olds are similar to those found at the time of the last inspection, although there have been variations year on year. In 2000, results were not as good, but there was a significant improvement last year. Staffing changes and the higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs in different years account for these inconsistencies.

3. The school received a School Achievement Award in 2001 for raising standards. Inspection findings show that currently, pupils in Year 2 are not reaching such high levels, except in science, where the above average standards have been sustained. Standards are currently broadly average in reading, writing and mathematics in both Year 2 classes. There have been a number of staffing changes recently, necessitated by teachers leaving or caused by staff on maternity leave. Overall, the principal factors in explaining the lower levels pupils are currently reaching lies in planning for progress in learning and the subsequent rate of learning. Both of these, while satisfactory, are not as good as in the previous year. However, standards remain at least average in the majority of subjects, with above average standards in art and design, design and technology and in music. Standards in ICT are below average.

4. Children begin the Foundation Stage with broadly average standards. The school is now admitting a wider ability range year on year. The school still receives a good proportion of higher attaining pupils, however, and progress of both groups is good. Learning is very

good in all areas of the curriculum, but especially in literacy and numeracy. Provision for improving learning is very good. Teaching is often of a high quality, and is never less than good. Staff make very effective use of resources; very good levels of planning ensure that no time is lost and that the essential early skills, such as speaking, listening, counting and using computers, are reinforced at every opportunity. This results in good progress over time across all areas of learning. Most children are likely to start the National Curriculum early, having achieved their goals before the end of the reception year.

5. The national test results in reading showed a significant proportion of pupils to be above average, giving well above average results overall. In writing, pupils' standards were above average overall, with average numbers achieving the higher levels. In mathematics, results in 2001 were very high for average pupils and well above average at the higher level. Almost all pupils reached the expected level and many more exceeded it. Results in the science teacher assessments for seven-year-olds in 2001 show standards above average overall, and this is confirmed by inspection findings. The teacher assessments for 2001 showed there to be an above average proportion of pupils achieving the national average, with well above average results for pupils reaching higher levels.

6. Achievement in English over time is good. It is better in the junior section of the school than in the infant classes. This is a reflection of the better quality of teaching for most older pupils. Planning is more consistent, so that skills in reading and writing in particular develop well. While reading and writing levels are satisfactory in some infant classes, strategies for improving the skills in both areas are not applied rigorously enough in Year 2. This results in satisfactory rather than good progress. Pupils achieve well throughout the school in speaking and listening. There are good opportunities provided in all classrooms for these skills to develop well. These include the effective use of listening corners for the youngest pupils and the presentation of findings across a wide range of subjects for older pupils.

7. Achievement in mathematics is good. Progress is enhanced through good use of mental strategies at the start of lessons. This enthuses pupils to try harder, and when solving problems or working on numeracy exercises, pupils progress well overall. Progress is better for junior age pupils than in the infants. In this area, staff do not always challenge pupils effectively enough, and some of the work is merely an extension of what they already know, rather than newer, more complex work suitable to their needs. There is equally good achievement by pupils in all areas of mathematics, including data handling and graphs, in the junior section of the school.

8. Achievement in science throughout the school is good. This is largely due to good planning which ensures that prior knowledge and understanding is built on well. Teaching of science is also good, with many opportunities for pupils to undertake investigations and carry out experiments. This capitalises on pupils' enthusiasms and they make good progress in lessons and over time.

9. There are above average standards by age eleven in art and design, design and technology, geography, history and music. Staff make these subjects particularly interesting for pupils, with plenty of independent research work, investigations and problem solving. This strategy is very successful in motivating pupils who enjoy and benefit from this style of approach. Learning is greatly enhanced by small groups in classrooms who are busily engaged on many different tasks. These include producing sculptures in art and design, or designing air raid shelters in design and technology lessons, making an effective link to their history. In music, teachers inspire confidence in pupils to sing better and more clearly through very effective role modelling. Pupils achieve well in all these subjects.

10. Standards meet average levels in physical education and in religious education for eleven-year-olds. Skills in physical education are built up gradually throughout the school. Where teachers use opportunities for pupils to assess and evaluate their own performances, progress is better and standards of attainment are higher. In religious education, there is sometimes too much emphasis placed on the story rather than its religious or moral significance. As a result, progress over time is satisfactory and standards are average.

11. In ICT, pupils do not reach the expected level throughout the school and there is underachievement in skills development overall. Pupils' work shows insufficient use being made of ICT in a number of key subjects, such as mathematics, science, design and technology and geography. Opportunities are missed for pupils to make progress in understanding the value of using the skills of translating data into graphs or the use of spreadsheets for storing information. The school has not been able to complete its staff ICT training programme, and there have been teething problems with the early use of the new ICT suite. However, it is at the level of staff incorporating the wider use of ICT into all lessons where the main issue lies. Pupils do make enough progress, given that many have their own equipment at home, and use it for their research and projects.

12. Achievement by pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language is good, given their starting points. The school has lower than average numbers on its register of special educational need. Procedures for identifying these pupils early on in the infant classes is not good enough. Staff do not have sufficiently clear advice or guidance to ensure early identification. With some relatively less experienced teachers in the infants, this is an unsatisfactory situation. Provision to support these pupils within classes is satisfactory and the resultant progress is satisfactory. Older pupils in need of special help are generally more effectively supported and make better progress. In sessions where pupils are withdrawn from main lessons, the support they receive throughout the school is good. There is a sharp focus on improving literacy and numeracy skills, with successful strategies in operation.

13. The school has a few pupils with English as an additional language. A small proportion is at an early stage of language acquisition. The school has worked hard with local authority support teachers to ensure that these pupils are given adequate provision. This is currently the case. Where an appropriate bi-lingual support teacher is available, progress in learning English and applying it across the curriculum is good. In other cases, teachers provide additional help wherever they can. This is effective as far as it goes and progress is satisfactory.

14. The school has recently identified a small number of gifted and talented pupils whose achievement so far is satisfactory. A new policy is now being shared among the staff, who are starting to make better provision for these and for higher attaining pupils. Particularly successful is the strategy of independent research work, which, with appropriate guidance, allows these pupils to extend their creativity and imagination well and so achieve better.

15. Targets set by the school and published in the governor's annual report were exceeded in the tests for eleven-year-olds in English and mathematics last year. Targets agreed with the local education authority were more realistic challenges and were broadly similar to the actual results. The school has not yet formalised its target setting precisely enough. This is an area tied in to the wider issue of the use made of assessment information, a key issue for further development recognised by the school.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

16. The pupils' have an exemplary attitude to school and learning. Their behaviour and their personal development are very good. This represents an improvement on the good standards seen at the previous inspection.

17. Children in the reception classes settle down well when they first come into the school at age four. They soon become interested and involved in learning due to the very good provision for them. Behaviour is very good and positive relationships are formed quickly. The majority concentrates well and enjoys practical activities such as singing, playing with sand and water and doing physical exercises. Children have a good sense of personal space and begin to respect the need for this in themselves and in others.

18. Pupils have an excellent attitude to learning. They enjoy school very much; this is confirmed by the pupils themselves and the majority of parents. Pupils think highly of their school and are proud to be there. In lessons, they settle down very quickly, are attentive and highly motivated to learn. They follow instructions quickly. Throughout the school, pupils show an extremely high degree of interest and involvement in their lessons. This reflects the skill of the teachers in planning many lessons that are well focused, clearly presented and structured to encourage independent thinking. Pupils invariably sustain their interest in learning for the complete lesson and work very hard when given a task to do. Pupils take a clear pride in what they produce and are very keen to talk about what they have learnt.

19. Behaviour is very good and is recognised by an overwhelming number of parents. Pupils know very well that high standards are expected at all times. They understand the rules well and think they are fair. Classrooms are quiet and conducive to learning. Movement around the school is very orderly. Behaviour in assembly is very good. Dining is an orderly and civilised social occasion with noise levels that allow easy conversation. Table manners are good. Playtimes have a very happy and harmonious atmosphere where pupils play very well together. No signs of oppressive behaviour were observed during the inspection and the pupils confirmed this is not a problem in the school. If an incident of bullying occurs, pupils express confidence in the teachers' ability to sort out the problem speedily. There have been no exclusions in the last year.

20. Relationships in the school are very good. Pupils get on well together and look upon the staff as friends who they can trust. They are very courteous and polite and make visitors feel very welcome. From an early age pupils collaborate very well in lessons, working productively and helping each other when appropriate. They listen attentively and sensibly to each other's point of view. Pupils show a good degree of respect and consideration for others, for example, the few pupils whose mother tongue is not English are well looked after in both the classroom and the playground.

21. Pupils show a high level of initiative and responsibility. In classrooms, pupils are encouraged to think for themselves and make choices within the formal structure of the lesson. This can lead to lively, effective and very entertaining learning. For instance, in a Year 5 science lesson, pupils were asked to devise ways of promoting healthy eating. In less than 30 minutes a mass of detailed suggestions had emerged, ranging from a song about the nutritional values of different foods, sung to the class, to an election type address on virtues of an apple. The encouragement given to pupils to work out their own ideas is successfully developing a strong appetite for independent learning. Out of school activities are popular and well attended. From Year 3, all classes have two elected members on the School Council, with younger pupils being represented by older pupils. Membership is taken very seriously, with well run meetings and a very efficient consultation and reporting back system. This very effectively ensures that staff are aware of issues that may concern pupils and gives pupils a clear feeling of involvement in the running of the school. By the age of eleven, pupils are developing into confident, sensible and interesting individuals.

22. The pupils' eagerness to learn, together with the way in which they conduct themselves in and around the school, is a credit to the school and to their parents.

23. Attendance at the school is very good and reflects the pupils' enthusiasm for school. The rate is well above the national average for primary schools. Unauthorised absence is well below the national average. Punctuality is generally good and registration is prompt and efficient. Lessons start on time.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

24. Teaching is good overall in the school. There is no unsatisfactory teaching and almost two out of every five lessons were judged as at least very good or better. This is a significant improvement since the school was previously inspected.

25. Teaching varies within the school. Most of the very good and excellent teaching takes place in the reception classes in the Foundation Stage and in the upper juniors, largely in Year 6. Elsewhere, teaching is at least satisfactory and often good.

26. The strengths in teaching and learning are:

- effective planning so that basic skills, especially in literacy and numeracy are learnt effectively;
- very good teaching methods that allow pupils the freedom under scrutiny to learn independently;
- very effective management of classes so that no time is lost and pupils are kept busy and interested;
- good use of time and resources to widen pupils' learning experiences;

27. Teaching and learning in the reception classes for Foundation Stage children are consistently very good. Teaching is especially successful in basic skills work in literacy, numeracy and ICT, where most children learn rapidly. Teaching is very carefully planned. Every opportunity is taken to ensure children use these skills throughout the day whenever an opportunity arises. During registration, children are encouraged to reply in sentences. Teachers use the opportunity to reinforce counting by totalling the numbers present. Computers are always switched on and children use these formally but also to experiment with and for exploration as they learn basic keyboard and other skills. Teachers and support staff work very well together to ensure that all areas of learning are fully covered. The achievements by children in this stage of their education are good and many are ready to start the National Curriculum early. Almost all children reach the expected levels before leaving the two reception classes.

28. Teaching and learning overall for infant pupils up to the age of seven are at least satisfactory, with many good features. Teachers build successfully on the skills acquired in the Foundation Stage. Learning mirrors the teaching and is at least satisfactory. In the best lessons in this part of the school, teachers use time effectively. In numeracy in Year 2, for example, mental sessions proceed with great zest. Pupils enjoy the challenges, learn basic facts well and consolidate their prior learning effectively. In Year 1 science, lessons are prepared very well to include use of a wide range of learning resources as pupils learn about the properties of materials. Effective links are made to art and design so that pupils' learning is broadened well. Lessons are less successful, while remaining satisfactory, when the pace is slower or questioning does not extend pupils' knowledge far enough. Occasionally, teachers make assumptions about what pupils have learnt without checking it. In a geography lesson, the teacher assumed the pupils would be familiar with map symbols, and they were not. This led to some confusion and time being lost. In some literacy lessons,

challenges are not high enough all the time. Key words and new vocabulary from the 'Little Red Riding Hood' story were not always securely learnt by the end of the lesson.

29. For pupils aged between seven and eleven, teaching and learning are good, with many examples of very good practice. Where teaching is most successful, staff have defined very clearly what they expect pupils to learn and precisely how they will go about learning it. Aims for the lessons are clear, precise and achievable. In literacy and numeracy, these are more usually aims for the whole week. Pupils are clear about what they are doing and why they are doing it. They enjoy and appreciate the very many varied opportunities that staff give them to work independently, a feature for which they have been very well prepared. In Year 6 design and technology, pupils are given a problem to solve, worksheets to help explore the problem, and materials with which to experiment in order to come to a conclusion. Pace of learning is rapid as pupils form small groups and 'bounce' ideas off each other. They work exceptionally well in these circumstances, giving rise to rapid learning through trial and error and experimentation. Teachers draw lessons to conclusions, outlining success and learning and reinforcing the skills acquired very effectively. In geography, pupils learn rapidly when they are asked thought-provoking questions in Year 5 as they try to relate climate to lifestyle. In Year 6 literacy, challenging tasks and effective group work allow pupils to 'unpick' a story and become very familiar with it. They also learn the skills of self-evaluation in literacy at this level very effectively. There are high expectations of learning and challenge in Year 6 mathematics, as teachers match their questions to the different levels pupils are working at in the classroom. Constant use of technical language by staff enables pupils to make gains in their wider range of vocabulary in literacy, numeracy, science and many other subjects.

30. Less successful teaching occurs for pupils aged seven plus, when the challenges are not always high enough. In Year 3 religious education, the colouring activity did not stretch the higher attaining pupils sufficiently well in the latter part of the lesson. When pupil self-evaluation is not undertaken in Year 4 physical education, pupils have less secure knowledge of what they have achieved during the session. When insufficient time is allowed for the completion of a task, learning is interrupted and less effective, as in Year 5 art and design. However, these relative weaknesses are more than outweighed by the overall better practice, and pupils learn effectively and make good progress overall between the ages of seven and eleven.

31. The skills of ICT are not successfully taught or learnt from the end of reception onwards. Computers are often switched on in classrooms but are not used by pupils often enough. Teachers do not plan the use of ICT into many of their lessons. Pupils' work across the school from the end of reception to Year 6 shows a notable absence of the use of ICT. Many opportunities are missed and this adversely affects learning. The school is still waiting for effective training of all staff to be completed, and there have been teething troubles with the facilities in the new ICT suite. Once these problems have been sorted, there are plans to increase the use of ICT in many subjects as an aid to further learning.

32. Overall, pupils with special educational needs are effectively taught and they learn well. Support and provision is better for older than for younger pupils. Teachers generally are not provided with precise and clear criteria for identifying pupils who might be experiencing problems, although most staff have good understanding and knowledge in this field. Once identified, pupils with special educational needs make at least satisfactory progress. Older pupils thus identified make good progress, often due to the more frequent and better quality support they receive in some junior classes. The Individual Education Plans are of good quality and are used effectively to help pupils learn. Time targets coincide with review dates, although times and dates are not always clear. Other targets are very precise and show exactly what is needed to help each pupil. Teachers are aware of these and support pupils well when appropriate. In some classes, such as Year 4 history, larger scale worksheets enable pupils to access work more easily, and progress is better as a result. Teachers sometimes vary the tasks, as in mathematics throughout the school, so that pupils with learning difficulties are being given appropriately challenging work. The few pupils with English as an additional language are supported well overall by visiting linguistic assistants. Their progress in learning basic skills, especially in English, is enhanced as a result. The school has more recently identified some gifted and talented pupils. Staff are now beginning to plan more demanding work with higher challenges. These pupils are making good progress as a result. This aspect of teaching and learning is in its infancy, but the school has made an effective start.

33. Marking of pupils' work is inconsistent in the school, but satisfactory overall. The least effective marking is a tick and a general comment such as 'fine' or 'well done'. The best marking analyses what pupils have done well and praises them for that; it then continues to inform them of what to improve with guidance on how to do it. Excellent marking occurs in Year 6 history projects where a complete diagnosis of every aspect of pupils' work is undertaken; learning is greatly strengthened by such detail.

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

34. The curriculum offered by the school is good, with a suitable balance and breadth in activities. Particular attention is given to providing a good range of additional learning opportunities to enhance and enrich the curriculum provision. All subjects match the requirements of the National Curriculum, and of the Locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education. The delivery of the curriculum for ICT is affected by difficulties with the hardware and software for this subject. The issues of the last inspection have all been addressed successfully. Policies and schemes of work are now in place for all subject areas, and through a regular curriculum overview by the senior management team a good check is made on curriculum balance. The school has adopted the literacy and numeracy strategies successfully. It also provides a number of very good additional numeracy activities in order to raise standards. For example the 'Alice in Numberland' day gave fun and excitement to the learning of numbers through a variety of games, activities and quizzes. The School Council is considered an extremely important aspect of school life and allocated curriculum time regularly in every class, so that together pupils can discuss issues which are of relevance to them and decide strategies which will benefit the whole school community.

35. The planning of the curriculum is good. The school has considered the National Curriculum and other nationally recommended programmes of work when preparing the long and medium term planning for all year groups. Teachers plan in teams within each year group, and are also assisted in their planning by the subject co-ordinators. Work is effectively matched to the ability levels of pupils and additional help is provided for pupils with special educational needs and for those pupils with English as an additional language, so that equality of access and opportunity in the curriculum are achieved. However, the level of

support and strategies for identifying pupils with special educational needs are better for older pupils. Provision is unsatisfactory for infant children, as staff have no written guidance or criteria for helping them to recognise pupils who may be experiencing specific difficulties. Booster classes and additional support are offered to other pupils as required. Very good cross curricular links are provided in the curriculum so that specialist skills are reinforced in practical activities and new learning is reinforced in other situations. Very good provision is provided in lessons for the development of pupils' personal, social, citizenship and health education. This provision is further reinforced in residential and day visits out of school and in extra curricular activities. The science curriculum is also used to develop pupils' understanding of health and drugs. Sex education is also taught very successfully through science lessons.

36. The provision for extra curricular activities is a strength of the school for junior age pupils. They have the opportunity to enjoy a wide range of sports, musical activities, drama, chess, art and design, and food technology activities. This provision is valued greatly by the pupils and the parents who help in school. Each term, there are large numbers of pupils queuing to enrol in these activities. Lunch-time activities are also popular and well supported. For example, the lunch-time Bible club regularly provides activities for at least 30 pupils.

37. The school has developed very good links with the local high school which benefits the pupils in many curriculum activities. Pupils regularly visit the high school to enrich their learning and participate in cluster group curriculum tasks along with other local feeder primary schools. Good links are also in place with the nearby play-group and nursery schools so that transition arrangements between schools are smooth and pupils remain confident and happy.

38. The school promotes links with other local organisations well. It also encourages pupils to build citizenship links. For example, the nearby retirement home for Senior Citizens is visited regularly, especially at Christmas and harvest time. Collections are made for local charities and other world organisations. The school joins in musical and sporting fixtures with many local schools and also participates in cultural activities in Warrington and Liverpool.

39. The provision for promoting pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall, with very good provision for moral and social development. This provision reflects the aims of the school well and maintains the good practice observed in the previous inspection.

40. The provision for spiritual development is satisfactory. Assemblies, including regular contributions by the clergy, are used to develop thoughts on the meaning of life. Periods of reflection are used effectively in assemblies and class discussions. In music lessons, pupils are encouraged to explore their own feelings when listening to the works of great composers, such as Holst's Planet Suite'. This enables them to develop an awareness of a range of emotions and feelings. However many teachers do not instinctively use opportunities during lessons to develop pupils' spiritual awareness and self-knowledge. The withdrawal of pupils on certain days from the act of collective worship for other activities is unsatisfactory and in breach of statutory regulations.

41. The school is very strong on moral development. Teachers set very good examples and have high expectations of the pupils. All pupils are taught right from wrong and to respect others. Pupils are expected to be honest and well mannered to each other and their teachers. Older pupils are expected to set a good example. They have frequent contact with younger pupils, for instance, during lunch. A system of rewards effectively reinforces the virtues of effort, good deeds and good behaviour. Pupils are expected to respect their school and the environment. For instance, tidying up at the end of a lesson is normal. The school is free

from graffiti and there is very little litter on the playground. Class discussion periods are well used to develop concepts of citizenship. The school council and its consultation process very effectively provide pupils with a sense of responsibility in the running of the school.

42. Provision for social development is very good. The very good relationships within the school and strong sense of community provide a very firm basis for the pupils' social development. Class discussions, assemblies and dining arrangements make a positive contribution to the supportive and inclusive ethos of the school, and effectively reinforce a sense of belonging in the pupils. The wide range of school clubs and their popularity allow pupils to mix with others and establish a different relationship with the staff. The strong emphasis of pupils working together during lessons in pairs or larger groups effectively develops an understanding of the importance of sharing together with learning skills in compromise and respecting each other's views.

43. Provision for cultural development is good. The appreciation of music is an important part of the curriculum. In addition to Western music, pupils also hear music from South Africa, India, Java, Brazil and the Caribbean. The choir gives public performances locally on an annual basis. Parents speak highly of the opportunities the school provides to extend pupils' learning in this manner. Pupils learn about lifestyles in various parts of the world through geography. They study village life in India and Mexico, and appreciate the wide range of different cultures that they observe. In history, pupils develop a very good understanding of their own cultural heritage through looking at the Tudors, Victorians and aspects of life during World War 2. Drama is successfully promoted by regular school productions and projects arranged by teachers from the local secondary school. Visiting groups effectively extend pupils' awareness of the wider world, for instance the Chinese Dragon Dancers.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

44. The good levels of care seen at the previous inspection have been maintained.

45. This is a happy and friendly community where pupils are treated with respect. The headteacher has a high profile in the school and knows all pupils by name. Pupils look upon the staff as friends they can trust. Supervision is good at all times. Parents are justified in considering the school a safe and secure environment where their children are well looked after. Staff are vigilant and caring when supervising the youngest children in the reception classes and these good levels are sustained elsewhere.

46. Procedures for child protection are effective. The responsible person has been fully trained and staff are regularly reminded of the school's procedures. Health and safety matters are treated seriously. There are good procedures in place and these are applied effectively. For instance, there is very good first aid cover, detailed records are kept of all accidents, equipment is regularly checked and the appropriate fire drills are held. Safety is correctly stressed when appropriate in lessons. Very good use is made of the services of the school health adviser in sex education and the promotion of a healthy heart.

47. Procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance are good overall. Registers meet statutory regulations and are generally well kept, although there is some inconsistency in the coding of absences. Even though the attendance figures for the school are very good, parents are regularly reminded of the importance of regular attendance and good punctuality. The school has plans to introduce a more formal procedure for requesting holidays in term time.

48. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are very good and very effective. High expectations are expected and achieved. Rules are simple and well

publicised. Good behaviour is positively recognised and the acquisition of house points is taken seriously by the pupils. Lunchtime procedures are very good, with all significant events being recorded in the playground incident book. All entries are followed up, often by the headteacher, and further action taken if needed. Very good records are kept of all serious incidents of inappropriate behaviour, including bullying, and parents informed when necessary, often by means of a 'think sheet' where the pupil has to reflect on his/her actions and consider how to handle a similar event in future. Racism is not tolerated and it is not an issue in the school.

49. The school has very good procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development. Class teachers and other staff know the pupils well. The climate of friendship and trust produces a sense of openness and confidence. Pupils are encouraged to think for themselves, take responsibility and develop skills in independent learning. The sections in pupils' reports covering personal development are of consistently very high quality containing an honest appraisal and, when appropriate, clear advice on how to improve.

50. At the previous inspection, inadequacies in the way pupils' attainment was recorded resulted in a key issue to improve assessment procedures. This key issue has been partly addressed. Very considerable improvements have been made to the way pupils' attainment is assessed and recorded. Teachers now maintain good ongoing records for all pupils in all subjects, with English and mathematics correctly being the most detailed. Also, the school is collecting a great deal of data and information on every pupil through regular assessment and tests. This information is being used to record where pupils are, rather than being used to set realistic targets of what pupils should achieve, given their starting points. Therefore insufficient use is being made of the information to improve standards by setting challenging group and individual targets and regularly monitoring progress against these targets. This is unsatisfactory. The role of the assessment co-ordinator is insufficiently developed. Assessment and reviewing of pupils with special educational needs are good and follow statutory guidance effectively. The school is developing good procedures for helping pupils whose first language is not English. A number of good support staff come into the school regularly and help those pupils who are at an early stage of language development. Gifted and talented pupils are now identified following the completion of a new policy. Generally, support and help is satisfactory at this early stage.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

51. Parents have a very high opinion of the school. It has a good reputation locally and is currently oversubscribed.

52. Parents particularly like the very good behaviour at the school, the way their children become mature and responsible, the approachability of the staff, the high expectations the school has of their children, the way the school is led and the good quality of the teaching. They also very much appreciate the way the headteacher stands at the school gate every morning and is very accessible. Parents also commented favourably on the new ICT suite and the improved accommodation as a result of the new extension. The inspectors are very happy to endorse all these positive views, although due to technical problems beyond the school's control, very little use was being made of the new ICT suite during the inspection.

53. The quality of information for parents is very good. General information ranges from very clear information on school routines for parents of children about to join the school, to the half-termly letters for each class giving parents an outline of what is about to be taught in the coming weeks. These letters are of consistently good quality and are very useful for parents who want to be involved in their children's learning. The monthly newsletters are of very good quality; easy to read and contain a vast amount of information. The school arranges regular curriculum meetings. These are well attended and allow parents to understand the way in which English and mathematics are now taught in schools. The prospectus and the governors' annual report are interesting and informative. However, both have omissions and do not meet statutory regulations. The prospectus does not include the name of the chair of governors, the number of pupils at the school and the percentage of sessions missed due to authorised absence. The information regarding admissions to the school is incorrect. The governors' annual report does not include the name and address of the clerk to the governors and the required data on attendance. The school's targets for eleven-year-old pupils are insufficiently detailed to be understandable by parents. The school is aware of these omissions and has already taken steps to correct them.

54. The arrangements for parents to be kept informed on their child's progress are very good. The school does not have formal parents' evenings. Instead parents can request at any time an interview with their child's teacher. A significant minority of parents does not like this system. Pupils' reports are very good and meet statutory requirements. They are written in an easy-to-understand style with progress clearly stated. Most reports contain very specific targets for improvement in English and mathematics; written in a way that allows parents to help in their children's learning. The most useful reports include an indication of how the child is achieving compared with national expectations.

55. The degree of parental involvement in the school is very good. A large number of parents regularly help in the classroom. This help is well organised and makes a valuable contribution to the children's learning. The governors who are parents are committed, involved and familiar faces around the school. There is an active Friends' Association that is successful in arranging social events and raising funds for the school. Parents of pupils with special educational needs attend review meetings when appropriate and are kept fully informed of their children's progress throughout the time they are on the register.

56. Overall the school is very successful in meeting its aim of developing a positive partnership with parents. This has a beneficial impact on the pupils' learning.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

57. Leadership and management overall are good. Leadership by the headteacher and deputy head is very good. The headteacher continues to exert very strong leadership in the school. The principal characteristics of the strong leadership include:

- clear vision shared by senior management, staff and governors of how to improve standards and learning in the school;
- very effective team-work built up over the years since the previous inspection;
- very good planning for the future to ensure all monies are spent for the benefit of the pupils and that new educational initiatives are brought on board effectively;
- clear identification of the school's strengths and weaknesses and how to improve further.

These are all improvements since the school was previously inspected. Areas for further improvement in the leadership and management include:

- greater delegation from the headteacher to other key staff in order to share the burden of management and change;
- increasing the level of monitoring and evaluation, especially by subject leaders, in order to help raise standards further.

The deputy headteacher continues to provide wise and considered support within the structure of the senior management team. This team, which is larger than at the previous inspection, links closely with the staff in a collegiate approach which explains the strong sense of teamwork and high morale. For instance, the support staff value the regular briefings they have with the deputy, as this clarifies their role and leads to greater efficiency in the use of their time. The governing body, through training and increased experience, has developed even closer ties with the school since the previous inspection. Governors visit the classrooms regularly to give positive support to the staff. The headteacher and governors have a clear vision of where they want the school to be in ten years' time. The governors play a central part in the decision-making, based on a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Through a consistent three-year cycle of careful planning, they are sure they have the appropriate strategies in place to achieve this. Inspectors confirm these strategies as good. The whole staff share in this very strong commitment to succeed. Their enthusiasm, backed by a comprehensive, planned programme of in-service training, shows a very good capacity to achieve their vision.

58. The staff also share the headteacher's clear day-to-day educational aims, values and principles, which lie at the heart of the school's work. They give rise to the positive atmosphere and effective climate for learning, within which pupils feel secure and gain significantly in confidence. Parents comment very favourably both on the leadership and on the very welcoming nature of the school. Management of children in the reception classes is very good. This enables all children in these two classes to make a very good start to their learning.

59. Management of pupils with special educational needs is good. The part-time teacher responsible has good systems for recording and filing. Accurate records are kept and updated as appropriate. The school is fully compliant with statutory requirements. The support provided to help the few pupils who have English as an additional language is managed effectively by liaison between pupils and class teachers.

60. The demands of monitoring and evaluating the school's work have become more rigorous since the previous inspection. The senior management team has effectively supported the introduction of key educational initiatives, for example, the extensive implementation of the literacy strategy and the particularly strong embedding of numeracy. However, the valuable programme of monitoring teaching at the time of the previous inspection has slowed somewhat. This is partly because too much of the total workload falls on the headteacher's shoulders. The planning for delegation of duties has not achieved an equitable distribution. The other factor is staff changes during this period. This has resulted in new younger staff, who are made very welcome in the school. They are supported by a

generous programme of induction training. As the headteacher says, "They have done wonders for the age and gender profile of the staff, who can now grow old together." Youth inevitably brings inexperience. The subject co-ordinating roles of the newer staff are not sufficiently developed or clear. This hinders the way in which they might support the head in the crucial role of evaluating standards, monitoring provision and generating progress. The mentoring system is not as responsive as it should be. The headteacher is aware of this situation, has discussed it fully with the governors and drawn up a plan to ensure that more delegated powers are passed on to key staff as appropriate. Strategies for managing the performance of teachers are appropriate.

61. School development planning is good, the right priorities are identified and costed appropriately, with a clear focus on raising standards. The planning document is much improved since the previous inspection. The targets are clear and criteria for successful achievement are written for all of them. The school does not just look for cost effectiveness, it strives for the wider principles of 'best value', which underpin its prudent financial planning. Although the budget has a high surplus level, this money is earmarked to support provision for ICT and to maintain staffing for the maximum number of single age classes. The school has clear plans to reduce the budget surplus so that it is within the recommended levels during the next financial year.

62. The day-to-day work of the staff in the school office is efficient and unobtrusive. Technology is not yet used effectively across the school. For instance, its introduction for use in assessment is recent, and is not impacting fully. The computer suite is ready for use and its teething problems are not the fault of the school. The classroom computers are not used as much as they might be. The match of teachers and support staff to the needs of the curriculum is satisfactory. The teachers' range of expertise is good and results in specialisms being well applied, particularly in extra-curricular activities.

63. The parents, governors, staff and most of all, the pupils, are delighted with the very good level of accommodation. The school grounds, the big bright classrooms, the cleanliness, the quality of display, the amenity of the wide corridors, library, computer suite and hall, all combine to create a positive learning environment where the staff and pupils want to work and thrive. Levels of resourcing are good and have improved since the previous inspection overall. This is especially the case in helping pupils with special educational needs and children in the Foundation Stage. Good resources provide staff with quality tools for the job. These resources are used effectively to give pupils valuable hands-on experience and to enhance the richness of the curriculum. There is still some way to go to make the best use of ICT, and the school, aware of this, has planned carefully to accomplish this within an effective time period.

64. Given the average standards when pupils come into the school, the overall good teaching, curriculum and management and leadership, and the above average standards by Year 6, the school provides good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

65. In order to improve standards and progress, and to improve the educational provision, the school should now:

- (1) raise standards in ICT by ensuring that
 - teachers plan more effectively to incorporate ICT appropriately into lessons;
 - all staff are fully trained in its use.(Paragraphs: 3, 11, 31, 34, 97, 99, 104, 110, 115, 119, 124, 129)

- (2) ensure that pupils with special educational needs are more effectively supported and taught through:
 - providing all staff with clear and precise criteria for the early recognition and identification of potential problems;
 - making it more clear when targets on individual education plans are to be achieved.(Paragraphs: 32, 93)

- (3) ensure that all the information gathered on pupils through its assessment procedures is used effectively to improve standards and progress by:
 - setting realistic and precise targets which effectively challenge pupils of all abilities;
 - amending and modifying curriculum planning to take fuller account of pupils' prior learning;
 - using marking more effectively to show pupils how to improve their work.(Paragraphs: 15, 28, 50, 84, 89, 94, 96, 99, 104, 110, 124)

- (4) ensure that all co-ordinators are provided with regular and appropriate opportunities to monitor teaching in their areas of responsibility.
(Paragraphs: 50, 60, 84, 99, 115, 119, 124)

The current school development and improvement plan includes strategies to accomplish all the above.

In addition to the Key Issues listed above, the governors should consider the following minor points for inclusion in its action plan:

- take steps to ensure all pupils receive their full entitlement to a daily act of collective worship;
(Paragraph: 40)
- ensure that the school prospectus contains details of the name of the chair of governors, the number of pupils at the school the percentage of sessions missed due to authorised absence and correct information regarding admissions to the school;
(Paragraph: 53)
- ensure that the governors' annual report includes the name and address of the clerk to the governors, the required data on attendance and additional information about the school's targets for eleven-year-old pupils so that they are understandable by parents.
(Paragraph: 53)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	71
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	40

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	24	26	19	0	0	0
Percentage	3	34	37	27	0	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents 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)	326
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	12

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	36
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	3

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	8

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	19
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	15

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.1

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1

National comparative data	5.2
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National comparative data	0.5
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Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	23	21	44

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	22	21	23
	Girls	20	20	21
	Total	42	41	44
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	95 (93)	93 (96)	100 (98)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	20	23	22
	Girls	20	20	21
	Total	40	43	43
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	91 (96)	98 (96)	98 (98)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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
	2001	15	20	35

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	11	13
	Girls	16	13	20
	Total	27	24	33
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	77 (84)	69 (79)	94 (93)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	13	13
	Girls	16	14	18
	Total	28	27	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	80 (81)	77 (81)	89 (86)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	2
Black – other	0
Indian	5
Pakistani	1
Bangladeshi	8
Chinese	3
White	306
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	13.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24
Average class size	27.3

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	136

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1.4
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

This table gives the number of exclusions of pupils of compulsory school age, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Financial information

Financial year	2000/2001
	£
Total income	572 617
Total expenditure	545 922
Expenditure per pupil	1 778
Balance brought forward from previous year	41 835
Balance carried forward to next year	68 530

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	326
Number of questionnaires returned	116

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	67	27	4	1	1
My child is making good progress in school.	55	36	6	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	51	48	1	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	34	53	9	2	3
The teaching is good.	62	33	1	0	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	38	42	18	2	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	65	33	3	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	59	37	3	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	46	43	9	1	2
The school is well led and managed.	67	29	3	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	58	41	1	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	41	41	9	0	9

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

66. Children begin the National Curriculum at the end of their reception year. All pupils enter the two reception classes at the beginning of the school year, so that they have a full year in the Foundation Stage. Many have attended nursery school or play-group sessions before entering the reception class. Assessments of the children on entry show that they are average overall. The children make good progress during the year and a large number reach at least the expected levels in all areas of the curriculum by the end of the year. A small minority of children are not likely to reach an average level in literacy and mathematics.

67. The accommodation for the reception classes is good. The classrooms are spacious and attractive. There is a direct access to the playground outside the classrooms and the children share the outside play space of the six and seven year olds. This is a good arrangement, as the older pupils are caring and supportive. The children use the general school hall for dining and physical education and also have access to an attractive courtyard with a pond.

68. The provision for the forty-seven pupils in the Foundation Stage is very good. The teachers are experienced and teaching is very good overall. Teaching is consistently very good and leads to rapid learning amongst the children. Teachers are supported effectively by a very capable support staff, including a nursery nurse, a classroom assistant, and a special needs assistant. Several parents and other helpers give generously of their time.

69. The programme the teachers have devised for children about to enter the reception classes is very good. The school holds very well attended informal day and evening meetings with the parents. There are four pre-school visits by the children during which the parents can stay if they so wish. The children take home a booklet to complete and the staff offer a home visit. There is a large take up of this offer. Also during the summer term there is a 'teddy bears' picnic'. Parents come along and join in with the children currently in the reception classes.

70. The curriculum studied is detailed and challenging. The planning shows excellent cross-curricular links which are evident through the teaching in both classrooms

71. Assessment and the use of assessment are also very good. Every child undertakes a series of tests when entering the reception classes so that the teachers know what is required to improve children's attainment in all areas of learning. Each week assessment entries are written against a list of the children's names and these are used for updating individual records and to inform any adjustment to the next week's planning. The assessment sheets are used very well as a constant reference sheet for staff. All long term, medium term and short term planning is detailed and very carefully thought out. Parents are informed of the current topic being studied. Written targets are shared each half term, or more often if the parent requires, so they may track progress and support their children where appropriate. Relationships with parents are excellent and the parents appreciate the amount of information provided by the teachers.

Personal, social and emotional development

72. The happy atmosphere in the classrooms and the use of the large hall which allows pupils to move freely helps develop this side of the curriculum and ensures the children make good progress. The large specially set up 'office' and other areas in the rooms give pupils opportunities to play together, take turns and choose what they want to do. The children are sensitive to the needs of others and will readily approach any member of staff if they need help. The children use equipment sensibly and replace it after use. They are sensible and helpful around the classroom, under the ever-vigilant eyes of the staff. There is a uniformity of expectation, which gives the children good standards and security. Parents bring their children into the relaxed atmosphere of the classroom each morning and often speak with staff. On the morning the children go into the hall for physical education parents help them undress and get ready. On their return most children can re-dress themselves with a few requiring a little help. The children are completely at home in the school. They move around the building with confidence, taking care not to bump into anything or anybody.

73. Teaching is very good. Staff are constantly developing the children's social and moral awareness through homilies such as, 'Take care not splash anyone when it is wet outside', and 'We mustn't upset anybody.' The children respond well to this kind of approach. They do what is required naturally and respond instantly to the teacher's voice. All the staff understand the children well and know exactly how much help each child requires to maintain constant development. Most children are likely to achieve expected levels before they leave the Foundation Stage.

Communication, language and literacy

74. Progress in all areas of language is good and children's language is well developed. Most children speak in sentences and carry on a simple conversation and some are able talk for a long period about their family and what they like to do in school. Children negotiate their activities with each other, constantly chattering and explaining. They will, however, listen intently to a story and when the teacher speaks. Their listening skills are highly developed.

75. Teaching is very good. The literacy lessons are well thought out and very enjoyable for children. The careful deployment of teacher and helpers ensures that all children are supported in their group work. A very good lesson was observed when the teacher used a commercial computer programme for teaching the main part of the lesson. The children tried very hard indeed to read the story from the screen. Many new words were learnt when follow up activities reinforced the whole class session. The children both initiated ideas and took turns happily during this lesson. They enjoyed each other's success.

76. Included in the literacy planning is a structured programme of listening and repeating sounds linked to writing. This is an individual activity with a member of staff sitting with each child to make sure children are using the correct letter formation and linking the letter to the appropriate sound. Through this method of teaching, about fifty per cent of the pupils know all initial sounds and of these twenty-five per cent can spell three letter words phonetically. This is above average at this time in the school year. Almost all the children are likely to reach the expected levels in the Foundation Stage and many will exceed them.

77. Staff also provide sufficient games and apparatus to use when the children have 'choosing' time. These help develop language and literacy skills almost incidentally, as children 'mark' a register, 'write' a letter and look at books, often in pairs in the book corner.

Mathematical development

78. Nearly all children are likely to reach the expected level by the end of the school year, having made good progress during the year. Teaching is very good. A great deal of incidental teaching of mathematics occurs during each day. For example, during registration, staff use counting and ordering the number of children who are present and singing number rhymes such as 'Ten green bottles' and 'Peter's hammer' very effectively. Mathematics is fully integrated and is part of every school day. In addition, the teachers operate a whole class, timetabled mathematics session. In this highly structured lesson the children build understanding by, for example, learning to sort real objects such as clothes to wear when it is wet and when it is dry and use objects and number cards to count. This and other very good teaching enables basic skills to be learnt rapidly and progressively. Numeracy lessons are successful because of the teachers' good control of the children, the interest fostered by the teachers' skill and the use of very attractive resources, often teacher-made. The children count reliably up to ten, and about a half to twenty. Most pupils recognise numbers to ten and place them either against a certain number of objects or in the correct order. One of the strengths of the teaching lies in the variety of approaches used in any one lesson to ensure the pupils' full understanding. Teachers also refer to children's previous learning. About a quarter of the children are still gathering experiences that will secure their fuller understanding of number. Teachers are very good at extending children's learning. In one complicated lesson, children were throwing a dice and then placing red cubes on yellow paper and green cubes onto blue. Halfway through the lesson the teacher introduced addition by counting which challenged the children and caused great excitement. One boy made up his sum, counting to twenty-two. The teachers have identified gifted and talented children and extend them wherever it is possible through appropriately challenging activities.

79. The classroom resources are very good and include sets of 2-dimensional and 3-dimensional shapes, a very large number of board games, a playground hopscotch and collections of a very large variety of materials, including plastic and natural items such as shells and pebbles. The children count everything from the soft toys on the shelf to playhouse cups, saucers and plates. It is an integral part of their daily life. Assessment of numeracy is very good. All staff keep daily sheets on the pupil's learning and adjust the next week's planning where necessary.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

80. This is a particularly strong area of the curriculum, partly because of the resources bought by the teachers and because of the teachers' knowledge of the needs of young children in this topic based curriculum. Teaching and children's progress are very good. The children are studying weather, keeping a daily weather chart and recording the day's weather in many ways. They are making individual weather wheels and weather books. They talk about what they are doing all the time and are rapidly acquiring an advanced vocabulary. The science element of the topic includes porosity and waterproofing.

81. Classes are fully integrated into the school and this means that the children are constantly exposed to the activities of the older pupils and this helps their general knowledge acquisition. There is a good deal of incidental learning in science. When discussing rain one child offered, 'My daddy kills slugs.' Art and craft activities are also linked to this area of the curriculum. A group of children working in a damp sand pit were very carefully making a farm from buildings and farm animals. They knew all their names. The computer is constantly in use both to support formal teaching sessions and as an exploratory tool for the children. Its use is carefully timetabled. Children use it under direction with an adult and it is always available during free choice sessions. The majority of children are on course to reach expected levels before they leave the reception classes.

Physical development

82. By the end of the Foundation Stage most pupils are likely to have reached the expected levels. A few still have immature movements and this becomes evident in a whole class physical education lesson in the large hall. Teaching is very good. Most pupils make good progress over time and learn very effectively in classrooms and outside. The children have good hand control and use pencils and crayons well. Many opportunities are given in craft sessions for them to improve their skills. Large apparatus including wooden bricks is played with effectively. This helps the children's precise movements to develop well. The children have many opportunities to move around the school. They show maturity in this, walking sensibly and respecting each other's space. Progress in physical development, although good, is restricted by the lack of outdoor play facilities.

Creative development

83. Teaching is very good and this inspires children to learn effectively. The children love their craft activities, often because they are usually working in a group with an adult. This is an ideal opportunity for them to extend their language, knowledge of materials and hand control. They choose coloured paper, crayons and glue appropriately and set to work with a will. They use scissors well. Recently the children have made individual books by accurately folding paper. They follow instructions carefully and accurately. This type of activity is linked usually to the current topic and is very good for developing understanding, vocabulary, hand/eye co-ordination and skills. There are also creative activities in the free choice sessions of the day. There is ample evidence around the reception classes displays of a variety of techniques that have been used by the children. There are pictures of collage, one the story of 'The very hungry caterpillar' and another of 'The three pigs.' There is a large splatter paint background to a bonfire, individual small pictures of children with captions and this is a very useful link with early reading. Another good cross-curricular link is a large picture of fruits and vegetables in two sets. The children make good progress. The children sing well and tunefully. They are enthusiastic in singing lessons and full of confidence. During one lesson several children offered to sing alone a song of their own choice and this they did well. This was a lesson involving two classes but there is also an additional lesson when the children play instruments. The majority of children are likely to reach the expected levels before the end of their reception year.

ENGLISH

84. Standards in English overall are above national averages for pupils by the age of eleven and pupils achieve well over time. The national tests in 2001 for pupils aged seven and eleven show that standards have been maintained since the last inspection report. This is confirmed by inspection findings for pupils in Year 6. However, standards for seven years olds are currently average, which is not as high as last year. The school is seeking to address this issue.

The strengths of the subject are:

- The good standards achieved by all pupils in speaking and listening;
- The very good teaching and learning in the upper junior classes;
- The successful development of the literacy strategy;
- The good use of literacy skills across the curriculum;

Areas for development are:

- A structured approach throughout school to the teaching of reading, handwriting, and spelling;
- Increased teaching of basic sounds;
- Increased use of assessment to monitor the progress of pupils during each school year;

- Increased opportunities for the co-ordinator to monitor teaching and learning.

85. Pupils make good progress in speaking and listening throughout the school. Standards in speaking and listening are above expected levels overall for all pupils. In Year 1, pupils are able to describe their ideas simply and ask questions sensibly. By Year 2, they are developing a wider vocabulary and will describe actions and story characters in more detail. For instance, in a poetry lesson which included references to monsters, pupils were able to list strings of words such as 'miniature, huge, timid, rusty' to describe their creatures. Junior age pupils use technical vocabulary skilfully and by the age of eleven many use words and expression effectively to make their discussions and explanations more explicit. They listen to each other carefully and enjoy the opportunity to participate in class quizzes and debates. For example, in a good listening activity in Year 5 the pupils listened and took notes on important facts in a mini drama, which included "Chinese whispers." They extracted and recorded relevant information in the note-taking exercise, so that they could pass the message of the play to other class members. Levels of listening were intense as the pupils watched the comedy performed by the pupils unfold. The School Council is also an important vehicle of communication in school, and all older pupils welcome the opportunity to contribute, expressing their ideas either in class or in meetings with clarity and fervour. Most pupils are happy to answer questions in whole school assemblies and speak clearly and precisely. Pupils with special educational needs and those who learn English as a second language take an active part in all discussions. Their opinions are welcomed and encouraged by teachers, who sensitively use questions to extend pupils' speaking and listening skills.

86. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in the infants and good overall in the juniors. There are examples of some very good teaching and learning in the upper juniors. In the most successful lessons, the teachers plan the development of each part of the literacy hour carefully. They have very good subject knowledge of children's literacy and are able to include a wealth of material in the daily learning opportunities which consistently improve pupils' general knowledge of books. They encourage pupils to read and write maturely using the style of a range of authors, poets, and biographers. Teachers' expectations are high and pupils have a clear understanding of the targets, which they are expected to achieve. Marking is used effectively so that pupils are praised for their achievement and encouraged to self evaluate and identify methods of further improvement. Lessons are fun and pupils are happy and confident contributors as equal partners in the learning activities which are taking place.

87. All teachers teach the literacy strategy satisfactorily and many make good use of the good quality resources which are available. In most lessons the teacher introduces the new learning objectives in a class activity and then provides further opportunities for pupils to practise these tasks through group and independent work. On many occasions the teachers use the plenary part of the lesson effectively to measure pupil progress, and to provide an opportunity for pupils to explain their activities to other members of their class. In most lessons, pupils undertake activities well matched to their ability level, although in some lessons there are insufficient expectations made of the higher attaining pupils and their progress is restricted. Good quality additional support is provided for the junior aged pupils experiencing difficulty with their reading and writing. Most classrooms have a good range of appropriate fiction material available in comfortable, attractive reading areas. Listening centres are included in the class libraries and pupils listen to a wide variety of classic tales.

88. Although teaching of reading and writing is at least satisfactory in all year groups there are discrepancies in the quality of teaching within and across year groups. Reading, handwriting, and spelling programmes of work are in place but not always applied rigorously. There is a general understanding of the expected activities which teachers employ in reading and writing tasks. However, there are some unexplained differences in the teaching methods used. Some teachers provide good focused guidance to ability groups within the part of the

lesson, with an expectation that other pupils will work independently. In these classes the pupils understand clearly the criteria for successful outcomes expected of them by the end of the lesson. They behave well and work effectively without adult assistance. In contrast other teachers manage all the groups, and work alongside individuals if required.

89. There are also discrepancies in the quality and quantity of marking. Some teachers provide comments of praise freely without clearly identifying the qualities of good work. Other teachers use their marking as a teaching tool and regularly discuss with pupils suggested methods of improvement and then judge measures of success later on. All teachers include the development of reading skills in their lessons. However there is a lack of rigour to the teaching of basic skills in Years 1 and 2. Teachers have insufficient knowledge of pupils' present levels of understanding in order to make learning activities progressive. The co-ordinators are aware of these variations in teaching style and methods, but have had insufficient opportunity to offer practical support in lessons.

90. The use of literacy in other areas of the curriculum is good. Staff plan a wide range of activities that involve reading, extracting information and presenting ideas in front of the whole class. Especially good examples of listening occur in music lessons, in investigation in science and history lessons, and of presenting ideas in geography and art and design.

91. The newly developed refurbished library is an attractive resource and teachers encourage pupils to use these facilities. Older pupils understand the classification system and extract books sensibly to extend their learning. Presently the library is not computerised but some pupils have experienced this method of recording non-fiction material and can describe how to use a library. In order to become a librarian, pupils have to complete an application form. They fulfil their roles responsibly and look upon the opportunity as a privilege. Home reading scheme books are of good quality and many parents of younger pupils choose them freely to make a good contribution to their child's reading progress.

92. In all year groups, the teachers are effective in including opportunities to develop skills in reading and writing in other subject areas. For example, pupils record their science work using a non-narrative report. In religious education the younger pupils write their versions of the Christmas story. Other pupils write recipes, which they use in food technology lessons. Skills in letter writing are practised as pupils write letters of thanks following a visit to the Manchester Science Museum, or write to a children's author asking questions about his books prior to a visit to the school. Pupils in Year 6 undertook some good project work in history, which incorporated several writing activities. They planned a history project on the Second World War and presented a project book at the end of the term. They practised and advanced their skills in newspaper reporting, poetry writing, and biographical detail, improving their choice of vocabulary as relevant and increasing their understanding of formal English, of grammar and of correct use of verb tenses. Finally they looked at presentation skills and recognised the effect of bias within some media reporting and then took steps to check the accuracy of their own work.

93. The school has good procedures in place to assess the pupils' levels of achievement and identify strengths and weaknesses in the teaching and learning which is taking place. The head teacher and co-ordinators have successfully predicted standards which the pupils should achieve by the age of eleven and these are shared successfully with teachers and governors. Currently insufficient use is made of assessment in all year groups in order to set targets for pupils, and then measure progress regularly. Pupils identified with special educational needs and those participating in additional literacy support have individual targets appropriate to their ability level and for these pupils assessments are more rigorous and are used to set new challenges. However the special needs of some pupils are not identified early and for these pupils progress is slow. Good assistance is provided for pupils with English as an additional language when their levels of understanding have been correctly identified.

MATHEMATICS

94. The standards for the oldest pupils in the school are above average. This is a significant improvement on the results in last year's national tests, and better than found in the previous inspection. The weaker result in last year's tests interrupted a steadily rising trend in performance, faster than the national trend. The results can be explained by analysis of the year group. A larger than usual number of pupils joined and left the class during the final year, building up a higher proportion of pupils with lower prior attainment.

Strengths in the subject:

- Very good standards, teaching and progress by the end of the juniors.
- All pupils' ability to develop and use their own strategies for problem solving.
- The subject management and the school's action to develop the subject.
- The extended range of assessment procedures and analysis.

Areas for improvement:

- To raise the standards in the infants.
- To use the good assessment information more precisely to drive progress.
- To increase pupil's independence by promoting more self-checking of work.

95. The very effective implementation of the numeracy strategy has had a strong positive impact on the work of all pupils. This results in good achievement by pupils as they near the end of Year 6. The effectively structured planning gives a balanced coverage of all the attainment targets, although the format is not consistent throughout the school. A particular strength is the attention that the teachers give to developing pupils' independent thinking. In every class the teachers give the pupils plenty of time to work out their own ways to do calculations. They encourage all pupils to express their ideas, demonstrate them on the board and use them in their work. Pupils become very involved, and discussions are intense. "Well, I think it would be better if you doubled the 5," is a typical Year 2 remark showing pupils becoming self-reliant. Lively class games, such as 'beat the teacher or 'round the world' encourage pupils to learn number facts and times tables. Year 1 pupils are delighted when they score more than the teacher. Year 5 pupils burst with pride when they can answer a tables question in under a second. Homework plays a big part in this. Teachers build up a strong positive attitude to mathematics in their pupils, where all feel they can succeed. Behaviour in lessons, usually very good, is in some classes perfect. Teaching in the juniors is very good and leads to very good progress.

96. Teaching in the infants is satisfactory and leads to sound progress. On present evidence the Year 2 pupils are likely to achieve average standards by the end of the school year. This is lower than previous years, and than in the previous inspection. The reason lies in the use of assessment. The teachers put much effort into applying the procedures to get good information about the pupils. It enables teachers to identify groups, and set different work for the ability levels. In some cases, however, it does not signal to the teacher how high

to set the level of challenge in the work given. In other words, assessment information does not target individual pupils sufficiently, and does not drive progress. For instance, the use of graded number cards is a good strategy, but in practice needs more careful selection of the numbers. At times it results in the top group doing the smaller numbers, and the lower group doing the larger.

97. The co-ordinator has encouraged teachers to write more precise objectives for the numeracy lessons, and to extend the use of the mental alertness session at the beginning of lessons. He has guided the school in looking closely at the recent disappointing results, developing the strong package of assessment procedures. By analysing pupils' answers in the test papers he has been able to adjust and strengthen parts of the curriculum. This includes the emphasis on working on pupils' understanding and starting a system of pupils' personal targets and of self-evaluation. Pupils do not yet use a sufficiently wide range of self-checking methods, for instance computers and calculators. ICT generally is underused in mathematics. However, teachers give a strong emphasis on aspects of literacy, by promoting technical mathematical language, and putting maths in a context of words. Year 6 pupils, for instance, used a thesaurus well to find out what was meant by co-ordinates and quadrants.

98. In keeping with the school's aim to ensure that all pupils are included in all activities, the school gives more support through classroom assistants, targeted to particular groups of pupils. This has helped to boost pupils with special educational needs to a higher level. It is planned to extend and widen this approach during the spring term. The school has identified a number of higher achieving pupils and is using specialist help to develop a suitable programme for them. Numeracy skills are used effectively in many other lessons. Pupils acquire a sense of chronology in history, use scale in maps in geography, measure precisely in science and design and technology, and count the beat effectively in music. This enables pupils to apply their skills well, and to enhance learning across a wide range of subjects.

SCIENCE

99. Standards of attainment in science are above average across the school and all pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make good progress. These are similar findings to those of the previous inspection.

The strengths in science are:

- Good teaching overall and very good teaching of the oldest pupils.
- Good preparation of lessons with attractive supporting materials and good use of resources.
- The pupils' investigation and questioning skills.
- Outside school visits to enrich the curriculum with strong links to the High School.
- Positive attitudes and behaviour of the pupils.

Areas for improvement are:

- The use of assessment to guide curriculum planning;
- The use of ICT particularly for recording findings.
- Monitoring of the teaching in the subject;

100. Teaching and learning in science are good overall. The lessons are in the main effectively planned and the classrooms well organised. Little time is lost and learning proceeds at a good rate. Occasionally poor planning results in a less successful lesson. Generally preparation is thorough, with all materials for both the teacher and pupils to hand. Standards are above average throughout the school. In all lessons there is an element of practical investigation, which is enjoyed by the pupils and enables them to make better progress in their learning. They tackle the tasks enthusiastically and most pupils apply the principles of a fair test to their experiments. Pupils are very clear about processes and how they work. The younger pupils explore and discuss effectively, learning essential skills well in this way; the older ones work quickly and accurately, experimenting and recording their findings. A detailed investigation into reflective materials was completed and very well written up in ninety minutes. All completed work is marked by the teachers but there is sometimes a lack of comment to show pupils how to improve their work. This does not therefore lead to better learning at a later stage.

101. Pupils enjoy their science lessons, particularly when they are active and experimenting. Their very good behaviour and good social skills enable learning to be very successful. The curriculum is enriched through outside school visits for the younger children and the school nurse who visits to work with the Year 6 pupils. She conducts lessons on sex education and helps in the teachers' revision sessions on the human body. The school has very good links with the High School, especially at the level of curriculum planning. Each summer term the High School science teachers set a piece of work for the children to take with them when they transfer and they also lend resources.

102. The science curriculum is enriched through links with art and design, and with design and technology. Working model vehicles and alarms and fairgrounds powered by electricity are made to support science. Health and safety measures are good. There is insufficient use made of ICT in science throughout the school. Work shows very little use, other than by pupils on their own machines at home. A particular omission is the lack of use of ICT in helping pupils record their work, and produce graphs or trends using appropriate software. Progress, although good, is not as good as it might be as a result.

103. A considerable amount of assessment takes place at the end of each unit of work but the information is not used to as effectively as it might. The co-ordinator has no release time to monitor classroom practice, although this is now planned for future development.

ART AND DESIGN

104. Standards of attainment in art and design are above average throughout the school. This is a similar finding to that of the previous inspection. All children including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language make good progress. This is monitored effectively by the head teacher, a senior teacher and the co-ordinator through viewing work completed and displayed in classrooms.

The strengths in art and design are:

- Good teaching across the school with good planning of lessons and teacher demonstrations.
- Good management of the enthusiastic pupils
- Good links with other subjects.
- Work on display is of a high quality and enhances the school effectively.

Areas for improvement are:

- The use of ICT programmes to gather information on artists and their work;
- The use of assessments to improve the curriculum and learning;
- Visits to museums and art galleries.

105. Teachers plan their lessons well and use good visual aids and resources. In a Year 1 lesson, a teacher collected a number of natural objects to enable the pupils to create a sculpture after the style of Andrew Goldsworthy. Results were good. Teachers are confident when teaching art and design. They take care to ensure the pupils have complete understanding before starting an activity. This leads to enhanced learning as pupils are clear from the start as to what is expected of them. Class management and organisation are good as is the deployment and use made of classroom assistants. These aspects enable pupils of all levels of skill to make good progress.

106. Pupils enjoy art and design. They listen intently to the teachers and try hard in lessons. Little time is lost as they are eager to complete their tasks and are proud of their efforts. Hard sustained work results in a good rate of progress with good achievement overall.

107. There are valuable links with other subject areas, such as illustrating the story of Hercules studied in the literacy hour. Pupils learn about traditional and modern artists, including Van Gogh and Roberta Antoni. They use ideas effectively from these artists to improve their own work.

108. Displays of art and design work are a striking feature in the school. They brighten the entrance hall and the corridors and pupils talk about them and learn from them.

109. There is no appreciable use of ICT to enhance learning. The co-ordinator has attended a relevant course recently and then disseminated ideas gained from it in a whole school workshop, thereby raising staff expertise. The use of sketch books is sporadic and assessments are mainly oral. Insufficient use is made of assessment information to set even higher targets for pupils to achieve.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

110. Standards of attainment are above average throughout the school. This is an improvement on the previous inspection when standards were judged to be satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language take a full part in design and technology lessons and make good progress.

The strengths in design and technology are:

- Uniformly very good teaching with high teacher expectations and excellent control of pupils;
- The promotion of independent investigations;
- The preparation of lessons and resources provided;
- The very good attitudes and behaviour of the pupils;

Areas for improvement are:

- Increased use of ICT to help raise standards;
- The use of assessment to help pupils make better progress.

111. Teachers plan and prepare their lessons well, throughout the school, for example making a working model at home the previous evening to demonstrate the transfer of movement from circular to linear. Classroom organisation is very good and the children work quietly and co-operatively in pairs and small groups. Lessons move at a good pace, and a great deal is achieved in the allocated time. The pupils really enjoy the design and technology

lessons and talk afterwards about what they have made. Year 2 pupils describe exactly how they designed and constructed models of houses and made decorated clay tiles. Teachers provide pupils with plenty of opportunities for independent work and problem solving. Pupils enjoy these challenges and work to arrive at a solution with interest and sustained concentration. Achievement by pupils overall is good.

112. A valuable link with art and design occurred when pupils made a composite picture depicting the work of L. S. Lowry. Research on Lowry on home computers added to their understanding. Design and technology, particularly in the upper junior classes, is often linked to other subject areas, such as when air raid shelters were designed and made to bring realism to World War 2 events.

113. Safety measures are emphasised by the teachers who are ever vigilant. Pupils before being deemed competent have to pass a “knife safety test” in Years 5 and 6. Parent support in Year 2 is valuable in helping the pupil’s understanding of the rudiments of food technology. A parent regularly cooks scones and cakes with groups of pupils and enhances learning as she works with smaller groups.

114. Day to day assessments are good but the assessments are not evaluated or used to guide further planning. The subject co-ordinator sees all planning and gives advice to teachers.

GEOGRAPHY

115. Standards in geography are above average by the time pupils reach the age of eleven. This is an improvement since the previous inspection.

Strengths in geography include:

- Good teaching which captures pupils’ interests and enthusiasms effectively
- Good development of skills over time
- Encouragement of independent research work

Areas for improvement include

- Using ICT more effectively as an aid to learning
- Improving the role of the co-ordinator through monitoring teaching in order to raise standards further

Teaching is good overall, although better teaching occurs for the older pupils. Pupils achieve well overall, given their average starting points. The best teaching focuses clearly on explaining to pupils exactly what they are going to learn and how to go about it. Teachers with good subject knowledge use this very effectively when they question pupils. For example, in a Year 5 lesson on life in a Mexican village, the teacher linked cause and effect successfully through probing questions. Pupils were asked what was different about the housing; this was then extended to include climatic features, so that pupils learnt that there was less need for sloping rooftops where rainfall is slight. Similarly, pupils recognised that building on flat land was easier than on slopes. They then related this to the location of the town in Mexico they were studying. Teachers ensure that pupils think about the similarities and differences between the areas they study and the area in which they live. This occurs in various classes, from studying a Scottish island in Years 1 and 2, a village in India in Years 3 and 4, Mexico in Year 5 and a holiday destination in Year 6. The wide range of physical and human features studied enables pupils to have a very clear and above average understanding of the world in which they live by Year 6. Pupils in Year 6 became quite excited as they planned a holiday for the headteacher, who was said to be looking tired towards the end of the inspection! Pupils cross-examined her about various aspects of her likes and dislikes as they made tentative plans without her knowledge. In this way, pupils learned much about alternative holiday destinations and foreign resorts, which could be reached readily for a weekend break, and about temperature and climate.

116. Skills are progressively built on year by year. Pupils in the infant section of the school have superficial understanding of maps and their functions. Work on the imaginary Isle of Struay gives them a clear appreciation of how pictorial map symbols are translated into the Ordnance Survey symbols that they will use later. They begin to understand direction and distance well, although their estimations are often over- or under-exaggerated. Younger pupils also begin to distinguish appropriately between physical and human features of the landscape through good effective teacher questioning. One pupil remarked that a jetty was 'like a car park for boats', an inspired thought for such a young mind. Standards for seven-year-olds generally correspond to national expectations. Older pupils develop map-reading skills effectively and are able to locate places accurately across the world. They know where Mexico and Southern India are, and the types of climate associated with both. They then learn effectively how lifestyle is affected by climatic conditions, and the range of crops that are grown in response to differing climatic conditions.

117. As the pupils get older, far more emphasis is placed by teachers on developing independent research work. Pupils eagerly delve into atlases, travel brochures, scan the internet and use textbooks to gain information and ideas. They work together co-operatively very well, sharing materials and ideas. Teachers challenge pupils very well through good quality problem-solving exercises, such as the proposed holiday destination for the headteacher. This helps pupils to learn well independently, through sharing ideas in small groups or by using homework tasks effectively for research. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are supported effectively, especially in the junior classes. Such support enables them to understand the more complex vocabulary. Teachers ensure that these pupils are fully included in any questioning or group presentations.

118. Little use is being made of ICT in the teaching of geography. Work scrutinised shows a lack of graphs, bar charts or spreadsheets. The school is aware of this and the temporary and very new co-ordinator who is currently 'holding the fort' has plans to incorporate more ICT in the near future. Due to the recent and temporary nature of subject co-ordination in geography, no monitoring of teaching is currently taking place. Since standards are not as high for infant aged pupils as for older pupils, this is an area for further development.

HISTORY

119. Standards in history are above average by the time pupils reach Year 6. These are similar standards at that age as reported at the time of the previous inspection.

The main strengths in the subject are:

- Good achievement over time through effective teaching
- Very good emphasis placed on research and investigation
- Teachers focusing well on pupils' interests and enthusiasms

The areas for further development include:

- Developing the role of the co-ordinator to include monitoring of teaching in order to raise standards further
- Using ICT more effectively to enhance learning

120. No teaching of history was observed for pupils up to the age of seven during the inspection. Evidence has been gathered from planning, documents, wall displays, pupils' work and talking to pupils in Year 2. Teaching in the juniors is good. This enables pupils to make good progress in the development of their learning. In the infants, pupils begin to gain a sense of things that are old and new. They understand that older apparatus did not use electricity, and they have developed a satisfactory understanding of the passage of time. In the juniors, teaching is lively and interesting. Teachers present information to pupils so that

their appetites are whetted. They are keen and eager to pursue investigations and to do their own research. Teachers have good subject knowledge which they use effectively when questioning pupils. When pupils in Year 5 were struggling to answer the question 'Why did bombing take place at night in the Second World War?', the teacher asked a pupil to close his eyes. The teacher then tip-toed up to him and tapped him on the shoulder, saying 'Did you see me coming?'. 'No', came the reply, with the pupil instantly realising that it would be very hard to spot the incoming bombers at night.

121. Pupils' project work is of a very high standard and some examples show outstanding research work. Pupils love to investigate and undertake their own research. Teachers have been very successful in establishing and developing the skills of using evidence as sources of information. Pupils learn to sift through information and extract the important facts. They then use illustrations very well, some hand-drawn, others cut from magazines. Work is imaginative and pupils write imaginary letters home to loved ones from their action stations abroad, capturing some of the atmosphere well in their writing. Pupils know and understand the differences between first and second-hand evidence, and are careful when using it in their topics. The marking of the Year 6 research work is outstandingly good. There is a complete diagnosis of each pupils' performance with much additional help on how to improve. The very good and excellent work is rewarded effectively through encouragement and due praise. This is a considerable boost to pupils' learning and motivation.

122. By age eleven, pupils have very good in-depth knowledge and understanding of life in Tudor times, and what life might have been like as an evacuee. The enthusiasm of pupils, and their interest in research, are built on effectively by teachers who encourage research and investigation. Teachers allow plenty of time in lessons and at home for pupils to work on their own or in small groups. Learning is greatly enhanced as pupils acquire a good breadth of knowledge and understanding in this way.

123. Many pupils have used their own computers at home to word process their projects and other pieces of work. The school has not yet provided pupils with sufficient opportunities to undertake more of this kind of work, or to access important web-sites, during school time. The co-ordinator has plans to do this when the newly acquired computer suite is fully operational. Standards for the infant pupils are not as high as for the juniors, although it meets expected levels for pupils aged seven. The co-ordinator currently does not have opportunities to monitor teaching so that standards might be improved. This is an area for further development.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

124. Standards are below average throughout the school. Progress has been satisfactory in word processing and the use of the computer to find information. However, in other important areas progress has been insufficient to maintain standards.

Strengths in the subject:

- The potential of the comprehensive new resources;
- The determination of the staff to overcome difficulties;
- Word-processing;

Areas for development:

- To bring standards into line with expected levels throughout the school;
- To extend the use of the computer to support learning in a wider range of subjects;
- To develop the role of the co-ordinators so that they monitor and evaluate work effectively;
- To use assessment information more effectively as an instrument for raising standards.

125. To a large extent, particularly adverse circumstances, outside the school's control, have delayed the governors' plans to put ICT on a more secure footing. The first programme

of staff training was not of suitable quality. It has had to be repeated, and is not yet completed. The superb new computer suite which was due to be launched at the start of the year, is beset by teething troubles. During the week of the inspection it could only be used by teachers with a strong expertise, who were prepared to cope with the frequent technical problems. This disturbed the planned timetable. As a result, only a few observations were made, of small parts of lessons. No overall judgement on teaching is possible.

126. It is possible to judge standards by discussing their activities with pupils, and scrutinising their work. Pupils have a positive and enthusiastic attitude to using computers in school. Year 6 pupils have a good recollection of work they have done in earlier years. They are proud of their designs for an Anderson shelter using an art software package. In Year 4, pupils' animal poems are enhanced by displaying them in neat word-processed form. However, pupils have no experience of control software, or of using computer sensors to collect data, for instance, in science experiments.

127. Although the previous report found standards to be satisfactory, expectations have risen since that time. The current provision in the school, in terms of resourcing, structured planning scheme and assessment of pupil progress, has improved since that inspection. The potential of the computer suite was clearly evident in the partial lessons seen. In a Year 2 session, the pupils' concentration was intense. The pupils were completely absorbed in directing their own learning. By exploring the facilities they outstripped Year 4's processing skills in just one lesson, by adding more and more features. The bright font colours and designs caused considerable awe and wonder. Year 6 pupils discovered the stored thesaurus, which made an immediate impact on the standard of their writing. The pupils relished the treasury of words, and Snow White soon became the story of 'The 7 Diminutive Dwarves and the Paranoid Witch'.

128. Two enthusiastic new co-ordinators give effective support to the staff, and are 'on call' to solve problems. Their roles are not sufficiently developed to be precise in their measurement of standards. The staff do not yet use the information coming in from the assessment records to guide them in evaluating the rate of pupils' progress. The popular computer club creates a bank of pupil expertise which usefully transfers into the classroom.

MUSIC

129. Standards are above average throughout the school. This is a marked improvement since the previous inspection.

Strengths in music provision include:

- Good teaching which focuses on pupils learning a wide range of skills in the subject effectively;
- Sustaining pupils' interest and creativity well;
- Good subject leadership which helps to raise confidence in other teachers and in pupils;
- Providing pupils with a wide range of extra-curricular opportunities to enhance learning.

The area for further development is:

- To use ICT more effectively as a means of improving learning further.

130. Teaching is good. It ranges from satisfactory to very good. The best teaching focuses on pupils learning basic skills effectively. In whole school singing, for example, the teaching begins with a gentle warm up of the vocal chords, followed by simple and then more complex scales, sung unaccompanied and following the teacher's lead. Other staff join in with the pupils. Once the lead teacher decides that pupils are ready, singing begins, accompanied by guitar. Posture is appropriately emphasised. Very good guidance is given on improving performance by varying the dynamic or tone. After a few runs through of pieces such as 'Rock my soul in the bosom of Abraham', the resultant performance was well above what

would normally be expected of pupils with ages ranging from six to eleven. All pupils are able to sing in three parts clearly, accurately and tunefully. They pay very good attention to changes in the rhythm or pitch. In other classes, teachers use technical language consistently, exploring with pupils the meanings and implications of specific words, such as texture, harmony and chord. In all lessons, pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are purposefully included by the teacher and they take a full and active part in singing and answering questions. Their achievements are good overall.

131. Pupils are very keen and interested in music. They enjoy lessons and put in a great deal of sustained effort. Teachers make the lessons fun, and this captures effectively those initial interests and enthusiasms, greatly adding to learning in lessons. For example, in a lesson which explored feelings through listening to 'Venus' from the Planets' Suite by Gustav Holst, pupils were given opportunities to be creative and to express their own emotions. Having previously listened to the contrasting movement 'Mars', one pupil volunteered that men are from Mars and women are from Venus in his attempt to contrast the music and how it made him feel. This showed good understanding of the mood created by the music. Others described the music as intense, lonely or calm. Pupils learn effectively to understand technical terms such as texture in composition, or structure to specific pieces of music. Pupils learn the names and sounds made by a range of instruments. Pupils in Year 2 are able to name a wide range of instruments of the orchestra and explain clearly how the sound is produced from the violin, for example. In other classes, pupils have become very familiar with recognising instruments when music is playing. For example, a pupil in Year 4 correctly identified the saxophone from a piece of jazz. Other pupils in Year 3 were able to identify emotions in music, such as sad, happy, mysterious and frightening when listening to 'Peter and the Wolf' by Prokofiev.

132. Leadership in the subject is good and this has inspired other teachers and given them the confidence to be inventive. Teachers explore with their pupils a wide range of music, from the great classics to traditional jazz. The co-ordinator gives clear structure to guide lesson planning, so that skills are built on progressively over time. The co-ordinator has had some opportunities to work with some of her colleagues and help them improve the quality of their teaching. This has resulted in the better progress and the above average standards throughout the school. Given their starting points, pupils' achievement is good over time.

133. Music is effectively extended beyond the curriculum, enhancing learning through a wide range of regular opportunities for performing in public or learning from experts. Visiting specialists have led composition workshops. Pupils rehearse and perform in public regularly. Parents spoke highly of the performances at the public venue in the town centre which take place annually just before Christmas. The school has presented productions with a musical flavour in the past, such as 'Alice in Wonderland' and 'The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe'. Such opportunities help to raise self-esteem and confidence in pupils and make them eager to learn more. Other pupils learn the flute or clarinet in additional lessons.

134. The school is currently seeking ways of enhancing learning through better and greater use of ICT in the subject. Technology is already playing a part through the use of synthesised music on keyboard. The school recognises that the next steps involve such things as composition and inventiveness using computer programs, and there are plans to introduce this once the computer suite is fully operational.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

135. Standards for Year 6 pupils are average. All pupils in Year 6 achieve at least the 25 metre swimming distance award. Provision for physical education has improved since the

previous inspection with the adoption of the national guidance as a basis for the school's planning. This means that a structured programme is in place for gymnastics and dance as well as for games. Pupils make good progress. Pupils who have special educational needs have good opportunities to gain success, and achieve well.

Strengths in the subject are:

- Above average standards in swimming for juniors and for gymnastics throughout the school;
- The good quality of teaching and learning;
- The very good contribution to standards of the wide range of extra-curricular activities.

The area for improvement is:

- To extend the opportunities for infants to observe and evaluate each other's performance.

136. Standards by the end of Year 2 are also in line with those expected. The quality of teaching is good. Relationships are very good so that pupils listen closely to what the teachers say. The teachers explain points of technique clearly and in detail. The pupils try hard to incorporate the teachers' guidance into their activities. Because of this, the infants' gymnastics routines are above average in care and precision. They make good progress in this. The junior teachers take this a step further, requiring the pupils to observe and evaluate the quality of classmates' performance. By discussion they are able to plan and improve their own movement sequences. Lessons promoting pupils' involvement in their own learning in this way are very good. They develop a very positive response in the pupils. For instance, a large group of Year 5 pupils developed a strong interest in dance. On their own initiative they composed and rehearsed the lyrics of a modern routine which they choreographed for themselves. When they judged it to be of suitable quality, they presented it to the class.

137. By good planning teachers ensure that each lesson builds on the skills learned in the previous one. Teachers use resources well to promote progress during each individual lesson. For example, Year 4 pupils used large balls in the first part of their lesson to get the basic feel of throwing and catching. They refined the skill by using increasingly smaller items. They then applied the skill in games in small areas defined by hoops and canes. The teachers develop the pupils' responsibility well by organising the pupils to put out equipment, which is done sensibly and efficiently. Teachers take care to ensure a safe, calm environment. Year 2 pupils, for instance, know the rules very well, and can explain why exercise is good for health, in great detail. As a result of very good management, pupils' behaviour is always good and often very good.

138. The school believes strongly in including all pupils in available activities. The large number of extra-curricular activities, and coaching by the specialists the school can bring in, are open to all. This promotes the progress of pupils of all levels of skill and ability, and develops the talents of the more sporting pupils. Enthusiastic new co-ordinators offer good support to the staff. Their role is not sufficiently well developed to include the monitoring and evaluation of standards. Insufficiently good use is made of the data from the effective assessment system.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

139. Standards are in line with the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus for pupils at the age of seven and eleven. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection.

The strengths of the subject are:

- The interest and enthusiasm of the pupils to learn about other faiths;
- The commitment of the teaching staff to provide the pupils with a broad and balanced curriculum;
- The recognition and respect of major faiths by pupils within the school community, through shared celebration of their festivals and customs.

The main area for development is:

- To increase the opportunity for pupils to have first-hand experiences for learning about other faiths.

140. Pupils enjoy their work in religious education. Younger pupils listen carefully to stories and ask pertinent questions to improve their own understanding. Older pupils carefully compare and contrast the major world faiths, and enter into detailed and well-argued discussions together as they reflect on differences in customs, attitudes and beliefs. For example, in Year 5 as part of a good study of the customs and beliefs of Christians, Sikhs, Jews, and Muslims, pupils participated in a good debate about the value and reverence shown by worshippers to the Holy books of each faith. They compared the details of preparations for worship and considered how each book is shown special respect and reverence. These pupils showed good understanding and respect of the beliefs and values reflected in each religion. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress.

141. The curriculum in both key stages is broad and balanced. Teachers make good efforts to teach religious education sensitively and this improves the quality of the learning. Overall, teaching is satisfactory. Teachers' subject knowledge is satisfactory and they work hard to ensure that pupils are introduced to a breadth of experience, as suggested by the Locally Agreed Syllabus. Younger pupils in the infants learn about the main events in the Christian calendar and of special festival celebrations. They are introduced to Bible stories from the Old and New Testament and are helped to understand the teachings in parable stories. By the age of seven many pupils are recognising the moral of a story and the difference between story, myth and fact. For example, in Key Stage 1 pupils have produced some good work on the Creation story and have some knowledge of a variety of interpretations of the story which have been explained carefully to them at an appropriate level of understanding. They have read the Old Testament story of Adam and Eve, and then on another day listened with fascination to the North American creation myth of the 'Stone Mother'. These young pupils are already beginning to understand that it is acceptable for storytellers and scientists to have different interpretations. Some higher attaining pupils in the infants explain in simple terms their understanding of the scientific theory of the 'Big Bang'. Towards the end of Year 6, pupils have been introduced to the major world faiths and have a satisfactory understanding of the beliefs and customs associated with Hinduism, Sikhism, Judaism and Islamic faiths. They describe some places of worship, know the names of some religious symbols, and explain the teachings of Mohammed, Guru Nanak and of Jesus.

They know some details of the life of Abraham and Moses. Most pupils understand that people worship in different places, and in different ways. They use the appropriate vocabulary in their discussions. For example, pupils name parts of a temple, synagogue, mosque or church. Through the use of videos they see the inside of these buildings and watch how celebrations of weddings and christenings are conducted. This is satisfactory achievement overall.

142. The school makes good efforts to celebrate the main religious festivals of their pupils within the curriculum, and also celebrations shared within the local community. Experiences are discussed among school friends so that understanding respect, and empathy can develop. One pupil talked to his class about his life as a Muslim and the uncle of another pupil visited school to explain about Hindu festivals. Displays help extend an interest in major world religions, with teachers using appropriate drapes, artefacts, books and photographs to reflect cultural customs. The school has regularly celebrated Diwali and also the Chinese New Year. Festival dancers have visited the school to show different dance forms to the pupils.

143. There are currently few opportunities for pupils to undertake visits to local places of worship to improve first-hand experiences. Although the school has purchased some good books and suitable artefacts, these resources are too few in number to have a positive impact in this expanding school. Similarly, teacher resource material is restricted and insufficient to help pupils' development in understanding further the major faiths. There are few additional training opportunities for teachers to develop their own subject knowledge.