

INSPECTION REPORT

WHITEFIELD JMI SCHOOL

Everton, Liverpool

LEA Area: Liverpool

Unique Reference Number: 104570

Inspection Number: 66840

Head-Teacher: Mrs J Clyronomides

Reporting inspector: Mrs A Dawson
11608

Dates of inspection: 17 – 23 September 19099

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school :	Infant and Junior
Type of control :	County
Age range of pupils :	3 - 11
Gender of pupils :	Mixed
School address :	Boundary Lane Liverpool L6 2HZ
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Appropriate authority :	Governing body
Name of chair of governors :	Mr D Hoare
Date of previous inspection :	11 th – 15 th September 1995

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Mrs J Garland, Lay Inspector		Attitudes, Behaviour and Personal Development Attendance Support, Guidance and Pupils' Welfare Partnership with Parents and the Community
Mr A C Davies	Areas of Learning for Children Under Five Equal Opportunities English as a Second Language Science Information Technology Physical Education	Efficiency of the School
Mr S Russell	English	Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development
Mrs J Clarke	History Special Educational Needs Art Design and Technology	Curriculum and Assessment Staffing, Accommodation and Learning Resources
	Religious Education	

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MAIN FINDINGS

What the school does well

- Pupils' attainment at 11 is well above average in English, mathematics and science, when compared to pupils in similar schools.
- Teaching is good. It is a major strength of the school. The school has implemented the National Literacy Strategy very effectively and there are particular strengths in the teaching of literacy and mental mathematics.
- Pupils make good progress. Standards in history are high and pupils make very good progress in this subject throughout the school.
- The relationships in the school are excellent, and the attitudes, behaviour, and personal development of the pupils are very good
- The provision for special educational needs is very good
- The provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good, and the provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development is good. This is reflected in the excellent ethos of the school.
- The school provides a rich curriculum, which very effectively supports the personal development of pupils.

Where the school has weaknesses

- Despite the good progress pupils make, standards at 11 are below the national average for English, mathematics and science and well below average in information technology.
- The development planning and overall long-term planning for the school lacks rigour in costing the budget to specific criteria, which is measured against criteria for success, in order to raise standards.
- The attendance and punctuality of a minority of pupils.

The weaknesses are outweighed by what the school does well, but they will form the basis of the governors' action plan, which will be sent to all the parents or guardians of the pupils at the school.

How the school has improved since the last inspection

Since the last inspection the school has made good progress in addressing the key issues from the previous report in 1995. The most significant improvement in the school is the quality of the teaching. The school has effectively raised the attainment of pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. Good improvement has been made in the curriculum provision in the nursery. Other areas such as the monitoring of the curriculum, the partnership with parents and the support and guidance the school gives to its pupils have been strengthened. The school is now in a good position to move forward positively.

Standards in subjects

This table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds in 1998 based on the National Curriculum tests:

Performance in	Compared with all schools	Compared with similar schools	Key	
			<i>well above average</i>	<i>A</i>
			<i>above average</i>	<i>B</i>
			<i>average</i>	<i>C</i>
English	D	B	<i>below average</i>	<i>D</i>
Mathematics	C	A	<i>well below average</i>	<i>E</i>
Science	D	A		

The information shows that while the standards in English and science are below average and average in mathematics, the standards are high in comparison to similar schools. Standards in English and mathematics are rising and standards in history are high, but they are still weak in information technology. This is largely due to the quality of teaching. By the age of five children make good progress across the range of their work.

Quality of teaching

Teaching in	Under 5	5 – 7 years	7 – 11 years
English	Good	Good	Good
Mathematics	Good	Good	Good
Science	N/A	Good	Good
Information technology	N/A	Insufficient Evidence	Insufficient Evidence
Religious education	N/A	Good	Good
Other subjects	Good	Good	Good

The quality of the teaching is excellent in 6 per cent of lessons, very good in 27 per cent and good in 43 per cent of lessons. There was no unsatisfactory teaching. The teachers work very well together to plan their work thoroughly and make effective assessments of pupils work. However, there are some staff members who lack confidence and expertise in teaching information technology and music.

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

Other aspects of the school

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	Very good. Staff have high expectations. Pupils are polite and very well behaved. The school is an orderly community where children work and play together very well.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. Overall attendance is below average, but consistent unpunctuality is characteristic of a minority of pupils.
Ethos*	The ethos of the school is excellent, which is evident in pupils' attitudes to work and the strong commitment for improvement in the school.
Leadership and management	The headteacher provides a clear direction for the work of the school and the governing body is fully involved and effectively focus on the need to raise standards.
Curriculum	Very good overall. The school makes very good provision to meet the needs of the pupils, except in information technology where the new computers are not yet installed and standards of attainment are well below average by the age of eleven. The school has very effectively implemented the National Literacy and has made a positive start in implementing the National Numeracy Strategy. Appropriate time is spent on the core subjects of English, mathematics, science and religious education.
Pupils with special educational needs	Very good. There is very good provision for pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. Pupils make good progress in their work.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	The provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good, and there is good provision for their spiritual and cultural development.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Good. The staff are well qualified and sufficiently experienced for the work they do. The resources to support the curriculum are good for most subjects except in information technology, where they are at present insufficient. There is good accommodation to support pupils' learning.
Value for money	In view of the attainment of pupils on entry to the school and the good progress they make the school gives good value for money.

**Ethos is the climate for learning: attitudes to work, relationships and the commitment to high standards.*

The parents' views of the school

What most parents like about the school

- Their children like coming to school.
- Most parents find it easy to approach the school.

What some parents are not happy about

- Some parents would like to have more children are expected to do at home.

- Most parents are happy with the progress their children make.
- Most parents are happy with the standards of behaviour and the values and attitudes that the school promotes.

The inspectors support the very positive views of the parents. The information the school provides is generally good. However, the pupils' reports to parents do not give the parents enough information about their children's strengths and weaknesses and areas for improvement.

KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

- The school should raise standards in English, mathematics, science and information technology by:
 - developing pupils' independent writing; (*see paragraphs:4,66,104,105,106,107*)
 - meeting the needs of the higher attaining pupils in mathematics and science; (*see paragraphs:4,5,29,126,166*)
 - increasing resources and staff training for information technology thereby ensuring that pupils have appropriate access and coverage of the curriculum. (*see paragraphs: 29,71,137,138*)
- Improve the quality of school development planning by:
 - linking budgetary priorities to raising standards with precise and measurable targets for improvement which are regularly evaluated from success criteria; (*see paragraph:68*)
 - setting long-term financial projections for school development to enable the school to gain a clear strategic long-term overview for school improvement. (*see paragraph:75*)

In addition to the key issues above, the following less important weakness should be considered for inclusion in the action plan.

Governors should take steps to encourage parents to make sure their children attend regularly and come to school on time by strengthening their procedures and involving the appropriate authorities. (*see paragraphs: 25,53*)

INTRODUCTION

Characteristics of the school

1 Whitefield Junior and Infant School is situated in the Everton inner-city district of Liverpool. It draws most of its pupils from the local rented properties that surround the school. There is little industry in the area and unemployment is high. The majority of pupils come from disadvantaged backgrounds. The building is a two-storey brick building, which was originally built in 1932. The school was established as a junior and infant school with the amalgamation of a separate junior and infant school in 1990. The accommodation is unsuitable for pupils with physical disabilities in Key Stage 2, as there are staircases leading to the classes for the older children. The school buildings incorporate a nursery, 14 classrooms and a parents' room. The dining hall is a separate building adjacent to the school field. There has been continuing refurbishment of the building and the school benefits from good playing fields and playgrounds.

2 Children are admitted to the nursery on a part-time basis at the age of three. Those showing poor levels of attainment in language, mathematical and personal and social skills are in the majority. They transfer to the reception class at the beginning of the year in which they will become five, having made good progress but still with poor attainment. The nursery has a capacity for 100 pupils on a part-time basis. At present there are the equivalent of 16 full time children in the nursery and 37 pupils in the reception classes who are not yet 5. This is a large school with 313 pupils on roll in the main school, 155 girls and 158 boys. There are 3 per cent of pupils from ethnic minorities, 2 per cent of whom have English as an additional language, which is higher than in most schools. There are 72 per cent of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, which is well above average. There are 38 per cent of pupils on the school register for special educational needs which is above average. Two pupils have a statement of special educational need. Overall the social and economic characteristics of the school are poorer than during the previous inspection.

The school aims to create a community where:

- all pupils are valued no matter what sex, age, status, ability, race or creed;
- all pupils reach their full potential and enjoy their experiences at school;
- all pupils have good moral values and grow up to participate fully in society as responsible citizens.

The school has already identified the following priorities and targets:

- to improve standards and resources in information technology across the curriculum by the development of an information technology suite;
- to improve standards in English;

- to improve standards in mathematics;
- to improve provision for pupils with special educational needs;
- to monitor planning and a new recording system;
- to broaden the range of experiences for children in the nursery.

Key indicators

Attainment at Key Stage 1¹

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for latest reporting year:	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1998	20	23	43

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	6	5	13
	Girls	15	14	15
	Total	21	19	28
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	48(42)	44(35)	65(40)
	National	80(80)	81(80)	84(84)

Teacher Assessments		Reading	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	8	10	9
	Girls	16	15	10
	Total	24	25	19
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	51(31)	58(31)	44(44)
	National	81(80)	85(84)	86(85)

Attainment at Key Stage 2²

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
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¹ Percentage in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

² Percentage in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

for latest reporting year:

1998 21 15 36

National Curriculum Test Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	12	12	17
	Girls	9	11	11
	Total	21	23	28
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	58(50)	63(52)	78(67)
	National	65(63)	59(62)	69(69)

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	12	10	15
	Girls	10	10	11
	Total	22	20	26
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	61(55)	55(50)	72(70)
	National	N/A(63)	N/A(64)	N/A(69)

Attendance

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year:	Authorised	School	%	
	Absence	National comparative data		9.1
	Unauthorised	School		5.7
	Absence	National comparative data		0.6
				0.5

Exclusions

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) during the previous year:		Number	
	Fixed period		1
	Permanent		0

Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is:		%	
	Very good or better		32
	Satisfactory or better		100
	Less than satisfactory		0

PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL

Attainment and progress

3 The results of National Curriculum tests and assessments in 1998 by the age of 11, show that pupils' attainment in English was below the national averages for level 4 and the higher level 5. The pupils' attainment was average in comparison with pupils' attainments in similar schools. In mathematics, pupils' attainment is close to the national average for level 4 but below the national average for the higher level 5. Pupils' attainment in mathematics was well above average when compared with pupils' attainments in similar schools. In science, pupils' attainment was above the national average for level 4 and well below the national average at the higher level 5. In comparison to similar schools, pupils' science results were well above average.

4 The school has analysed the reasons for the below average standards in English, mathematics and science. It has recognised that pupils' writing skills are weak and has put effective strategies into place to strengthen the curriculum. These are having a positive impact on standards. In mathematics, pupils' ability to solve problems and apply their knowledge to a range of contexts is a weakness. The implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy, with an emphasis on mental calculations and using a range of strategies to solve problems is raising standards in these skills. However this is in its very early stages of development and the full impact will not be evident in the immediate future. In information technology, the school is set to improve its resources, which are at present insufficient, and provide training for staff to raise standards.

5 Most of the present Year 6 pupils achieve standards below the national average in English, science and mathematics. A very small minority of pupils achieve standards above average. Attainment over the last three years has shown improvement at a faster rate than the national picture. In each year group there is a high percentage of special needs pupils than the national average. This directly affects the attainments of the majority taking national tests. While the school makes very good provision for pupils with special educational needs, there are fewer opportunities for the more able pupils to develop their skills in English, mathematics and science in order to achieve the higher levels of attainment in the National Curriculum tests.

6 All pupils do better where the school has prioritised curriculum initiatives and where there is detailed guidance for staff, or specialist help. For example, the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have detailed guidance for teachers in each year group. This is having a positive impact on pupils' understanding of reading and their attainment in mental mathematics at both key stages. In music and drama, specialist help from the Local Education Authority (L.E.A.) is also having a positive effect on pupils' attainment by the age of 11.

7 By the age of 11, pupils listen well and enjoy reading and writing but standards are below average. They have limited vocabulary and expression in their work. Punctuation is generally accurate and handwriting is joined and well formed. The Literacy Strategy and the writing recovery programme are having a positive impact on standards. However, pupils make little effective use of information technology to draft, revise and research their work. Pupils' skills in drama have improved since the last inspection and are now a strong element of the curriculum.

8 The National Numeracy Strategy is beginning to raise standards in mathematics. Pupils are

developing effective mental strategies to double numbers and to add and subtract two and three digits quickly and effectively. They have a sound understanding of decimals, fractions and percentages.

9 In science, pupils consistently develop their skills throughout both key stages and by the age of 11, pupils are able to apply their previously acquired knowledge and understanding in their experiments and begin to make simple hypotheses.

10 In the previous report, the attainment of the pupils in the core subjects was broadly similar. Trends over the last three years indicate that pupils' attainment is below average overall but there is a trend for improvement and attainment is improving faster than the national trend. The school has improved its curricular provision and teaching from the last inspection and is clearly moving forward.

11 The results of National Curriculum tests and assessments for seven year olds in 1998 show that pupils' attainment was well below the expected national average in reading for level 2, and very low in writing. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher level 3, in reading and writing was well below the national average. In mathematics, the percentage of pupils reaching level 2 and the higher level 3 well below the national averages. Results of teacher assessments in science show that pupils' attainment was well below the national average for level 2, and below the national average for the higher level 3. In comparison with similar schools, the attainment of pupils in reading and writing is below average and well below average for mathematics. There are no significant differences in the attainment of boys and girls.

12 An analysis of results shows that pupils have limited language skills and particularly have difficulty with writing and their comprehension of reading. The school is resolving this weakness during the literacy hour, where there is a focus on improving pupils' knowledge and understanding of reading, and a writing recovery programme to improve their writing skills. In mathematics and science pupils' ability to solve problems and apply their knowledge to a range of contexts is limited and hampered by their reading and writing skills, which are below average.

13 At the end of Key Stage 1, the majority of pupils achieve standards below the national averages in English, mathematics and science. A very small minority achieve standards in line with the national averages. However, pupils make good progress and the attainment is generally improved this year.

14 The average attainments of pupils fluctuate from year to year according to the number of pupils in the class and their varying attainments. Results from the past three years indicate that by the age of 7, pupils' attainments have not significantly changed, but are improving this year.

15 Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language are supported very well through effective teaching and make good progress towards their set targets. They contribute well to class discussion and learn from listening to others.

16 In information technology, pupils' attainment is below the national expectation at the age of 7, and well below at the age of 11. Pupils have insufficient access to computers and there are insufficient resources to enable them to develop the appropriate skills. The school is currently putting more resources into place and has made arrangements for staff training. By the time they are 7, pupils understand the function of keys and use them with help but are hampered by poor keyboard skills. By the time they are 11, pupils use the Internet and CD-ROM programs to research information, but have limited skills beyond researching and retrieving information they need to support their topic work.

17 In religious education, pupils' attainment at the end of both key stages meets the expectation of the

locally agreed syllabus. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils know a range of stories from the Bible and are aware of the major Christian beliefs. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are aware of the importance of respecting beliefs that are different from their own.

18 In other subjects, pupils achieve standards in both key stages for art, design and technology, geography, music and physical education that are normally nationally expected of pupils of a similar age. In history pupils attain standards that are high when compared to other pupils of a similar age. They are motivated by the enthusiasm of the co-ordinators and the well researched visits to the locality linked to history topics, which bring the subject alive for the pupils.

19 From a level where their attainment on entry to school is very poor, pupils under five make good progress in all areas of learning. During both key stages, pupils continue to make good progress overall in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. They are challenged effectively in their learning in these subjects and each pupil has set targets for improvement. Pupils make satisfactory progress in information technology in Key Stage 1, but unsatisfactory progress in Key Stage 2. In religious education, pupils make good progress at both key stages. There are no significant fluctuations in attainment and progress between year groups or classes as the quality of teaching is consistently good across the school. The best progress across the school is being made in literacy and numeracy, as teachers have effective and detailed guidance coupled with good resources. This is particularly noticeable in the pupils' improvement in reading and the pupils' mental arithmetic strategies at both key stages, which are taught from the National Numeracy Strategy. The school has set appropriate targets for the future in these subjects, to raise attainment further. In other subjects, good progress is made in drama and music, where there is effective staff guidance and help for pupils from visiting specialist teachers, which has a positive impact on their progress. The school develops links with other subjects effectively, especially in the teaching of topics. Progress in history is very good. In design and technology, geography, music and physical education it is good throughout both key stages. There is no significant difference in the progress of boys and girls. Since the last report pupils' progress in history at 7 and for pupils with special educational needs has improved. However, pupils, still make insufficient progress in information technology.

Attitudes, behaviour and personal development

20 When children enter the nursery, most have very limited social and language skills. The majority find it difficult to concentrate, listen to others and settle down to an activity at a table. Teachers spend a lot of time with the children to ensure they adjust to the routines of the nursery and the expectations of the teachers. By the time they reach the age of five, they are used to sharing with others, responding to the teachers' instructions and concentrating on activities for short periods of time. In the reception class, pupils work with enthusiasm and are eager to please. They share equipment and resources sensibly and help to tidy up at the end of sessions.

21 Pupils' attitudes to work are excellent in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science and history and very good in other subjects. They come to school prepared to behave well and to do their best. They listen very well to instructions and stories and co-operate with their classmates and their teachers. Pupils take a pride in the presentation of their work and try hard to improve. They particularly enjoy their library sessions in the new library and are encouraged to use the local library where they find information for their history and geography topics.

22 Behaviour is very good and parents at the meeting confirmed this with inspectors and in the questionnaire responses. Pupils are polite and helpful to visitors. They hold doors open for one another and move around the building in an orderly manner. They respond well to the staff at lunchtime and play happily together. They can be relied on to sit quietly in assembly, or for example, to behave sensibly in the public sports centre while waiting for a swimming lesson. They are good ambassadors

for the school when they are off site on trips and visits. Older pupils have a strong sense that they need to set an example for younger children, and help at playtimes. Instances of inappropriate behaviour are uncommon and the school works closely with parents to resolve concerns. There were no instances of poor behaviour observed during the inspection. Pupils are keen to win team points and achievements are celebrated in a weekly assembly.

23 The quality of relationships in the school is very good. Staff and pupils show mutual respect, which positively contributes to the excellent ethos of the school. Staff and pupils are very aware of individual needs and are quick to support one another in times of trouble. Pupils help others when they fall in the playground and they know that the staff are very supportive of them and are ready to listen and help them with their personal concerns. Pupils respect the values and beliefs of others and in drama, history, geography and religious education; they discuss similarities and differences of other cultural traditions and beliefs sensitively. For example, pupils in religious education discuss how well known people such as Mother Teresa and Bob Geldof use their skills and talents to help other. They relate their knowledge and understanding effectively to practical events and situations within their own experience.

24 Personal development is also very good. Pupils in the nursery quickly learn to become independent. The youngest pupils register their own names in the mornings. With the help of the staff they begin to take some responsibility for their work as they help to plan an activity and review what they have achieved at the end. As they grow older, pupils take on simple tasks around the school and help the younger pupils at lunchtime and playtime. The pupils in Y6 carry out small duties effectively such as being register monitor, selling fruit at break and setting out the hall for assemblies. Pupils look after their property and respect their class equipment. The provisions for circle time and drama sessions, which effectively explore sensitive moral and social issues, have a positive impact on pupils' personal development. Extra-curricular activities, residential visit and visits to local places of interest contribute very positively to pupils' personal and social development. Pupils regularly take part in sporting activities and musical and drama productions and support charity fundraising. There has been good improvement in pupils' attitudes to work and behaviour since the last inspection. One pupil was excluded for a fixed period within the last year. The number of exclusions has fallen since the last report.

Attendance

25 Attendance, at just over 90 per cent for the last reporting year, is unsatisfactory and well below the national average. Several pupils come late to school in the mornings. Attendance is at about the same level as the previous inspection, but has dipped during the intervening period. The present figure represents an improvement over the previous year, and reflects some successful initiatives by the school, such as badges and certificates to encourage good attendance.

26 The figures for the first few weeks of the new academic year indicate that attendance has improved from the last published figure.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED

Teaching

27 The quality of teaching is good overall and a major strength of the school. Teaching is excellent in 6 per cent of lessons. A further 27 per cent is very good and 43 per cent is good. In the remaining 24 per cent of lessons, teaching is satisfactory and there was no unsatisfactory teaching. This is a good improvement from the last report where the majority of lessons were judged to be good or better, but where there were shortcomings in setting appropriate tasks for the pupils and effectively managing the behaviour of a minority. These issues have successfully been resolved. The behaviour of pupils is very good and the effective planning by teachers, which is closely matched to the pupils' attainment to promote good progress, is a significant strength.

28 In the nursery, the quality of teaching is consistently good. The staff work closely together to plan a wide range of challenging but enjoyable tasks and maintain a positive learning environment. Most children enter with poor language and social skills, so a high priority is placed on the development of language and literacy and personal and social development. Staff use questioning effectively to establish children's understanding and constantly and skilfully widen their vocabulary and broaden their understanding. Considerable time is taken to establish good relationships and the routine of the nursery. The high level of staffing enables staff to work effectively with individual children in small groups, and address the specific needs of the children. Daily assessment is used very effectively by the staff to plan the activities to match the needs of the children. There is effective liaison established with the parents to encourage them to extend learning at home but the parents who take advantage of the opportunities offered are in the minority, which limits children's progress. The teaching of children in the reception class is equally as good and provides an effective introduction to the National Curriculum. The effective teaching in the nursery and reception classes results in children making good progress in all areas of development and prepares them well for the National Curriculum.

29 The quality of teaching at both key stages is good. In Key Stage 1, the positive start made by the nursery is continued. Teachers throughout the school have a very good knowledge and understanding of their work overall. Where staff lack some expertise in music, for example, they make effective use of the scheme of work adopted by the school and the advice offered by colleagues with appropriate skills. Music and drama teaching is enhanced through links with the L.E.A., which provides specialist help in these subjects. The teachers attend all these teaching sessions and increase their own expertise as a result of observing the techniques and skills of other professionals. The pupils in Year 6 use their skills to good effect as they participate in a joint drama and music festival with other local schools. This has a positive impact on standards and the personal development of pupils as they prepare to transfer to secondary school. Teachers have been very well trained in literacy and numeracy. Most of the very good teaching was seen in the literacy hour in English, where there is detailed guidance and staff have benefited from recent training. In both literacy and numeracy, lessons are particularly well structured to ensure step-by-step development of key learning objectives, and this is helping to raise standards, especially in reading and in mental mathematics throughout the school. Planning for literacy at the end of Key Stage 2 is excellent. The planning is effectively shared between the Year 6 teachers and the co-ordinator for special educational needs. Pupils are set in different groups for English and mathematics, which allows them to make better progress than formerly as the work and pace of the lessons are closely matched to the attainments of the pupils. Weaknesses in pupils' writing have been identified and strategies and targets for improvement have been introduced to the literacy hour to raise standards. Where teaching is satisfactory, in a very small number of lessons in mathematics and science for example, work lacks pace and teachers do not plan sufficiently challenging work for the more able pupils. For example, there are too few opportunities for them to create their own investigations and experiments. In information technology, the quality of teaching is satisfactory. There are insufficient resources available to pupils and some staff lack training to increase their subject knowledge and confidence. However the school has recognised this weakness and has made plans for staff training and a new information technology suite to strengthen teaching and raise standards. In religious education and other subjects, teaching is generally good across the school and there are no major defects.

30 Teachers plan their work thoroughly. Staff work very well together as a team to ensure that the work is sufficiently detailed to meet the needs of the wide range of attainments within each class and that planning is consistent for all year groups. Teachers' daily lesson plans are good in Key Stage 1 and very good in Key Stage 2. They all detail the specific objectives to be achieved, resources to be used and the development of the lesson for different pupils and groups. Effective use is made by staff of pupils' work to inform their future lessons. Day-to-day assessment by teachers in lessons is good. Learning is monitored effectively through direct work with groups and individuals and completed work is marked thoroughly and supportive comments are made in the pupil's books. However teachers do not always make useful comments on how the pupils might improve their work.

31 Teachers have high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour, which is particularly evident at the end of Key Stage 2. There is good teaching in all classes, but a significant proportion of teaching in Year 6, is very good or excellent. Where teaching is very good in lessons in both key stages, there is a brisk pace to learning, time is managed well and pupils are constantly asked to consolidate, refine and improve their thinking. Work takes place in a calm and purposeful atmosphere, where pupils work conscientiously. There are strengths in the teaching of English, mathematics and history, where teaching is mostly very good at both key stages. The focus on specific objectives, brisk pace to learning and the effective use of assessment to inform the planning of future work are the most significant factors in the very good teaching. The school has rightly placed priority on the development of literacy and numeracy, which is effectively guided by the detailed planning and assessment of pupils' work. As a result pupils make good and often very good progress in their set tasks. The teachers are very skilled at questioning the pupils to assess their understanding and promote thinking and learning. In these subjects, teachers have considerable expertise, which they use to good effect. In English and mathematics pupils are grouped according to their attainments and the pace and content of the work is tailored to their needs. In history, the subject is brought alive by a well-planned scheme of work. Good quality visits are planned to places of interest and visitors into school share their experiences with the pupils. These experiences interest and motivate pupils to achieve.

32 In all classrooms, relationships are very good and staff and pupils show mutual respect. Staff value the contributions pupils make in discussion. For example, the older pupils feel at ease when discussing sensitive issues such as the misuse of drugs and the effects of violent behaviour, which enables them to make good progress in their personal and social development. All the staff are very hard working and committed to achieving the aims of the school. This is clearly demonstrated through the implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, which have been carefully monitored by the staff, headteacher and governors. All staff have worked hard to plan and assess pupils' work, plan strategies and set targets for improvement in these areas. As a result there is a uniform approach and consistently good teaching throughout the school, which is having a positive impact on standards.

33 The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. All staff know the individual needs of all pupils very well and plan effectively on a day-to-day basis to meet them. There is very good liaison between the support staff, adults who work with these pupils and the class teachers. Pupils are sometimes withdrawn for individual work but mostly they are supported effectively within the main classroom. This also contributes to their personal and social development. They take a full part in lessons and have detailed targets for improvement. Individual targets for the majority of pupils are at an early stage of development in the school. At present, there is insufficient emphasis on pupils' improvement on their set targets, to enable them to make better progress. Targets are set in English, mathematics, which are shared with the parents. However, they are not used effectively enough in everyday teaching. Pupils often forget what they are because they are not reviewed frequently enough. Marking of pupils' work is up to date and praises pupils frequently for their efforts, but it is less focused on informing them as to how they might improve their work.

34 Regular homework includes reading, spelling and mathematics. The homework increases as pupils get older and is sometimes set in other subjects such as science, history and geography. Homework given in Key Stage 2 and particularly in Year 6 makes an effective contribution to pupils' knowledge and understanding. Pupils' learning during the day, especially in English and mathematics is consolidated and extended at home. The new libraries in school and in the locality are having a positive impact on pupils' research skills as they look up information for their history topics and are motivated to read stories from good quality books. A minority of parents are very supportive and help pupils with work at home. This contributes effectively to their attainment and progress.

The curriculum and assessment

35 The curriculum for the children under five in the nursery and the two reception classes is very good. It is broad and balanced and is planned very well with due regard for the six areas of learning. There is a very strong emphasis on the development of speaking and listening skills and personal and social skills, which is of vital importance for the development of these young children. The curriculum provides a secure foundation for children to make good progress, taking into account their specific needs. The thorough medium and short term planning provides a clearly focused curriculum for the children. The procedures for assessing children's progress are good. They are used very well and clearly indicate what the children have achieved and the targets for their future learning. These are then effectively developed through the curriculum. The provision in the nursery is an improvement on the last report, where the curriculum lacked breadth and balance, and assessments were not used sufficiently to plan for the individual needs of the children. These issues have been resolved and are now strengths in the teaching.

36 The school provides a curriculum in Key Stage 1 and 2, which is broad and very well balanced. It includes all of the National Curriculum subjects and religious education. A significant emphasis is placed upon the enrichment of the curriculum to meet the specific needs of the pupils, which is a major strength of the school. There is, for instance, a significant amount of time allocated to the physical education curriculum to ensure that all the pupils in Key Stage 2 have access to swimming lessons in each school year. Personal and social education, religious education and drugs awareness offer the pupils a wide perspective on local and wider world issues. Literacy, numeracy and the wider English curriculum including drama and personal and social education lessons are allocated an appropriate amount of time. The time allocated to foundation subjects has been carefully organised to ensure good coverage. Sex education and drugs related issues are delivered through the school's personal and social education programme. The oldest pupils are well prepared for the next phase of their education and attend a residential course with pupils from other primary schools before they transfer to the high school.

37 The school's literacy curriculum follows the guidelines of the National Literacy Strategy and provision throughout the school is very good. Formal literacy sessions are taught each day of the week, which is having a positive impact upon the attainment of the pupils. Literacy is well developed across all the subjects of the National Curriculum. The school has made a good start to the implementation of the Numeracy Strategy, and this is beginning to have an impact upon the attainment of the pupils especially in their mental mathematical skills

38 The curriculum is aided in all subjects by effective policies and schemes of work; some of the schemes of work are at present being reworked to include recent initiatives. These give effective guidance in all subjects. Curricular planning is very good. It is detailed and ensures that the pupils build upon previous knowledge well and make good progress. The teachers plan together and this ensures that pupils in parallel and mixed aged classes have the same curriculum opportunities. There are very good cross-curricular links built into the curriculum and the teachers make effective use of these

links to develop and enhance the pupils' experiences. In all subjects, there are satisfactory schemes of work to aid teachers' planning and ensure that work is planned appropriately for all subjects, year groups and all classes. There are long-term and medium-term plans, which are more detailed for work for the different classes each term. The detailed planning and the effective use of assessment are major factors that contribute to the successful teaching in the school and the good progress that the pupils make.

39 Good provision is made for those pupils who have English as an additional language. The special educational needs co-ordinator, support staff and the class teachers are effective in helping the pupils develop their knowledge of spoken and written English. Pupils have equal access and opportunity to the curriculum. It meets the requirements of all pupils on the school's Code of Practice special educational needs register. Curricular planning and implementation takes appropriate account of the pupils' special educational needs through the use of appropriate teaching methods and materials. The curriculum also meets the specific needs identified in the learning objectives in the individual education plans and for the pupils at Stage 5 of the statutory Code of Practice. Pupils' access to the full curriculum is improved by the quality of the support they receive when they are withdrawn from the classroom.

40 The provision for extra curricular activities is good. There are opportunities for the pupils to attend football training, mathematics club and athletics. Educational visits extend the pupils' knowledge and understanding of the natural world, the past and present world and make a very positive and valuable contribution to the curriculum. The pupils have visited The Maritime Museum; the Art Gallery, The Squirrel Reserve, Greenacres Farm, The Viking Experience and all the pupils have visited the local library. The school also provides a range of extracurricular visits where pupils have the opportunity to appreciate a wider curriculum, for example, visiting the theatre. All the pupils in Key Stage 2 are given the opportunity to take part in a residential visit every year. The pupils enjoy their visits to Colomendy from where they explore the locality. These activities make a positive contribution to standards of attainment, to social and cultural development, to the development of the arts and the self-esteem of the pupils. There are also a wide variety of visitors to the school, who provide rich and stimulating experiences for the pupils. Visitors this year have included Levi Tafari a poet, a storyteller and expert tutors in computing, drama and music.

41 The school has adopted the L.E.A. assessment system for children who enter the reception class, this is enabling the school to make precise assessments of the children who are under five within the first few weeks after they enter school full time. The school is planning to introduce an assessment system to enable them to measure the children's progress throughout the nursery class. The school fully complies with the requirements to administer statutory national tests at the end of the key stages, when pupils are seven and eleven.

42 There is a clear focus on meeting individual needs and setting targets for improvement in the school. The school's assessment procedures are very good. The pupil's attainments in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science are assessed regularly and recorded systematically. This precise and regular updating of information ensures that each teacher has a clear picture of the pupils' strengths and weaknesses. The assessment of English is extremely thorough with assessment made of the pupil's progress in guided reading, home reading, phonics and writing. The assessment of mathematics is at present under review to accommodate the changes necessary to support the Numeracy Strategy. The exceptions are the procedures for information technology, which are under review and religious education, where the assessment procedures are satisfactory rather than good. Other subjects are assessed by the teacher annually. The assessment co-ordinator is very effective in organising effective systems of assessment. The Key Stage 2 pupils take the optional national tests and other standardised tests, which enable the school to keep comprehensive pupil records, which are well maintained by the teachers.

43 The pupils are set targets in English and mathematics to improve their work and these are displayed in the classrooms. Target setting is however in its early stages of development and as yet the impact of the targets on the pupils work has not been evident. The assessment co-ordinator is at present considering ways to include science in the target setting procedures in the school.

44 The previous report raised as a key issue for action the need for the school to improve the planning and broaden the range of learning experiences in the nursery. These are now judged to be very good with a wide range of experiences available to the children. The school was also asked to improve the quality of individual lessons in both key stages, the quality of lesson planning is now very good. Another area for improvement was to strengthen the procedures for monitoring standards and the quality of the curriculum. The procedures for monitoring are now good. The school has been effective in managing the curriculum and the curriculum is effectively supporting the needs of the pupils to enable them to make good progress through out the school.

Pupils spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

45 Provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is good.

46 The pupils' good spiritual development is fostered well through very good quality acts of collective worship that fully meet statutory requirements and through a programme of religious education. The excellent ethos of the school promotes the exploration of spiritual aspects of life in both the arts and sciences and the very good attitudes of the pupils enable them to talk freely about how they feel. This is notable during Literacy Hours when the pupils readily volunteer to put into words the effect of a text upon them; for instance, when a group of more able pupils read the Diary of Ann Frank and come across the entry where she records her first encounter with the concentration camps.

47 Moral development is very good. School is a very orderly place with the pupils respecting its rules, its aspirations and fabric. The school has been very successful in fostering mutual respect between the pupils and between them and the adults in school. Parents report that this is a very different picture to the way the school was about ten years ago and to the community in which the children live. The school is very successful in developing a moral attitude against injustice, such as racism and violence.

48 The pupils' social development of the pupils is also fostered very well. The school aims to be a community in which everyone is valued in their own right irrespective of gender, race, creed, age or ability. It is succeeding very well in doing this. The school's personal and social education programme is very appropriate to the needs of the pupils and it is very well enriched by a dramatic element. Residential visits by all Key Stage 2 pupils every year to a centre at Colomendy in North Wales is very effective in practically promoting the pupils' social development as they live together away from school and in the case of Year 6 pupils, with children whom they will meet at their high schools.

49 The pupils' cultural development is good. Visits to museums, art galleries and the theatre successfully enrich the lives of the pupils. For many pupils, it is only through school that they visit these places. The school has retained a broad curriculum while at the same time emphasizing literacy and numeracy. The pupils have access to a varied cultural education that includes an appropriate multi-cultural element. This includes involvement in the local multi-cultural 'Heartstone Project' that involves personal and social education and drama. Since the last inspection the school has been successful in addressing a perceived weakness that too little use was made of educational drama to promote cultural and aesthetic development.

Support, guidance and pupils' welfare

50 The progress pupils make in their subjects and personal and social education prepares them well for their next stage of learning.

51 The provision for this area of the school's work continues to be good. Since the last report, the school has made substantial improvements in its monitoring and assessment of pupils' progress, which is helping to raise to standards. The staff bring a considerable amount of care, consideration and commitment to the pupils they teach. This is particularly effective in Year 6 where the teachers set the pupils for mathematics and English and in the teaching of pupils under five, where the staff meet regularly to share ideas and plans. There are support staff attached to each class and these experienced and hard working staff know the pupils very well and are valued by the staff for the very effective support they give to all pupils and especially those with special educational needs.

52 Procedures for monitoring and promoting discipline and good behaviour are very good. Behaviour is well managed with the support of the behaviour policy, and pupils and staff are clear and consistent about what is acceptable behaviour and what is not acceptable. This is shared with the parents who comment positively about the pupils' behaviour. Pupils are well supported in their start at school. Youngest pupils are socialized into the nursery well; the concepts of sharing and taking turns are patiently explained. Reception children are confident in their social and learning skills by the time they start school. They make good progress as they get older and by the time pupils leave the school most behave well without having to be reminded. Older pupils sometimes take responsibility for younger ones, and become their 'buddy' if they are worried or concerned at playtimes.

53 Procedures for monitoring and promoting good attendance are satisfactory. The school has achieved better attendance than reported previously at least at the beginning of term. It has taken the lead on this, with a teacher designated to be closely involved in tracking pupils' attendance. Although the school has satisfactory procedures overall in place, there are still persistent absentees and pupils who come late or take odd days off school. Governors now need to address measures to further stabilise the attendance levels, particularly those of certain individuals.

54 There are effective procedures in place for child protection and promoting the well being, health and safety of the pupils. Policies and practice on child protection and health and safety take account of new initiatives and requirements and there is appropriate emphasis on sharing issues with staff and training them at the beginning of each year.

55 The guidance provided by the school's personal and social education curriculum is good. It tackles such sensitive issues as drugs and sex education in a sensible and approachable way, often using media such as drama to explore issues effectively with pupils. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in their work.

56 Procedures and supervision at lunchtimes are satisfactory. The training given to lunchtime supervisors helps to provide an environment where pupils, including the youngest, feel safe and relaxed. The provision of apples at break time encourages pupils to make healthy choices about their diet.

57 The difficulties of accommodation in the dining room noted in the previous report persist and this remains a poor facility for pupils to take their lunches leading to noisy sessions. This is

compounded by the fact that the hut is drab and unrelieved by menu information or decoration.

58 Pupils under five are encouraged to take responsibility for their work and nursery children register themselves. However, although pupils take on small administrative responsibilities, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to increasingly work independently as they get older in preparation for secondary school.

Partnership with parents and the community

59 This continues to be a good aspect of the school's work and is similar to the last report. The school is building on well-established parent links supported by community initiatives, local as well as national schemes, to increase the level of parental involvement in school and children's learning

60 This has resulted in benefits to both pupils and the parents concerned, with many of the latter going on to further education and several qualifying as teachers.

61 The room dedicated to the parent partnership programme is used well for courses run by a local college and provide a crucial interface between the school and the community, aided by a respected local community worker who is based there.

62 There are friendly relations established with most parents. The scene is set by the availability on the playground of the head teacher and class teachers in the mornings and at the end of the day. This informal link has provided benefits for the school's relations with parents. However, although some parents and grandparents come in to hear pupils read, many parents are still reluctant to come into the schools to attend information sessions or read with their children at home. The liaison with parents of pupils with special educational needs is very good, they feel very well informed and are pleased with the progress their children make. The school maintains effective support from outside agencies for these pupils.

63 Some parents said they would like more information about what their children are learning. The information the school provides is generally good in the prospectuses, behaviour books and booklets, but reports do not at present contain enough detail about progress or strengths and weaknesses confining themselves to coverage of the curriculum and pupils' attitudes to their work. The targets that the school has set for every child, are to be shared with parents and this should go some way towards alleviating this problem.

64 The school is part of a network of local initiatives and sees itself in partnership with many agencies and groups that are trying to make the environment better for pupils and their families.

65 There are also community links to churches, for instance the local Catholic Church, St George's United Reform church and the local Anglican Church. The school makes the most of the local community and through the parent/partnership link, seeks to support parents as well as pupils. The school is part of the North Liverpool Business Partnership. Representatives of the local premier league local football team, athletics teams, dance and drama groups all visit the school.

THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL

Leadership and management

66 The headteacher leads the school with a clear sense of purpose and direction based securely on its current priorities. There is a commitment to improvement and the quality of the education provided owes much to her leadership and the hard work of the senior management team and all the staff. The headteacher maintains an appropriate balance between the administrative and monitoring elements of her role. She effectively monitors teachers' planning to ensure that there is proper coverage of the curriculum. A common format to the planning has been introduced, so that everyone works towards agreed criteria. The headteacher regularly works alongside colleagues to support new developments and to assess the effectiveness of pupils' learning. There are two co-ordinators for most subjects and they work in pairs effectively to fulfil their responsibilities. They all monitor planning, share in agreeing priorities for the school, and take full responsibility for the management of resources for their subjects. Where the school has identified a priority such as the development of literacy and numeracy, the coordinators have fully informed governors of their work. The coordinators ensure that staff are fully informed of recent training initiatives and monitor the effectiveness of implementation of their subjects with the headteacher across the school. As a result the school has identified writing as a weakness and has planned improvements in the curriculum to raise standards. The children under five are managed well. The teachers in the nursery and the reception classes effectively plan together to provide a wide range of stimulating activities. This indicates good improvement from the last inspection. There is very good improvement in the management of special educational needs from the last report, pupils now are effectively supported through very good provision and make good progress.

67 The chair of governors maintains regular and supportive communication with the headteacher. There are committees in place with appropriate terms of reference to oversee the work of the school. The committees are well informed by the school and individual governors take a keen interest in the school. Some regularly work with small groups of pupils and others help pupils with their reading. Governors have been appointed with specific responsibilities for special educational needs, literacy and numeracy. Governors for literacy and numeracy have effectively monitored teaching and supported the implementation of the literacy and numeracy strategies. They have a clear overview of standards in the school and take an active role in identifying areas for improvement.

68 The School Development Plan provides an appropriate base for work during the current year and is based on a sound audit of the needs of the school. The governors and the staff work together effectively with the headteacher to review the work of the past year and set the current priorities. The school has correctly prioritized the development of literacy and numeracy and is committed to raising achievement. While the current development plan is successful in providing an overview of the development of the school it is less successful in the detail of outlining the small measurable steps needed to achieve its priorities, which are appropriately set against the school budget and criteria for success. Furthermore while the school has a sound overview of targets beyond the current year, projections for future targets are not formally recorded or costed in sufficient detail. The present planning is therefore unsatisfactory in that it provides insufficient detailed information on which the school may effectively evaluate and monitor its performance.

69 Statutory requirements are met in all aspects. The staff have a strong tradition of professional development. This is managed effectively and linked to the current priorities of the school as well as personal professional development. Training has improved their subject knowledge and expertise, which has a positive impact on teachers' lesson planning and the attainment and progress of the pupils. For example, the effectiveness of the National Literacy Strategy so far, is due to the good quality training and the enthusiasm and commitment of the staff in implementing it in school and striving for higher standards.

70 Since the last report the school has made good improvement in the monitoring of standards

and the quality of education the children receive. There is optimism and a high commitment in the school that standards will be raised. The very good quality of relationships in the school and the pupils' attitudes to learning is reflected in the excellent ethos. While it is too early to assess the full impact of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, the indications are that the school is successfully achieving its aims to improve in these areas and other outlined priorities. It is clear that the school has improved a great deal since the last inspection.

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

71 All staff are appropriately qualified for the posts they hold and between them they have the expertise to meet the demands of the National Curriculum. However some staff lack expertise in the teaching of information technology. The school has maintained a generous staff pupil ratio, which is used effectively to keep smaller than average class sizes. Staff work closely together and share their expertise. Arrangements for staff development are good. The school sets a high priority on staff development and training is closely linked to school priorities and government initiatives. All staff, including support staff have attended training for the implementation of the literacy and numeracy hours. The appraisal of teaching staff has been carried out and all staff have been monitored. There are detailed job descriptions in place, which effectively and clearly illustrate curriculum responsibilities. There are good induction procedures for new staff, to ensure a smooth transition into the life of the school and continuing professional development. In the last twelve months there have been no initial teacher training students in the school, although the school does have links with the local universities.

72 The building provides good accommodation, with two separate halls, a community room, a library and a room for the special educational needs specialist teacher to use. The halls, however, are long and narrow and present a difficult area for the pupils to use in gymnastics. The toilet facilities for the children under five in the reception class are inconvenient for them. They need to walk a distance down the corridor from the classroom. The effect of this is that at the beginning of the term the children have to go together. This is in direct opposition to the independence that the staff are trying to promote. The school provides only a limited access for pupils with physical disabilities, as they would not be able to have access to the top floor of the building. The position of the dining room was a concern in the previous inspection report and remains so. It is small and cramped and is not an attractive building in which to eat lunch. The staff have successfully adapted all available space to create an effective working environment. The school provides a welcoming and stimulating environment for the pupils. It is further enhanced by the many attractive and interactive displays of pupils' work. The interior of the school is well maintained and is light and airy. The cleaner in charge and her staff ensure that the accommodation is kept to a high standard of cleanliness. The fabric of the building has some areas of concern with rotten window frames and dry and wet rot. The outdoor accommodation is good, with a large hard surface playground and a large field for sporting activities.

73 There are good learning resources to support the National Curriculum. Resources to support the development of literacy are excellent with up-to-date attractive books. There is a wide range of fiction and non-fiction texts, which have been carefully chosen to develop pupils' awareness and understanding of other cultures and traditions. A large number of books have been chosen specifically to engage the interest of the boys. There is a good range of books to support the curriculum in the school library, which has recently been developed and provides a very good resource. Resources are good in mathematics, science, art, design and technology, geography, music, religious education and physical education. Resources in history, for the children who are under five and for the pupils with special educational needs are very good. The school is able to access dual language books for the pupils who have English as a second language. In information technology, the number of computers in school is barely sufficient for the number of pupils, this limits their attainment and progress. However, a large number of new computers has been ordered to furnish the recently created computer suite. All resources are accessible, stored appropriately and managed effectively. The school makes good use of

visits to museums, local places of interest and the local library to enhance pupils' learning experiences.

74 In the previous report, the fabric of the building was judged to be poor. Since then the main roof has been replaced, as have some of the flat roofs and they no longer leak. Some of the windows have been replaced and the governors have successfully decreased the amounts of vandalism. There are still some areas of wet and dry rot and some windows are still to be replaced. The position of the canteen was a cause for concern and this remains so. Resources for outdoor play in the nursery were unsatisfactory and these are now judged to be very good. The supply of books in the library was insufficient, it is now very good.

The efficiency of the school

75 The governors are very conscious of the need to link spending to areas that are likely to have an impact on raising standards. The employment of additional classroom assistants throughout the school and the deployment of an extra teacher in the nursery are two examples of their strategic management being aimed at raising standards. However, they do not have secure systems in place for checking on how successful their spending decisions have been. Although both the examples mentioned in relation to strategic planning have been effective in helping to raise standards, there is still some way to go before the school has appropriate measures to evaluate the full impact its spending decisions have on standards and provision. The School Development Plan has insufficient detail of costings for its targets, and unsatisfactorily does not provide an effective tool by which the school can measure its success.

76 The school has carried a large surplus in its budget for the past few years. This is as a result of additional funds allocated for social deprivation and an increase in the school's role. The governors have found it necessary to be cautious with its spending until decisions were made as to who had responsibility for much needed improvements to the accommodation. In the event, the school has spent a large amount of the surplus money on improvements to the building. This has resulted in significant improvement to the library, which could not take place before the roof was made waterproof, and to improved internal decoration giving a bright and stimulating environment within the school. The use of the library was noted as a weakness in the previous inspection. The improvements have resulted in increased access to the library, which is now used effectively to support pupils' learning.

77 The relatively generous funding has resulted in the school being able to have good quality resources for nearly all subjects. The school has spent a large amount of money on funding resources to support the National Literacy Strategy. These resources are very well used and have a positive impact on the learning. In addition, the school has been able to fund resources to support the National Numeracy Strategy, which has been introduced this year. As with literacy, resources are being used effectively to help to raise standards. Teachers' use of resources in other areas is also very positive, with particular impact being made in science and history. The one area where the resources are ineffectively used is information technology, because insufficient use is made of computers to support pupils' learning.

78 The school makes very effective use of both teaching and support staff. Careful thought has been given to the needs of very young children resulting in the decision to staff the nursery with two teachers and the equivalent of a full-time nursery nurse. This has resulted in the school being in a good position to support many children who start in the nursery with difficulties in speech and communication. The employment of additional classroom assistant is also very effective in raising the standards of lower attaining pupils throughout the school. The school receives a substantial addition

amount of money in relation to the social and special needs of the pupils. These funds are carefully allocated so as to have the greatest impact on improving pupils' communication skills and their levels of confidence. Much of the money is used to employ support staff, who are then appropriately deployed.

79 The school has struggled to come to terms with the accommodation. However, there have been significant improvements since the previous inspection and there is effective use made of the space available. A room dedicated to literacy resources is well organised and helps to make resources accessible to staff. Other smaller rooms are used effectively to enable staff to work with small groups of pupils or to establish a popular and well-used parents' workshop. Despite the difficulties encountered by the size and shape of the two halls, staff make appropriate use of the space available to them. There is also a room already partly equipped to accommodate the computer suite, which is to be in place shortly after the inspection.

80 The administration support staff work effectively in ensuring that appropriate checks are made on the budget. All spending is carefully monitored and computerised updates are available to the finance committee on request. There is effective checking against amounts of money dedicated to each area of spending. This is a similar position to the one reported in the previous inspection. A recent financial audit required the school to deal with a few minor issues. These have now been dealt with.

81 When taking account of the low attainment of pupils on entry to the school and comparing it to the attainment of 11-year-olds, as they are ready to leave school, there is evidence of good progress. Despite the slightly higher than average cost per pupil, this represents good value for money. This is an improved position in relation to the previous inspection.

PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE

82 Children start in the nursery immediately after their third birthday, which results in some children having almost two full years experience in the nursery before moving into the reception class. This helps them to make good progress in their personal and social development as well as in language and literacy. During the inspection only 19 children were on roll for the morning session and 13 for the afternoon. However, the roll is expected to increase to 25 in both morning and afternoon sessions before the end of the autumn term.

83 There are two full time teachers and the equivalent of a full-time nursery nurse working in the nursery. This is as a result of the governors' decision to staff this area generously, thereby enabling children to have as positive a start to their school life as is possible. The decision has been taken after much consideration and in the knowledge that they may not be able to sustain that level of staffing. One of the full time teachers is a newly qualified teacher and both the part-time nursery nurses are very experienced. In the academic year in which they are five children move into one of two reception classes. One class is a reception class only while the other is a mixed class of reception and Year 1 children. At the time of the inspection two thirds of the children in the reception classes were still 4 years of age.

84 When children first start school the majority have very limited skills in personal and social development, language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development. Their physical skills are slightly more advanced but are still below the level expected for their age.

Personal and Social Development

85 The majority of children start school in the nursery having very limited skills in this area. Many are not used to communicating with adults and they lack the confidence to try things for themselves. Concentration levels are low and children are not used to sitting and working at one activity for a sustained period. Most are not used to sharing equipment and many are not familiar with responding to instructions. During their time in the nursery they make very good progress. As they get older, children learn to respect the few rules that exist in the nursery and begin to understand why they are necessary. By the time they start their reception year, the majority have settled and know how to behave appropriately. The use of various jigsaws and puppets showing different emotions helps in the process of explaining to children about their responses and reactions to different situations. Children make good progress in their personal and social development in the reception classes and as a result they are close to achieving the learning goals anticipated for children of their age by the time they start Key Stage 1.

86 The quality of teaching for personal and social development is good in both the nursery and reception class. There is a high priority placed on the development of these skills and children make good progress overall as a result of the hard work of the staff. From the moment they arrive in the morning or afternoon session in the nursery, children are encouraged to greet each other and there is great emphasis placed on encouraging the children to become independent in their learning by getting out their own resources and tidying them away at the ends of sessions. Children respond well to these situations and within a few weeks of starting, they make very good progress and most are familiar with the routines in the nursery and learn to take turns. When children show anti-social tendencies there is much attention given to explaining why the adults are unhappy with them. In the reception class, staff consistently apply the behaviour policy and the children understand what is acceptable behaviour and what is not. Staff explain clearly how to behave well and reward good behaviour with praise and

stickers. Disagreements are resolved sensitively and fairly. In both classes staff are good role models. This has a positive impact on the children and provides a calm working atmosphere within a framework of well-established routines.

Language and literacy

87 As with personal and social development, many children start in the nursery with very limited skills in language and literacy. There are a large percentage of children who experience communication difficulties and many find it difficult to express themselves properly. There is a major emphasis placed on developing children's speaking and listening skills. One of the most consistent aspects of this is the way that adults speak to children. Children are constantly asked questions and the adults take care to speak as adults and use correct terminology. When children are trying to speak, the adults listen carefully to them and give them a chance to finish what they are saying. This helps the children make good progress. Older children in the nursery are noticeably more advanced than younger children when attempting to communicate with adults. Children use puppets effectively to help them, resulting in their confidence levels being raised. Adults engage children in speaking and listening about a range of everyday occurrences to 'what has happened at home' to 'the noise made by a passing aeroplane'. The good progress made in speaking and listening is continued as children move into the reception classes. Children in the nursery start to handle books appropriately and some are able to follow a story using the pictures. Older children are able to recognise stories that have been read to them and begin to know their favourite characters. In the reception classes, children's involvement in the literacy hour helps to make them familiar with the skills involved in reading. They have a book bag, enabling them to take books home regularly. Many begin to recognise that letters have a given sound. The higher attainers begin to use their fingers to follow the print and some recognise a few key words. Children are encouraged to make marks as soon as they start school. Older nursery children are encouraged to register by writing their names into a book. They are encouraged to behave like writers and most do when writing lists or taking messages during their structured play activities. By the time they move into the reception classes most are able to hold a pencil correctly and write their names. Despite the good progress made in both the nursery and reception classes, very few children are attaining the learning goals anticipated for this area by the time they start Key Stage 1. The majority are well behind the level expected for their age.

88 The staff rightly place emphasis on the development of literacy from entry to the nursery and the quality of teaching is good. This is continued into the reception class. Here, there is a greater expectation for them to participate in whole class discussions and staff are very vigilant as to who has and has not participated. A good range of activities is planned for all children to develop early reading and writing skills. In both classes, staff value the contributions children make in discussion and help them to develop a widening vocabulary.

Mathematics

89 Few children have heard of or know any number rhymes when they start in the nursery. They are not familiar with counting or with associating a particular amount with a number. During their time in the nursery and reception classes they make good progress. Children in the nursery are introduced to whole range of number rhymes and are encouraged to count whenever the opportunity arises. Many of the initial activities are associated with matching items by colour or another attribute. Many children learn the names of familiar shapes and begin to use appropriate mathematical language. The numeracy strategy used with reception children helps to sharpen their mental and oral skills. However, while many children are able to count up to 10 and some even to 20, few are able to count on from a given number such as 5. There is particular attention given to applying mathematical skills in play. Nursery children using sand or water are constantly asked questions that help to make them think about 'more than', 'less than', and about amounts. Despite the good progress made, the majority of children do not achieve the learning goals anticipated for them by the time they are five. Most start Key Stage 1 with skills in

mathematical development being relatively low. During the previous inspection this area was criticised. The provision for mathematics for children aged under five has much improved.

90 The quality of teaching is good in the nursery and the reception classes. The staff plan very well together and include frequent mathematical experiences throughout the daily routine. They are skilled at questioning the children to assess their understanding and to promote speaking skills and the development of mathematical thinking.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

91 Many children have limited general knowledge and this adversely affects their progress in this area of learning. The staff work hard to provide children with many experiences so that they expand their knowledge and understanding of everyday things. There are frequent visitors to school from representatives of the local services, such as policemen and firemen. Photographs are used to draw attention to things in the local environment. Records of weather patterns are kept and children are encouraged to grow and look after things. There are particularly strong links made with the local post office. Through these experiences children begin to learn about their local environment and about things outside their immediate environment. They are able to understand that they change, as they get older and that one day they will be adults. They are introduced to a range of books that help them find out more about things that they have experienced. Children begin to recognise the similarities and differences in familiar things around them. For instance one nursery child was talking about how a cat and dog are different. Reception children are able to distinguish between things they like and dislike, for instance, food. Some can begin to explain why they like certain foods and why they don't like others. The range of experiences provided for them helps the children to make good progress but again they are not achieving the learning goals expected of them by the time they are 5 years of age.

92 The quality of teaching is good in the nursery and reception classes. The staff provide a wide range of opportunities for pupils to observe and find out about their immediate environment. The activities are based around topics such as 'The Seaside', and activities are structured well to widen the children's knowledge, understanding and skills.

Physical development

93 Many children start in the nursery displaying appropriate skills in areas like physical education, which require them to display physical control of their bodies and have an awareness of space. However, in other areas of physical development they are not as well advanced. When it comes to holding pens or cutting and gluing they need much support. Children in the nursery and reception classes use the large hall regularly for physical activity and nursery children use large vehicles for outdoor play. During these sessions confidence levels are high and pupils are quite independent in the way they use apparatus. For instance, nursery-aged children are able to use the space in the hall sensibly without bumping into each other and to move around on tiptoes. They can change direction and speed as they move around. Children in the reception classes are also able to show good physical development when using the large hall. They balance on different parts of their bodies and many can link two different movements together showing a change of direction and speed in between. In other areas of physical development, children in the nursery are able to wash up after they have been baking and many are prepared to persevere for long periods despite trying to remove some stubborn makes off baking trays. Progress is satisfactory in this area with most children achieving the learning goals anticipated by the time they move into Key Stage 1. The provision for outdoor education has much improved since the previous inspection.

94 There is good teaching in both the nursery and reception classes. The staff teach the children

well through effective demonstrations, how to follow instructions and take part in simple games. They provide a wide range of activities indoors and outdoors to develop the appropriate skills of jumping, climbing and balancing. When using small equipment in the classroom, staff sensitively guide and encourage children to develop their physical control of small equipment such as jigsaws, construction materials and pencils.

Creative development

95 Many children start nursery with skills in this area being very impoverished. Some children find it difficult to participate in any creative play or to create pictures using paint. Many lack confidence in drawing and their pictures lack clarity. In some cases children's drawing is as much as 2 years behind the level expected for their age when they are 5. During their time in the nursery, they are provided with many opportunities to improve their skills in this area. They have access to a range of musical instruments and many begin to distinguish between the types of sounds that are possible to make with each. An adult is almost always available to help children with a painting or modelling activities. In this way they are able to paint and discuss what they do. Some children are able to mix two colours and know that they are going to create a different colour. Older nursery children recognise that mixing red and yellow will result in orange and that mixing blue and yellow will result in green. The good progress is continued through the reception classes and children's models become more refined. However, by the time they start Key Stage 1 children are not achieving the learning goals expected for their age.

96 The quality of teaching for creative work in both the nursery and reception classes is good. The staff plan a broad range of activities for the children to experience and develop appropriate techniques and skills when painting or modelling. The development of speaking skills is promoted well as staff sensitively encourage and develop pupils' vocabulary.

The Curriculum

97 The curriculum for children aged under five has been carefully organised to maximise opportunities for them to have practical experiences where possible. Planning is thorough allowing for progression in their learning. Assessment arrangements are also good with staff using information gained from these assessments very effectively to plan future learning needs. The assessments that staff make soon after the children enter, enable them to identify those children with special educational needs and those needing extra help, which the school very effectively provides. The nursery and reception classes are very well resourced and effective use is made of the resources. Every attempt is made to involve parents in the education life of their children. Some parents take an active part in this but parental involvement is not widespread.

98 There have been significant improvements since the previous inspection, and in particular, the provision for mathematics and outdoor education. The quality of teaching has improved from satisfactory to good teaching in the nursery.

ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE

English

99 In the 1998 National Curriculum tests and assessments at Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment was below the national average. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher level 5 was also below the national average. However, when compared to similar schools, the English results are well above the

average for level 4 and the higher level 5. The 1999 test results are similar to that of 1998 although the national comparatives for the present year are not yet available. The attainment of the majority of pupils currently in Year 6 is below average.

100 This position is consistent with the current teacher assessments. When taking account of the trend over the past three years there has been a steady improvement in pupils' attainment and this improvement has been at a greater rate than that experienced nationally. There is little variation noted between the performance of boys and girls. There is a significant number of pupils on the special educational needs register, which accounts for the below average attainment of the pupils at the present time.

101 Since the last report, the literacy hour has been introduced which is having a positive effect on standards in both key stages, particularly in reading. Standards in the last report were judged to be average. In comparison there has been an improvement in the quality of teaching and the standards are rising. The majority of pupils start their education with poor attainment in language skills but make good progress throughout both key stages.

102 By the age of eleven the pupils speak with confidence and listen well to one another and to their teachers in a variety of situations and make good progress. In history, for instance, they discuss how Ancient Greek pottery from different states can reflect the political stance of that state on the Trojan War. The school's drama programme contributes well to the pupils' language development. However, pupils speak in short sentences and the vocabulary of the majority of pupils is limited with only a small minority using expressive and adventurous words. Pupils with special educational needs make effective contributions to class discussions at both key stages and make good progress in relation to their learning targets.

103 Most pupils read a range of texts fluently and accurately and make good progress, but their attainment is below average. They are motivated to read by the excellent range of reading material available in the school for the 'Literacy Hour'. The texts used for shared reading often match in content the topic being studied by the class. For example, during a Literacy Hour, Year 5 pupils were learning research skills from a 'big book' about Victorians. Their history topic was the Victorians and an extensive display of artifacts in the classroom, matched the pictures in the book. Although pupils read fluently, many find difficulty in talking about the motives of the characters and making hypotheses about their behaviour and relationships with one another. They understand the different types of authors and express their preferences for different kinds of stories and poetry. Most understand the main themes, events and characters and illustrate their views from the text when questioned. Pupils have a good understanding of different forms of poetry and its spiritual nature.

104 Handwriting skills are average, pupils make good progress by the time they are eleven. The majority of Year 6 pupils write in a clear joined, legible style and take pride in their work. This has a positive effect on the presentation of their work across the curriculum. Most write in sentences punctuated with full stops and capital letters. However, when they write accounts of visits or stories many pupils express themselves clearly but their work lacks imagination and expressive adjectives, and they spell many commonly used words accurately. The higher attaining pupils use more advanced forms of punctuation such as speech marks and commas. Their writing is imaginative and stylish and their spelling is more accurate. For example, when writing from the point of view of Robinson Crusoe when he was being delivered from isolation, pupils effectively conveyed both his joy and nostalgia for his island home. Enriching the pupils' vocabularies of most pupils is a priority in lessons and the lower attaining pupils benefit from the 'Writing Recovery Project' methods to improve their work, and make very good progress.

105 The 1998 National Curriculum tests for seven year olds indicate that pupils' attainment is well below average in comparison to national figures and is also below average in comparison to similar schools. Over the last 3 years there is some improvement in reading but not in writing. The school has recognised this as an area for development and has already put some effective measures in place to raise standards. The attainment of the present Year 2 cohort of pupils is still below average when compared to national averages, but better than that indicated by the results of the previous few years.

106 Most seven year olds can discuss matters of immediate interest, listen to others and respond appropriately. They speak audibly, can explain what they mean to both children and adults and they are starting to extend what they say with detail. Their vocabularies are limited, however, and this restricts their comprehension and independent writing. In one Year 2 class, for example, none of the pupils could explain what a hedge was. The teachers have rightly identified raising standards in speaking and listening as a priority for raising standards in reading and writing. Most seven year olds recognise familiar words in simple reading matter and, when reading aloud, use their knowledge of the sounds associated with letters, to read unfamiliar words. Their writing communicates meaning through simple words and phrases and in both their reading and their writing many pupils show an understanding of full stops and capital letters. Letter shapes are beginning to be clearly shaped and positioned. A small minority of pupils are speaking and listening, reading and writing both below and above the required standards. To develop the pupils' independent writing is a priority of the teaching.

107 Pupils make good progress in language skills from poor attainment when they enter the nursery. By the time they become five they continue to make good progress but attainment still remains well below the national average. By the time they reach the end of Key Stage 1, as a result of continued good progress, pupils' attainment is just below the national averages in reading and lower in writing. Pupils do not make the equivalent progress in writing, partly because the use of worksheets in the past inhibited the development of writing skills where pupils were only required to write one answer instead of a sentence. The school has effectively introduced a new writing scheme to raise attainment. The 'Writing Recovery Project' that includes withdrawal for small groups of low attaining seven year olds so that they can intensively focus upon writing, is most effective in promoting very good progress.

108 Pupils have excellent attitudes to learning. There is a marked enthusiasm to learn on the part of the pupils in both key stages. This is closely related to the good quality of the teaching they receive. Lessons are interesting, lively and work is well pitched to the pupils' levels of attainment, which challenge and motivate pupils to learn. The pupils are enthusiastic about books and reading and they want to write. There are excellent relationships in many classes, especially at Key Stage 2. The rich variety of poetry, drama and fiction that the pupils meet, especially during the literacy hour, contributes well to their personal development, and in particular their spiritual development. Standards of behaviour are very good.

109 The quality of teaching is good at both key stages. In one lesson teaching is excellent, in 30 per cent of lessons it is very good, in a further 30 per cent it is good. In 35 per cent of lessons it is satisfactory. Staff, including the support staff work very well together as a team to ensure consistency of provision between the key stages, year groups and classes. This presents a good and improving picture throughout all classes. Teachers have very good knowledge of their subject and there is considerable expertise in English, evident in the initial qualifications and interests of the staff. The National Literacy Strategy is becoming well established and the staff have been trained well and use their time effectively in the literacy hour according to national recommendations. They plan in detail to do this, for example by designing their own initiatives such as their 'Writing Recovery Project'. Their assessments of pupils' attainment are accurate and are well used to pitch lessons precisely. This promotes good progress for all attainment groups. There is consistent and efficient provision for low attaining pupils and those with special educational needs. Teachers ensure that English is part of all subjects and time is devoted to improving and extending all aspects of the subject in other lessons.

Resources are used well and staff make the most of spontaneous opportunities to develop language from children's interests. Teachers have high expectations and work is planned very well to meet the individual targets set for each pupil. There is good use of assessment in lessons to inform pupils how to improve their work, particularly in Year 6. Teachers recognise the need to link reading, writing and spelling and promote effectively a range of strategies for spelling and checking unfamiliar words. A wide range of different forms of writing is taught. However, there are fewer opportunities for the more able pupils to research their work independently. The homework provided for the pupils is appropriate and effective. Discipline is good and questioning is particularly effective to promote pupils' thinking and understanding. Work is presented at a brisk pace. Pupils are always set clear objectives and review their work at the end. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. Parents particularly endorse the positive response the school makes towards these pupils, enabling them to make good progress. However, there is insufficient access to information technology as a medium for research and writing.

110 There is very good co-ordination and management of the subject. The policy and scheme of work provides detailed guidance for the staff. The co-ordinator has begun to analyse test results, which has led to the extra resources that have been purchased. Staff have conducted pupils' assessments together and the co-ordinator has compiled a useful portfolio of children's work matched to National Curriculum levels. Optional tests and informal assessments are carried out at the end of each term and lead to a comprehensive documentation of the progress each pupil is making. Each teacher records pupils' progress in an assessment file. Plans and teaching are monitored effectively. The staff work well with the co-ordinator to implement the National Literacy Strategy throughout the school. The coordinator has a clear picture of the strengths and weaknesses and areas for development. Challenging targets have been set for future improvement. Resources for English are good overall. The quantity and quality of books to support the literacy hour are very good and have been well chosen. The library has a good range of non-fiction books that support individual research by the pupils in Key Stage 2 and there is a satisfactory range of books for pupils in Key Stage 1. Parents make a good contribution in cataloguing the 'Readathon' books used by Year 6 and help in sessions where children can change their books. Parents feel they have been informed well about the literacy hour and the parents have supported fundraising events to buy new books for the library and the literacy hour.

111 The subject is well led by its well-informed subject leaders. Leadership is imaginative and focused sharply upon pupil-progress and raising standards. The teachers recognise this and one of their effective strategies for meeting the pupils' needs is the school's 'Writing Recovery Project' for Year 5 and 6 pupils. The writing of lower attaining pupils is well supported during lessons so that they can successfully put into writing their ideas. This is building up their confidence and self-esteem. Apart from some word-processing that was of an appropriate standard and the use of listening centres for shared reading, little other use of information technology was seen during the inspection. Resources for literacy are excellent. They are of high quality and plentiful and stored efficiently in a separate literacy resources room. The wide range of high quality texts, motivate pupils to read. At the time of the last inspection, standards of drama were criticised. This criticism has been fully addressed and drama is now a strong feature of the school's provision. It contributes very well to the pupils' moral and social development.

Mathematics

112 The 1998 National Curriculum test results for 11 year olds are in line with the national average but well above average for schools in similar circumstances. Although a large percentage of pupils reach the expected level for their age, only a few attained the higher grades. The 1999 test results are similar to that of 1998 although the national comparatives for the present year are not yet available. The attainment of the majority of pupils currently in Year 6 is below average. This position is consistent with the current teacher assessments. When taking account of the trend over the past three

years there has been a steady improvement in pupils' attainment and this improvement has been at a greater rate than the national trend. There are no significant differences between the performance of boys and girls. There is a significant number of pupils on the special educational needs register, and this accounts for the below average attainment at the present time. Standards are broadly the same as at the time of the last inspection.

113 By the age of eleven, the majority of pupils have developed their own strategies for solving problems and recording their findings. Pupils' work in solving problems is visibly improving due to the mental number work that is introduced at the start of each session. They are now beginning to resolve a previous weakness, search for patterns in an organised way and present their findings in a neat and organised manner. There is an understanding by the majority of place value in numbers to 1000 and beyond. They correctly use their tables to answer questions and confidently add and subtract in hundreds tens and units. They solve simple division sums and have a sound basic understanding of fractions, percentages and decimals. Pupils collect and record data on block and line graphs. They make their own graphs using scales on the horizontal and vertical axes. In the majority of pupils there is an ability to extract the data they require from their graphs and charts to find answers to their questions.

114 The 1998 National Curriculum results for seven year olds indicate that attainment is well below average in comparison to national figures for the number of pupils achieving the average level 2. No children achieved at a higher level. Pupils' attainment is also well below average in comparison to similar schools. The attainment of the present Year 2 cohort of pupils is better, although still below average. Although there are no national comparatives for 1999, results are broadly similar to previous years.

115 By the age of seven, many pupils still find it difficult to sustain concentration, and are not confident in explaining how they can work out the answer to a problem. The mental number work at the beginning of each lesson is having a positive impact on standards. Most pupils add and subtract numbers to twenty and beyond. In a minority of pupils there is confidence in counting in twos, fives and tens. They have a basic knowledge of shapes and measurements and know how to collect data to make simple graphs. However, pupils still find it difficult to solve simple problems and to read and make sense of questions. The below average literacy skills of the pupils cause problems for them in mathematics.

116 Pupils make good progress throughout the school during both key stages. In response to the low standards the school has grouped the pupils in Year 6 by their prior attainment. This has enabled the staff to match the content of the lesson and the pace of the work to challenge the pupils more effectively in order to raise standards. These changes and the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy are accelerating the progress of the majority of pupils in Year 6 in particular. The new initiatives, as a direct result of consistently good teaching are having a positive impact on the problem-solving skills of the pupils, particularly in Key Stage 2. The learning in school is then consolidated and reinforced by homework. These initiatives are in their early stages but are already raising standards. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are effectively solving and recording problems in a variety of ways to 20. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils solve the same problem using two different methods and apply what they have learnt to an everyday situation. When the majority of pupils start Key Stage 2, they have limited general knowledge and vocabulary to explain how to solve problems, which inhibits their attainment and progress. Only a small number of pupils attain levels beyond those expected for their age. Numeracy, although in its early stages is developing well in most areas of the curriculum. In the reception class pupils use number rhymes and games to help them learn to count. Throughout Key Stage 1, pupils use money and measurements such as length in a range of contexts. Throughout Key Stage 2, pupils use measurements and graphs in their science experiments and understand timelines as part of their history topics. However, the use of information technology is underdeveloped and pupils

very rarely devise their own experiments and investigations. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to their prior attainment. They have detailed targets, which are regularly reviewed and receive effective support in lessons. Pupils with English as an additional language also make good progress in their work.

117 Pupils' attitudes to learning are excellent in both key stages. They enjoy mathematics, particularly the mental mathematics session at the beginning of each lesson. The majority of pupils listen carefully and respond to questions with enthusiasm. Most persevere with their tasks, even when they find it difficult. Pupils enjoy being challenged as well as their success in solving problems using more than one strategy. They form very good relationships in class with their teachers, other adults and between pupils themselves. Pupils are motivated by the positive comments and suggestions from their teachers and work sensibly on their own or as a part of a small group. Most take a great pride in their work and their books are neat and tidy. These attitudes contribute greatly to their good progress.

118 The quality of teaching is good in both key stages. In 43 per cent of these lessons teaching is very good or excellent and in 50 per cent it is good. There was only one satisfactory lesson. This is a much improved picture since the last inspection where there were some shortcomings in the teaching. The strength in teaching across the school is the implementation of the techniques and organisation suggested by the National Numeracy Strategy. These recent changes have provided a clear lesson framework to ensure a brisk pace to learning. There is an emphasis on developing mental strategies for solving number problems and there are clear signs of improved progress in lessons. Teachers plan their lessons very well, sharing the objectives of each lesson with the pupils. In the best lessons, pupils are provided with a range of activities and there is an effective recap of what they have learned at the end. Teachers hold high expectations of work and behaviour. They achieve a high standard of discipline and pupils work at a good pace. Staff effectively question pupils to ensure they all fully understand important points before moving the lesson onto the next step. They successfully involve all pupils and are supported by good resources. Where teaching is satisfactory, the pace of the work was slower and the expectation of work and behaviour was lower. A strong feature of the teaching is the good subject knowledge of the staff; the development of mathematical vocabulary and the effective use that staff make of assessment to plan pupils' future work. Individual targets have recently been set for Key Stage 2 pupils, to help them improve their work. However many pupils have difficulty in remembering what they are.

119 The school is successfully implementing the National Numeracy Strategy. The curriculum is very effective in providing teachers with detailed targets for the implementation and assessment of pupils' work. The school makes very good provision for special educational needs and their targets are clear and achievable, enabling them to make good progress. There are very good procedures for the assessment of pupils' work and they are effectively used by the staff to plan future work for the pupils. Effective monitoring by the co-ordinators, headteacher and the governors, has resulted in consistent and thorough training and implementation. The resources are good and all staff have worked hard to share their planning and expertise to improve the provision in the school. It is too early to evaluate fully the impact on standards, but from the lessons observed, the good resourcing, effective teaching and consistency in implementation the staff are beginning to raise attainment in mathematics throughout the school.

Science

120 Pupils' make good progress in science throughout the school but their attainment is below the national averages at the end of both key stages.

121 The 1998 National Curriculum test results for eleven year olds are below the national average

but well above average for schools in similar circumstances. Although a large percentage of pupils reach the expected level for their age, no one attained the higher grade. The 1999 test results are similar to that of 1998 although the national comparatives for the present year are not yet available. The attainment of the majority of pupils currently in Year 6 is below average. When taking account of the trend over the past three years there has been a steady improvement in pupils' attainment and this improvement has been at a greater rate than that experienced nationally. There is little variation noted between the performance of boys and girls.

122 Pupils make good progress throughout Key Stage 2, with accelerated progress being made in Year 6. When the majority of pupils start Key Stage 2, they have limited general knowledge, which adversely affects their scientific knowledge and understanding. Many have limited vocabulary and do not explain themselves well enough or have the necessary technical language to aid their explanations. However, the attainment of a very small number of pupils reaches higher levels beyond that expected for their age.

123 The 1998 teacher assessments for seven year olds indicate that attainment is well below average in comparison to national figures and is also well below average in comparison to similar schools. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of life and living processes was particularly poor, as was their ability to experiment and investigate. The attainment of the present Year 2 cohort of pupils is better and although below average when compared to national expectations is significantly better than that indicated by the test results of the previous few years. One of the main reasons why results have been poor in the past is because science has been taught as part of a topic, which did not pay appropriate attention to scientific knowledge. This often resulted in pupils' recording of scientific work being confined to colouring worksheets. This practice no longer exists.

124 When pupils start Key Stage 1 their own poor general knowledge is hampering their ability to develop scientific understanding. However, there is good progress made throughout Year 1, where pupils are using their observation skills to help develop understanding about different aspects of science. For instance, when studying parts of the body they have access to a range of resources that helps them understand about how the body works, and, in particular, which of parts of the body help us with hearing, smelling and seeing. They have ample opportunities to experiment and are able to record their findings in a range of ways. This year, Year 2 pupils are provided with more opportunities to experiment and investigate. This is evident from the planning and the work carried out to date. Previous work completed by Year 2 pupils, shows that there was too much time spent on colouring worksheets and this hindered their progress. Conversations with the present Year 3 pupils confirmed that they do not possess the range of technical vocabulary expected for pupils of their age. However, changes in the way science is taught in the present Year 2 class give every indication that the good progress evident in Year 1 is being maintained in Year 2. As a result of the improved provision in Year 2, there is a greater emphasis on investigating and experimenting and pupils are able to use resources to set up their own electrical circuits and talk about what can happen to break the circuit. They are able to appreciate how electrical appliances can be a major advantage in a home but also to be aware of aspects of safety.

125 Good progress is made throughout Key Stage 2, with particularly good progress being evident in Year 6. One of the main features of the good progress is the way pupils work from 'first-hand' experiences and in the way that teachers question pupils so that they deepen their knowledge. There is also a good range of resources available enabling pupils to find out things for themselves. Year 3 and 4 pupils are able to appreciate that different creatures like living in different habitats. During their studies they confidently set up experiments, which show that they understand about fair tests and keeping careful records. They are able to apply their skills in numeracy to the measurements that they make. The recording of their work is well structured indicating that they are beginning to appreciate why diagrams can be an effective form of recording information. By the time they are in Year 5 pupils are more independent in the way they set about findings things out. During work on forces they are able to

respond to a question, such as, “What will happen if the slope is steeper?” The range of measurements they use is more complex and they frequently use spring balances as well as tape measures. Year 6 pupils make good progress because they apply all the skills that they have been taught throughout Key Stage 2. For instance, pupils studying the function of a flower use appropriate scientific instruments to help them carry out practical tasks. They make appropriate hypothesis because their scientific knowledge is better and they are better prepared to ask pertinent questions as well as drawing sensible conclusions.

126 Throughout the key stage there is very good provision for pupils with special educational needs. Classroom assistants are effectively deployed to ensure that this is the case. As a result, these pupils and pupils who have English as an additional language make good progress. However, there are a few occasions when higher attaining pupils carry out the same tasks as others before moving on to more challenging tasks. In many of these cases the more able pupils could have started with the more challenging tasks because they already have the basic understanding which is covered in the main task.

127 In both key stages, pupils use their literacy and numeracy skills well. They record their findings in different ways, which rely on them using their written and mathematical skills. They research their topics using information books. Measurement skills are required in much of the work carried out and pupils are increasing their skills in this area as they progress through the school. However, at present, they do not make sufficient use made of information technology in science lessons.

128 Pupils’ attitudes to learning are excellent in both key stages. In Key Stage 1, they are keen and excited about scientific work because they enjoy the practical nature of the subject and they respond well when tasks are challenging. They handle equipment appropriately and work well in pairs. This is developed in Key Stage 2 where pupils are good at setting up experiments together and show respect for living things. For instance, a group of Year 4 pupils working with woodlice are aware of the need to return them to their natural habitat after finishing the experiment. Year 5 and 6 pupils have mature attitudes to work, which is seen when aspects of reproduction are discussed in a Year 6 class. Behaviour is very good in all classes and relationships are very good. Any pupil who does occasionally misbehave is quick to settle down after a quiet reminder from the teacher. These attitudes help them to make good progress.

129 The quality of teaching is good in both key stages and is very good in Year 6. In 20 per cent of lessons teaching is very good and in 60 per cent of lessons teaching is good and in 20 per cent of lessons it is satisfactory. Overall, This is a much improved position from that reported in the previous inspection where the teaching in Key Stage 2 was variable. The most outstanding feature of good or very good teaching is the careful use of resources which is stimulating pupils’ interest. In Year 6, for instance, the use of a flower, which the pupils dissect, helps clarify for the pupils the function of each part. The careful questioning is another feature of good teaching. In almost all lessons the teachers are skilful in their questioning. In Year 2, the teacher’s question related to, ‘What would break the circuit?’ provides a catalyst for much investigating. In Year 3/4 the teacher’s question, ‘What does the diagram need to tell you?’ helps pupils to focus their attention on labelling. The methods used in science lessons put much emphasis on giving pupils direct, first-hand experiences. This results in pupils’ learning being positively influenced. The challenge in most lessons is appropriate apart from the few pupils who could start at more demanding levels. For instance, in a Year 4 lesson which had many good features, it was clear that a group of pupils knew about the preferred habitats of woodlice before they observed woodlice showing their preferences. For these few pupils, setting up their own experiments would have provided more challenge.

130 All teachers now have good subject knowledge. In the past the pupils’ work has indicated that teachers in Year 2 have been over-reliant on using inappropriate worksheets with pupils. As a result of monitoring, this practice has been stopped and Year 2 pupils are now encouraged to widen the range of

their recording. Teachers throughout Key Stage 1 are now much more aware of the need to increase pupils' scientific vocabulary. This has resulted in increased scientific knowledge and understanding for the pupils. Another strong feature of teaching is the use made of assessment. Teachers know their pupils and they plan work to take account of this knowledge. Individual targets are set for Key Stage 2 pupils, which are aimed at improving their standards.

131 The school has an appropriate scheme of work for both key stages, although in Key Stage 1 this has only recently been reviewed. Science is taught as part of a theme in Key Stage 1 and until recently this did not guarantee that specific scientific knowledge was being taught. However, recent changes now ensure that pupils are provided with an appropriate scientific background before they move into Key Stage 2. The present planning ensures that there is appropriate attention given to progression in pupils' learning. Assessment arrangements are effective and help teachers focus on the needs of lower attaining pupils in particular. Targets are set for older pupils, which focuses on what they need to do to improve their scientific knowledge and understanding. The monitoring of pupils' work has resulted in improved provision, especially in Key Stage 1 and the co-ordinators are very effective in ensuring that their subject is well resourced. The range of resources available for science is good and this is having a positive impact on standards.

132 When compared to the previous inspection there are many improvements in the provision for science. Teaching is better as is the range of work provided for pupils. Most importantly, there has been a steady improvement in standards at the end of Key Stage 2.

OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES

Information technology

133 The attainment of the majority of pupils currently in Year 6 is well below the national average. They make unsatisfactory progress throughout Key Stage 2. This is mainly as a result of a lack of opportunity for them to use computers as regularly as they need to in order to make good progress. The attainment of the majority of pupils is below average by the age of seven. Throughout Key Stage 1 pupils make satisfactory progress. This is a similar position to the one reported in the previous inspection.

134 Pupils start Key Stage 1 with limited skills in information technology despite the good work that occurs in the nursery. Throughout the key stage they are provided with opportunities to develop their keyboard skills on the limited number of computers available to them. There is an attempt made to improve the skill level of pupils with teachers working with the whole class to try and introduce new skills and programs to them. However, each classroom has just one machine and it is difficult for pupils to have the amount of regular access to the computers to help improve their skills. During the class lesson, Year 1 pupils show that they can remember words like 'delete' and 'return' and know the functions of these two keys. Two able pupils in Year 2, use a program to help them with dictionary skills. They manipulate the 'mouse' appropriately and know how to turn on to a new page. They are familiar with the range of 'icons' associated with the program and can access any part of the program. When using the computer for word processing, most pupils are handicapped by a lack of speed in using the keyboard.

135 During Key Stage 2, where the demands of the curriculum are greater, the limited access to computers is having a detrimental affect on standards. There are good examples of pupils using information technology to support on-going work, especially in history and English. For instance Year 6 pupils are able to use the CD-ROM to print out information regarding famous people like Martin

Luther King and Mahatma Gandhi. They are able to retrieve the information required to help them with their research. There is also evidence of information technology being used successfully to support work on the Ancient Greeks and some geography. Teachers are beginning to be aware of the range of support that can be provided through information technology but the main problem relates to the access that pupils have to the hardware. At present, pupils do not have sustained periods working with computers and therefore their skills are limited. In the area of control technology pupils have very little opportunity to improve their skills.

136 Pupils are very keen to use computers. A group of pupils use computers at lunchtimes and are able to explain to others in their class how to access information. Their attitudes to learning are very good; they are interested and keen to learn. They work well in pairs and share resources appropriately. Pupils persevere with tasks despite having limited skills. Even though it may take them a long time to copy out written extracts they do concentrate well on the task. Standards of behaviour are very good.

137 Very little direct teaching was seen during the inspection and it was not possible to make an overall judgement on teaching. Where teaching was observed it was in Key Stage 1 with teachers working with the whole class using one computer. Although the level of instruction was good the lack of access to the computer for pupils is limiting the progress being made. The level of teacher confidence is satisfactory although a comprehensive audit of teacher skills does not exist at the moment, which makes it difficult for the school to target future professional needs of individuals.

138 The school is at a stage of awaiting the arrival of many new computers to be set up in the computer suite. Much of the work has already been done to ensure that this room will be up and running as soon as the computers arrive. There is a development plan in place for information technology but this is limited by the lack of information about how the plan is to be evaluated and monitored. The plan clearly links developments with improvements in standards.

139 The school does have an appropriate scheme of work and there is some recognition as to what needs to be done to enable the staff to deliver the proposed plans. Assessment procedures are satisfactory. Pupils' work is appropriately assessed annually, but in the light of recent changes procedures are under review. There is a determination to ensure that pupils will have appropriate access once the computer suite is established but at the moment the developments are on hold.

140 The previous inspection report indicated that the school was finding it difficult to provide fully for pupils because of a lack of resources and because of the limited expertise that staff had. The position is very similar except that staff expertise and confidence in the subject is slightly better. Due to the increased demands of the Key Stage 2 curriculum since the last inspection, there is a wider gap between what pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 are currently achieving and what they ought to be achieving.

Religious Education

141 The attainment of the majority of pupils in religious education by the ages of seven and eleven, is in line with the standards expected in the locally Agreed Syllabus. In the previous inspection the attainment of pupils was very similar.

142 By the age of eleven pupils' knowledge of Christianity is appropriately extended. They look at a range of symbols that are significant in the Christian faith. They study the parable of the lost sheep, Daniel in the lion's den and the story of Martha and Mary. They relate these stories to areas of their own lives and understanding. For example, in the assemblies the pupils learn about the wise King

Solomon and the very foolish King Midas and reflect about the thing that he treasured most and had lost through his silliness. The pupils learn about people who use their own particular talents to help other people, for example, the Good Samaritan helping someone who was in deep distress. They learn about Florence Nightingale, Martin Luther King, Mother Teresa, Princess Diana and Bob Geldof, which brings their understanding of commitment and care of others into the present day. They gain an awareness of the impact such people had upon those they helped. The pupils learn about a range of other religions in line with the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus and this helps them to develop respect for the beliefs of others.

143 By the age of seven, the pupils develop a satisfactory understanding of the Christian faith and its beliefs. They learn about autumn and the Harvest of fruit and vegetables. They learn that Harvests occur all over the world, and that farmers gather bananas, grapes and rice when they have been planted, grown and are ready. They realise that many churches have special services of Thanksgiving, where the churches are decorated with flowers and produce and people gather to thank God for the Harvest. The pupils discuss how they have a lot to be grateful for as they have sufficient food to eat. They know that treasures are very personal things and that they do not have to cost a great deal of money and that if the treasures became lost it would cause great sadness.

144 During both key stages pupils, including those with special educational needs make good progress, as they develop their knowledge about stories, people, places, events and celebrations. Their work shows a developmental progression of ideas, understanding and thoughts as the pupils become older. This was particularly seen as the younger pupils studied the Harvest and the older pupils talked about people who used their talents to help other people. The pupils in Year 5 recognised that they all had talents, that they were not always the same as those of their friends and that they should all use their talents. They gain a good awareness of wider social and world issues and relate them well to the opportunities that are available in their own locality.

145 Pupils are interested in religious education. They behave very well in lessons and are willing to listen to and value the thoughts and suggestions of others. The younger pupils are clearly fascinated by their lesson and by the produce the teacher provides. They ask questions and show a willingness to contribute their own personal insights and thoughts in discussions. The older pupils show great empathy for those not as well off as themselves. The pupils relate the work in lessons to every day situations well. This enhances their progress in this subject.

146 The quality of teaching is good in both key stages. In lessons 20 per cent of teaching in Key Stage 2 is very good, in 60 per cent of lessons it is good and in 20 per cent it is satisfactory. The teachers have good subject knowledge and actively try to extend the pupils knowledge and understanding. They are sensitive to the needs of the pupils and they try to involve all the pupils in discussion. They relate the pupils' learning to the needs and insights of the pupils. The teachers encourage the pupils to express their own ideas and thoughts and value those of others. Relationships in the classes are very good and the teachers have very high expectations of the pupils. Teachers' planning is consistent throughout the school and is very good. It is detailed and has a clear progression of ideas. The pupils are well managed and organised with the teachers working hard to involve all the pupils in the lessons. The teachers monitor the pupils as they work, giving good support and guidance. Homework is used to extend the work covered in the lesson, with good guidance given to the pupils on how to tackle the work. In this way staff assess pupils' level of understanding effectively and appropriately question them to develop their thinking further.

147 The new co-ordinator is enthusiastic and is keen to develop her role. There is at present only a draft scheme of work and the co-ordinator sees the development and monitoring of the new scheme as her main priority. There is a collection of good quality artefacts and reference books to support the curriculum. The assessment of religious education is satisfactory. Religious education makes a good

contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, and to their personal development.

Art

148 Although only two art lessons were observed, the scrutiny of pupils' work on display, photographic evidence, teachers' planning and discussion with staff and pupils indicate that the pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress throughout both key stages and achieve standards appropriate to their age. In the previous inspection the pupils achieved a similar standard in their work.

149 By the age of eleven, pupils work to improve their skills developed in Key Stage 1. Pupils in Year 3 work with paint to discover for themselves how different colours are made. There are many cross-curricular themes explored by the pupils in their art curriculum. Pupils in Year 3 draw pictures of Henry the eighth and use as a source of knowledge Holbein's picture of Henry, so supporting their history curriculum. The pupils in Year 6 constructed collages of tiger lilies, the same flowers being studied as part of their science curriculum. The works of Cézanne, Picasso, Kandinsky and Miro are all studied and the pupils look at ways of inspiring their work through the study of these great artists. Observational drawings of musical instruments and flowers show the good progress the pupils make with their close observational work. The pupils make figures from wire after they had studied very carefully the movements of people. The figures were then covered with mod roc and carefully painted.

150 By the age of seven, pupils make their own tools from sticks, leaves and fur fabric in the fashion of the people who lived long ago and paint their pictures on the walls of their 'caves'. They use their own tools as they paint their pictures, using paints they make from soil and berries. They realise the difficulty of working with these primitive tools as they create their animal paintings. They learn to control their brushes and use paint to create paintings of animals, which live in or near water. The pupils use charcoal and chalk to make pictures of animals using ancient cave paintings as an inspiration. Pupils in Year 2, use clay to make vases of different shapes. In one of the classes the pupils had made a life-sized picture of 'Mr Gumpy' from different coloured pieces of material. Pupils extend their knowledge and understanding of art and the work of other artists as they make good progress in skills of drawing and painting and in using a variety of textures, materials and colours in their work. The work they produce is imaginative and creative.

151 Pupils enjoy their art and overall their response is very good. They listen carefully to the guidance given by the class teacher and then try hard with the tasks set. The older pupils in Key Stage 2 become thoroughly engaged in their task and concentrate hard on their pieces of work. They organise their materials well and treat the equipment with care, replacing it carefully after use. They talk enthusiastically about what they have learnt and what they are trying to achieve.

152 The quality of teaching is good in both key stages even though only 2 lessons were observed. The teachers have good subject knowledge, plan their lessons well and give the pupils a range of quality experiences. They teach different techniques well and help the pupils to improve their work. The younger pupils are taught how to mix their own paint from alternative materials. The older pupils are taught how to paint in the style of the Australian aborigines using both ends of the brush. The displays of pupils' work throughout the school increase pupils' self-esteem and make them feel a valued part of the school community. Art makes a significant contribution to the social and cultural life of the school and contributes effectively to other subjects such as geography and history. The subject is very well co-ordinated and the art co-ordinator works hard to promote art throughout the school. The quality and range of resources are good. They are stored appropriately, used effectively and are easily accessible.

Design and Technology

153 No teaching of design and technology was observed during the inspection due to the arrangement of the curriculum. However the scrutiny of pupils work and discussions with staff and pupils indicates that the pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in designing, making and evaluating in both key stages, and achieve standards expected for pupils of their age. In the previous inspection the attainment of the pupils was similar. Design and technology is used effectively by the teachers to support the curriculum in other subject areas.

154 By the age of eleven, pupils continue to develop their skill in book making and they make books about “Amazing Spiders” and “Hairy, Scary Spiders”. They make boats from card that look like the ship that Christopher Columbus sailed. The pupils create dioramas of a river flowing from the mountains to the sea, using card, tissue and art straws effectively. They use card and paper to make a range of masks depicting Ancient Greek Gods. The pupils cut and stick square sectioned wood and card together to make moving fairground toys, all are planned, made and evaluated. The pupils design and make a range of cards including “Thank You” cards in support of their religious education curriculum. Younger pupils in Key Stage 1, use a range of construction sets and malleable materials to make models and artefacts. They create their own designs, and use a range of materials and tools to fulfil them. Pupils use recycled materials and create specific models, for example in Year 2 the pupils made vehicles for Ted to ride in. The pupils in Year 1 designed and made their own moving puppet from card and split pins. All the pupils in Key Stage 1 enjoy making a range of books for their work. The pupils make dictionaries from zigzag books. The younger pupils make their own books of “When Sheep can not sleep”. Staff effectively evaluate pupils’ work and use their assessments well to ensure that pupils make good progress and build on their previous knowledge, understanding and skills. By the time they are eleven, pupils accurately design and make their artefacts and know how to choose the best materials and tools to use for their purposes. The curriculum is broad and includes all the elements of the programme of study for design and technology. It is effective in the way it is linked to other curriculum subjects and pupils learn about the relevance of the subject in relation to their everyday lives.

155 During the inspection no direct teaching of design and technology was observed. Pupils clearly enjoy their design and technology lessons, as they are pleased to talk about their work. The teachers’ planning is clear and follows the scheme of work. There are many opportunities for them to use their literacy and numeracy skills when planning and organising their work, for example by measuring and drawing plans to scale, or by writing accounts of their work. There is an appropriate and helpful scheme of work. There are good procedures for the assessment of pupils’ work at the end of each year. Resources for the subject are good and are stored effectively. At present there is a temporary co-ordinator who is monitoring the subject until the co-ordinator returns from extended leave, but the subject is managed effectively to provide the appropriate guidance to staff for their lesson planning.

Geography

156 Due to the organisation of the curriculum for the term, only one lesson in geography was observed. Scrutiny of pupils’ work, discussions with staff and pupils indicate that the pupils, including those with special educational needs make good progress during both key stages and attain standards normally expected. In the previous report, the pupils attained similar standards.

157 By the age of eleven, pupils use maps to locate physical and human features. They identify reasons for communities settling in different locations, and comment on their attractiveness or

otherwise. Pupils have an awareness of life in other countries and how the physical features and climate influence it. They make use of a variety of sources such as maps, topic books and visits to gain knowledge about the local area. For example, pupils learn to interpret photographs of India and comment on the differences in their lifestyles compared to those of India's children. They develop an understanding of plans and read keys on maps. By the age of seven, pupils know the difference between towns and villages and describe the main features of different geographical locations. They understand maps and identify features such as mountains and rivers. They make their own simple maps of the locality and know something of the world beyond the British Isles. The work at Key Stage 1 encourages pupils to form their own opinions on a locality.

158 Pupils enjoy their work and concentrate well. They are very enthusiastic about finding out information and enjoy using the computer to investigate other countries such as India. They are interested in their visits to the local area, such as the study of the River Dee in Year 5 and to further afield to Colomendy, a residential centre for environmental studies and outdoor pursuits in Wales. Pupils' interest and knowledge and understanding of the local features are broadened as they enjoy contrasting their city environment with the Welsh countryside. This provides an excellent opportunity where pupils further their cultural development and their personal and social skills.

159 The quality of teaching in the lesson observed was satisfactory, but there is insufficient evidence on the basis of one lesson to make an overall judgement. However, the scheme of work is very well planned and organised to ensure that pupils cover the content of the programme of study during their time at school. Pupils' past work shows that activities are planned effectively to build on previous learning and to develop subject skills such as fieldwork and mapping. Clear objectives are set in the teachers' planning and resources are tailored to meet the needs of the children.

160 There is a helpful policy and very effective co-ordination of the subject, which has ensured a rich and well-balanced curriculum for the pupils, which has a positive impact of their attainment and progress and cultural and social development. Staff work closely together with the co-ordinator to plan the curriculum and targets are set for the future. Accommodation is used well. The resources are in good supply, of good quality and accessible to both the staff and the pupils. The co-ordinator ensures that very good use is made of the locality and visits to places of interest, ensuring that pupils learn about their environment at first hand whenever possible.

History

161 The pupils by the age of seven and eleven, make very good progress and they achieve standards above those expected for pupils of their age. Pupils from different groups, including the higher attainers and those with special educational needs make equally very good progress in this subject.

162 Year 6 pupils have a very good sense of chronology and can relate knowledge of one period to other periods of time. They understand that there are different sources of evidence and can relate evidence from different sources to pursue historical enquiry. They do this as they assess factors in favour of and against the likelihood of the Trojan Horse having existed. They look at archeological evidence and at oral tradition. In the decorations of Greek pottery they are able to identify and discuss political bias. This contributes very well to the pupils' language development and literacy. Year 2 pupils are equally skilful. They recognise signs of age such as wearing and discolouration and can talk about the recent past authoritatively in terms of what their parents and grandparents have told them. When discussing the dates on old pennies that they had excavated from the school grounds, they show a very good grasp of how life has changed in the 20th century and of significant events such as the world

wars.

163 During both key stages the pupils empathise very well with the past. Pupils in Year 5, demonstrate a very good understanding of why a poor Victorian child with only a homemade doll could care so much about it. They show exceptionally high standards by the end of Key Stage 2, of being able to criticise evidence reasonably and to draw logical conclusions based upon sound evidence. An especially fine feature of the pupils' progress is their ability to make informed guesses to fill evidence gaps. This is the result of the very good teaching that the pupils receive in both key stages.

164 Relationships between staff and pupils and pupils' attitudes to work are excellent. From Year 1 onwards, teachers ask the pupils about what the pupils think themselves. The pupils are very well behaved and handle artifacts with great care. The subject contributes very well to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For instance, Year 4 pupils very confidently discuss the morality of Henry VIII's actions in terms of the responsibility to set up a dynasty that would stop the country slipping back into the disorder of the 'Wars of the Roses'.

165 The quality of the teaching is very good in both key stages. Teachers have very good subject knowledge; they use correct terminology, they bring history to life, encourage historical questioning, develop the use of evidence by the pupils themselves and they set about fostering the specific skills, knowledge and understanding of historians. A particular strength of the teaching is the way that the teachers bring history alive for children who have generally limited experiences of castles, museums and other firsthand experiences of history. They visit living-history sites; for instance, 'Viking villages' where re-enactors live out Viking daily life. Year 1 pupils handle toys from the past and the Year 2 teachers make very effective use of the school grounds as they set up 'archeological digs' for the Year 2 pupils. In Year 6, the pupils piece together evidence and estimate the character of missing pieces.

166 There is very effective co-ordination of the subject. At the time of the last inspection, standards were criticised at Key Stage 1. The school has successfully resolved this and standards are equally very good at Key Stage 1 and at Key Stage 2. This has been achieved through the successful revision of the syllabus that has resulted in fewer topics, which are explored more deeply than before. There are very good procedures for the assessment of pupils' work and staff use assessment effectively to plan future lessons that build on pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding. The resources are very good. Staff use the local environment very effectively to provide good quality history workshops and teaching in local places of interest which are matched to their topics.

Music

167 All pupils, including those with special educational needs, and in particular those who have tuition from visiting specialist teachers make good progress. They achieve standards appropriate for pupils of their age.

168 During Key Stage 2, pupils build up a repertoire of songs from a wide range of cultures and traditions. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 work in small groups to play simple accompaniments to American folk songs such as Michael Row the Boat Ashore. They identify changes in the mood and melody of compositions and know that the notes determine how the melody changes. They are learning appropriate terms of musical vocabulary such as solo, chorus and melody and have a basic understanding of how elements work together to produce a composition. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils use simple percussion instruments such as xylophones to perform their compositions as they play alongside a tape of Latin American music. During both key stages, there are opportunities for pupils to study the work of some famous composers such as Saint Saens. Pupils with special educational needs are integrated well into the activities and make satisfactory progress on their set targets. By the end of

Key Stage 1, pupils perform simple rhythmic patterns to accompany their songs. Together they tunefully sing a number of songs based around stories such as ‘ Hot Stone Soup’, which they accompany with simple clapping and tapping movements. Pupils demonstrate very good listening skills, enjoy singing and talk about their response to music. At the end of their topic or story, pupils perform their songs and stories to the rest of the school or in assembly, which has a positive impact on their personal and social development.

169 Pupils enjoy music and have very positive attitudes to learning. Their behaviour is very good. Relationships in classes between pupils and other adults are also very good. They sensibly work together in small groups and share their resources. Pupils in Key Stage 2, enjoy listening and responding to music from other cultures such as reggae, Caribbean and Latin American music which makes a significant contribution to pupils’ spiritual and cultural development.

170 The quality of teaching is good at both key stages. The lessons taken by the visiting specialist teacher are very good. In these lessons, a wide range of activities are planned very well to develop the skills of listening, appraising, composing and performing. The curriculum is planned to give pupils a wide experience of music and all pupils are encouraged to participate throughout the lesson. The teachers benefit from attending the lessons of the specialist teacher and gain expertise and subject knowledge. The policy and scheme of work provides appropriate assistance to the non-specialist teachers. Throughout the school, the curriculum is very well planned to build systematically on pupils’ previous learning so they make the progress they should and staff use assessment very effectively in lessons to enable all pupils to achieve the lesson objectives. At certain times of the year, there is more emphasis on music, where pupils are involved in musical productions and accompany their work with a range of percussion instruments and recorders. At other times, pupils successfully complete their topic by playing their compositions and performing their musical plays and stories.

171 Resources are good, well maintained and accessible. Music is well established and well managed in the school and where possible curricular links are made with other subjects. For example a Tudor Dance is studied which deepens pupils’ awareness of that era. Pupils reflect on different types of music, interpreting it by, for example, drawing pictures. The procedures for assessment are good and pupils are rigorously assessed at the end of each term. The curriculum is enriched by visitors to school such as an Indian dancer, and African drummers, and visits out to workshops, which make a positive contribution to pupils’ spiritual and cultural development. The standards in music are broadly similar to those achieved by the pupils during the last inspection.

Physical education

172 The majority of pupils make good progress overall and attain standards that are normally expected for children of this age. A significant number of pupils are achieving beyond that expected for their age, especially in the areas of swimming and games by the age of eleven. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress overall. This is similar to position reported in the previous inspection.

173 By the age of eleven, pupils capitalise on the good physical control that they have developed in Key Stage 1 and are able to show more strength, stamina and suppleness in their movements. During a dance lesson, Year 4 pupils are able to show many movements associated with vehicles on a busy street. However, there is a lack of creativity in their movements. During games lessons, there is a noticeable difference between the standards achieved by boys and girls. In Year 5, most are able to pass a ball along the floor over a distance of 10 metres or more. Some can do so with speed and accuracy, controlling the ball with one foot while passing with the other. By Year 6, during a session where the ball is passed by hand, pupils are beginning to appreciate the need to run into space and use skills like

feinting and moving to get away from an opponent. In each of the lessons, girls are not as quick to move or have the strength to pass over as long a distance. Standards in swimming are good. The majority of pupils are able to swim well beyond 25 metres by the time they are 11 years old and many have developed lifesaving skills.

174 Throughout Key Stage 1, progress is satisfactory. In Year 1, most pupils are able to stretch and hold a balance for a short time. Some are able to move from one point of balance to another showing good control as they do so. They are able to run at different paces and change direction quickly. However, they are still a little unsure about using space and sometimes tend to keep to middle of the hall when moving around. In Year 2 during a dance session it is clear that pupils have moved on so that they involve more emotion in their movements. For instance, some pupils are able to use their fingers and facial expressions effectively when trying to portray sadness or anger. They also use a wider range of their body parts when holding a balance.

175 Most pupils have very good attitudes to learning. They work well together and participate readily in all activities. In Key Stage 1, only a few pupils are reluctant to demonstrate their work and most are very keen to be chosen. In Key Stage 2, pupils enjoy every aspect of their physical education and show that they can co-operate to the extent that they can set up their own small-sided games and make up their own rules as necessary. Pupils' behaviour in all lessons is very good and contributes well to their good progress.

176 The quality of teaching is good overall. It is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2, which is an improvement since the previous inspection. In 20 per cent of lessons, teaching is excellent, in a further 30 per cent it is good and 50 per cent of lessons, it is satisfactory. In Key Stage 1, during dance and gymnastics teachers are very well prepared and use music appropriately to support the work. When a taped broadcast is used, the teacher uses the tape appropriately as an aid to the lesson and does not allow it to dominate the teaching. In some lessons, not enough opportunity is provided for pupils to evaluate each other's movements and the teacher does not use this as an important teaching point. The teachers consistently make the best possible use of the difficult space available to them. Pupils with special educational needs are supported effectively by the staff in their lessons.

177 In Key Stage 2, there is an example of outstanding teaching with the teacher moving from individual skill instruction, which included appropriate attention to technique, to paired, and later small group work. The lesson was outstanding because of the ability of the teacher to intervene at the correct moments to draw the pupils' attention to important points. As the lesson progressed the improvement in the pupils' performance was most noticeable. This resulted in a small-sided game being used at the end of the lesson, which contained many of the elements that had been taught earlier in the lesson. In other Key Stage 2 lessons, demonstration is used well to draw pupils' attention to important techniques and skills. Each lesson is very well organised and there is a maximum amount of time devoted to performing. Pupils are appropriately challenged although there are times when higher attaining pupils could be provided with more challenging tasks. For instance, two such pupils passing a ball to each other at speed and with accuracy could have been told to use their non-dominant leg only so as to increase the challenge for them.

178 There is an effective scheme of work in place, which helps to raise the confidence level of staff when teaching the subject. The school has used outside expertise appropriately to help them devise the scheme. The present planning arrangements help the teachers to build on previous skills and ensure continuity in pupils' learning. The staff are confident in teaching each area of physical education although some feel less secure in the area of dance. Three members of staff have national qualifications for swimming and provide good support to the swimming instructors at the local swimming pool. Outdoor education figures heavily in the school's overall physical education programme. There are opportunities for all pupils to participate in the school's residential visits to North Wales as well as

participate in activities like archery and canoeing at other times of the year. Pupils compete against other schools at football and athletics and the school has a good record of success in this area. During games lessons, pupils experience cricket, rounders, rugby and tennis as well as football and netball. The staff have had appropriate training during which they used a nationally produced video to help them focus on the standards expected for each age group.

179 Despite the difficulties posed by each of the two long and narrow halls, the staff make effective use of the facilities available to them. There is a good sized field and the playground is appropriately marked to help with games lessons.

PART C: INSPECTION DATA

SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE

180 A team of 5 inspectors inspected the school, one of whom was a lay inspector, for an equivalent of nineteen inspection days. Before the inspection began the registered inspector met with the governing body, headteacher and staff of the school. A meeting, attended by sixteen parents was held and an analysis was made of one hundred and seventeen or 31 per cent returned questionnaires from parents.

During the inspection:

- eighty four lessons or parts of lessons were observed in over 48 hours of observation;
- a group of pupils from each year group were heard to read;
- discussions were held with pupils about their work in a range of subjects;
- behaviour in the classrooms, playground, dining room and around the school was observed;
- informal discussions took place with pupils at lunchtimes and with parents;
- pupils work was examined during lessons;
- samples of pupils' past work were examined from each class;
- the register for pupils with special educational needs was examined, plus samples of their work;
- interviews were held with members of the governing body, the headteacher, all teachers, the non-teaching staff and parents;
- teachers were given feedback on the quality of their work;
- the school's planning documents, information relating to the governing body, lesson plans, assessment records, pupils' reports, financial details, information for parents, attendance records, accident reports and the previous inspection report and action plan were read;
- the school's arrangements for the health and safety and child protection procedures were examined.

DATA AND INDICATORS

Pupil data

Unit/School	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
YR – Y6	313	2	118	227
Nursery	16	0	11	0

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers (YR – Y6)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	15
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	21

Education support staff (YR – Y6)

Total number of education support staff:	11
Total aggregate hours worked each week:	258

Qualified teachers (Nursery school, classes or unit)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	8

Education support staff (Nursery school, classes or unit)

Total number of education support staff:	2
Total aggregate hours worked each week:	33

[Primary and Nursery]

Average class size:	26
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Financial data

Financial year:	1998/99
	£
Total Income	639,356.00
Total Expenditure	607,831.00
Expenditure per pupil	1,731.00
Balance brought forward from previous year	118,216.00
Balance carried forward to next year	149,741.00

PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out:

380

Number of questionnaires returned:

117

Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	49	46	3	2	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	63	33	3	1	0
The school handles complaints from parents well	34	54	7	4	1
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	45	52	2	1	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	54	37	8	1	0
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	59	39	0	2	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	44	43	11	1	1
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	46	43	3	6	3
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	46	49	3	1	1
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	39	52	5	3	1
My child(ren) like(s) school	73	22	4	0	1