

# INSPECTION REPORT

**ORRELL LAMBERHEAD GREEN PRIMARY  
SCHOOL**

Wigan

LEA area: Wigan

Unique reference number: 130385

Headteacher: Mrs E E McCann

Reporting inspector: Mr M H Cole  
3369

Dates of inspection: 19<sup>th</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2000

Inspection number: 67341

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

© Crown copyright 2000

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Kershaw Street Orrell Wigan Lancashire
Postcode:	WN5 0AW
Telephone number:	01942 768760
Fax number:	01942 768761
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs S Baker
Date of previous inspection:	28 <sup>th</sup> October 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr M H Cole	Registered inspector	Science Music Equal opportunities	What sort of school is it? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? School's results and achievements What should the school do to improve further?
Mr T Heavey	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its' pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Mrs J Denton	Team inspector	Geography History Areas of learning for children under five	
Ms C Glenis		English	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
Mrs A Hopwood	Team inspector	Art Physical education Special educational needs	The work of the special unit
Mr M Leyland		Mathematics Design and technology	
Mr J Morris		Information and communication technology Religious education	

The inspection contractor was:

Bench Marque Limited  
National Westminster Bank Chambers  
Victoria Street  
Burnham-on-Sea  
Somerset TA18 1AN

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Registrar  
Inspection Quality Division  
The Office for Standards in Education  
Alexandra House  
33 Kingsway  
London WC2B 6SE

## REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>6</b>
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?</b>	<b>11</b>
The school's results and achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
<b>HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>THE UNIT FOR SPECIAL NEEDS – THE 'LEARNING SUPPORT CENTRE'</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b>	<b>30</b>

## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

The school is a large primary school serving 429 boys and girls aged four to eleven. It occupies two sites which are about 300 metres apart (or half a mile by road). Pupils move from one site to the other at the beginning of the school year before their ninth birthday. The urban area served by the school is one of below average social and economic circumstances, a fact reflected in an above average proportion of pupils who are eligible for free school meals. A very small number of pupils is of ethnic minority origin. All pupils speak English as their first language. Pupils enter the school with attainment below the national average, particularly in language skills. The main school has an above average proportion of pupils with special educational needs. In addition the school houses a 'special unit' for Key Stage 2 pupils with statements of special educational need who are drawn from a wide area. This means that the overall proportions of pupils in the school with special needs (42 per cent), and of those with statements of such needs (6.3 per cent), are much higher than in the average school.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

The school shows a good level of effectiveness. Standards compare well with similar schools. Teaching is satisfactory overall and good in some parts of the school. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The school is well led and managed. The school provides good value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- Compared with those in similar schools, pupils achieve good standards in English, mathematics and science
- Pupils' achievements in information and communication technology are above the national standard
- There is good teaching in the Reception classes, in mathematics and science at Key Stage 2, in art at Key Stage 1, and in information and communication technology throughout the school
- The school is well led and managed overall, with headteacher and governors showing very good leadership
- There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs, including those in the special unit, which helps them make good progress
- Pupils have positive attitudes and behave well
- Good provision is made for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
- Pupils receive good support and guidance and their welfare is ensured
- Parents have positive views of the school and experience good communications with it.

#### **What could be improved**

- In some classes teachers do not apply policies for managing pupils' behaviour, marking work, or organising homework with consistent success
- Assessment of pupils' day-to-day progress is not systematic enough to guide planning of future work
- Checks made on the teaching and learning through direct observations and assessments of pupil progress are not sufficient to identify inconsistencies and areas where improvement could be made
- Opportunities across the curriculum for pupils to practise and develop their skills in writing are not sufficiently extensive.

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

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in October 1996. Since then the school has achieved a satisfactory level of overall improvement. There has been improvement in most areas of school life with maintenance of already good performance in others. Standards of pupil attainment have improved. Previously unsatisfactory standards in English and mathematics at Key Stage 2 have been put right so that the school's results now compare favourably with those for similar schools. Teaching and standards in mathematics show good improvement, while in information and communication technology there has been very good improvement. Within the teaching as a whole, the proportion of very good teaching is much improved while the proportion of unsatisfactory lessons has been much reduced. The previous inspection recommended improvements in several areas: teaching and standards in English, mathematics and science; teachers' knowledge in several subjects; assessment of pupils' work; support for new teachers; and monitoring of the curriculum. Since the last inspection all of these matters have been tackled successfully to bring about improvement, though further improvements in monitoring are still required. The school is well placed to meet its realistic targets for raised standards in future.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1997	1998	1999	1999	
English	D	C	D	B	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
mathematics	E	D	E	B	
science	D	E	E	B	

The table shows that in the 1999 tests results were below average in English and well below average in mathematics and science. However, these results must be seen against the background of two factors: (i) that the school has a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs; and (ii) that a substantial proportion of pupils entering the tests had statements of special needs in relation to significant learning difficulties, many of a sort that would particularly hinder their test performance. The grades comparing the school with other similar schools take account of these special factors and show results to be above the average for similar schools. Test results over successive years show a steady improvement. The school meets the realistic targets for improvement it sets.

Inspectors' observations of the standards achieved by present pupils about to leave the school are that they are in line with the national standard in English, mathematics and science. The pupils in this group with statements of special needs experience less difficulty than their counterparts in 1999. Away from the situation of written tests some of these pupils demonstrate attainment which, while below average, is not very far below.

Younger pupils taking national tests at the end of Key Stage 1 in 1999 achieved results in reading, writing and mathematics which were average by national standards. Compared with similar schools results were well above average in reading and above average in writing and mathematics. Results in reading have risen sharply in recent years and the levels in writing and mathematics

have been maintained.

In other subjects, throughout the school, pupils achieve satisfactory standards, but in information and communication technology standards are good. Standards in religious education are satisfactory.

Overall achievement in the school is satisfactory as pupils respond positively to satisfactory teaching that challenges them appropriately. Children in the reception classes achieve well as a result of good teaching. They join these classes in the September before their fifth birthdays and by the end of the reception year attain the learning outcomes officially defined as desirable for the age-group. Pupils with special educational need also achieve well in relation to the individual targets set for them.

### **PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Attitudes to the school	Good; pupils take interest in their activities
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good; the great majority behave well almost all of the time
Personal development and relationships	Satisfactory
Attendance	Satisfactory

Pupils take particular interest in their work in science, information technology and physical education.

### **TEACHING AND LEARNING**

<b>Teaching of pupils:</b>	<b>aged up to 5 years</b>	<b>aged 5-7 years</b>	<b>aged 7-11 years</b>
Lessons seen overall	Good	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

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

Ninety-six per cent of the eighty-five lessons seen during the inspection were of at least satisfactory standard. Fifty-five per cent of all lessons were of good quality, and a third of these were very good. Two lessons of excellent quality, both at Key Stage 2, were seen. Four per cent of lessons were judged unsatisfactory, all of them at Key Stage 2 but in a variety of classes and for a variety of reasons.

Teaching of English is generally satisfactory. However, teachers provide too few opportunities across the curriculum for pupils to practise and develop their skills in writing. Teaching of mathematics is satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2. Numeracy skills are satisfactorily taught across the curriculum. There is good teaching of science at Key Stage 2 and art at Key Stage 1. Teaching of information and communication technology is good throughout the school. Teaching meets the needs of pupils satisfactorily but meets them well in the case of pupils under five and those with special educational needs. Pupils take interest in most of the work, generally concentrate satisfactorily on their tasks and try hard.



## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory overall; broad and balanced, with good support from activities beyond lessons and links with the community
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good; thorough planning of individual education plans based on very careful and early assessment of needs
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good provision for spiritual, moral and social development, and satisfactory provision for cultural development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good care is shown through conscientious and caring attitudes together with good procedures

Within subjects, the learning opportunities for pupils in information and communication technology are a strength. Although satisfactory overall, provision for cultural development gives pupils too little support to develop awareness and appreciation of the variety of cultures other than their own. Guidance and support for pupils is not based on sufficiently frequent assessment of pupils' day-to-day academic progress. The school works well in partnership with parents, keeping them well informed and encouraging their involvement in their children's learning.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good; the headteacher gives very good leadership and overall management is of good quality; the school is true to its aims and values
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very well; governors are very supportive, watchful and well informed about the school's development
The school's evaluation of its performance	Evaluation of whole-school performance in the long-term is very good, but there is not enough detailed short-term evaluation
The strategic use of resources	Good; careful planning and management means resources are efficiently used

Governors and headteacher plan the school's development well and they measure improvement and pupils' long-term progress carefully. The headteacher and some senior staff make some checks on teaching and learning but subject co-ordinators generally do not keep a close enough check either by direct observation or by assessing pupils' short-term progress. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is well managed. Good financial planning and management applies principles of 'best value' effectively. The school has good resources of staff and accommodation, and satisfactory resources of books and equipment to support learning.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<p>That their children</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• like school</li> <li>• behave well</li> <li>• become more mature</li> </ul> <p>That the school</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• is well led and managed</li> <li>• provides good teaching</li> <li>• expects pupils to work hard</li> <li>• is approachable</li> </ul>	<p>A small minority of parents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• would like to see homework improved</li> <li>• feel the school does not work closely with parents</li> <li>• do not feel there are interesting activities outside lessons</li> </ul>

Inspectors' observations support parents' positive view of the school although they judge teaching to be satisfactory rather than good. Inspectors judge homework arrangements to be generally satisfactory though subject to some inconsistencies between classes which may account for some parents' concerns. The school is judged to make a good effort to work closely with parents. The range of activities outside lessons is judged to be good.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and achievements**

1. In the 1999 standard National Curriculum tests for pupils about to leave the school, results were below average in English and well below average in mathematics and science. However, in English and science the proportion of pupils reaching the higher level of attainment (Level 5) within the National Curriculum was in line with the national average. This pattern of results must be seen against the background of two factors: (i) that the school has a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs, and (ii) that a substantial proportion of pupils entering the Key Stage 2 tests had statements of special needs in relation to significant learning difficulties, many of a sort that would particularly hinder their test performance. This accounts for the above-average proportion of pupils who do not reach the expected level of attainment (Level 4) in the tests. Most of the pupils with statements have joined the school only for the last year or two of their primary education, having been taught for most of the time elsewhere. These special factors are set aside when comparing the school's results with those for similar schools. Such a comparison shows the school's results to be above the average for similar schools in all three subjects of English, mathematics and science. When the special factors are taken into account, test results over successive years show a steady improvement, at a rate faster than the national improvement. The school meets the realistic targets for improvement it sets.
2. Inspectors' observations of the standards achieved by present pupils about to leave the school are that they are in line with the national standard in English, mathematics and science. The pupils in this group with statements of special needs experience less difficulty than their counterparts in 1999. Away from the situation of written tests some of these pupils demonstrate attainment which, while below average, is not very far below.
3. Younger pupils taking national tests at the end of Key Stage 1 in 1999 achieved results in reading, writing and mathematics which were average by national standards. At this key stage the proportion of pupils with special educational needs is again above average but there are presently no pupils with statements of special needs. Compared with similar schools, results were well above average in reading and above average in writing and mathematics. Results in reading have risen sharply in recent years and the levels in writing and mathematics have been maintained. Unconfirmed results of the 2000 national tests show an improvement in mathematics with all pupils reaching at least the expected level of attainment and a doubling of the proportion reaching the higher level of attainment. In English there has been an increase in the proportion reaching the higher level in writing, but a drop in those doing so in reading.
4. Pupils enter the school with below average attainment, especially in language skills. However, a good quality and range of learning opportunities and good teaching in the reception classes promotes good achievement that results in most pupils reaching average attainment across the curriculum by the end of their reception year. Thereafter, there is satisfactory achievement as pupils move through the two key stages resulting in the maintenance of national standards in relation to pupils' ages. Most pupils make the gains in knowledge, understanding and skill to be expected, but a significant minority do better, leaving the school with attainment above the expected level. The generally satisfactory, and sometimes good, achievement of pupils reflects the positive attitudes and application to their work found in the great majority of lessons. This in turn is the result of teaching that is generally well planned and organised and which challenges pupils to make appropriate progress.

5. In English standards in reading are average throughout the school. In listening they are above average, but in speaking they are only average, partly because teaching across the curriculum gives too few opportunities for pupils to practise and develop these skills. Writing shows generally satisfactory spelling and sometimes good handwriting, though standards achieved in English lessons are sometimes allowed to slip when pupils are asked to write in other lessons, something that happens too infrequently.
6. In mathematics pupils achieve average standards in most areas of the subject. Good implementation of the recent National Numeracy Strategy has helped many pupils develop good mental mathematics skills, but recall of multiplication and division facts from their tables is a weakness for quite a few pupils.
7. In science pupils' average attainment includes good knowledge and sound understanding, with use of proper scientific terms a strength. Investigative skills develop well in some years but are not sufficiently extended for the oldest and most able pupils.
8. Throughout the school, standards in information and communication technology are good and are better than at the previous inspection. Here pupils throughout the school display what is, for their ages, a good range of skills which they confidently exploit. In all other subjects, including religious education, pupils achieve satisfactory standards. Since the last inspection standards in these subjects have either been maintained or they have risen, as in the case, at Key Stage 2, of art, design and technology and physical education.
9. Almost all pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to their previous attainment and to the targets set for them. This includes pupils with statements at Key Stage 2 who make up the membership of the special unit, the 'Learning Support Centre'. Good progress results from well planned provision for these pupils' needs and the good support they receive from class teachers and support staff. The early and thorough assessment of the youngest pupils' needs on entering the school and the effective support given, are important reasons why almost all pupils reach the expected level of attainment by the time they reach the end of Key Stage 1.
10. Progress in lessons is similar for all groups of pupils whether defined by gender, background or ability. There are no significant differences between boys' and girls' attainments, other than those which reflect the fact that the majority of pupils with special educational needs, especially where they have statements, are boys.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

11. Pupils demonstrate good attitudes and behaviour which, together with satisfactory personal development and relationships, make a significant contribution to pupils' learning by creating a climate within the school that promotes education. This positive approach to learning, identified at the previous inspection, has been sustained since.
12. Pupils' attitudes to the school are good, and their high levels of enthusiasm for school are acknowledged by their parents, 92 per cent of them declaring that their children like coming to school. For their part the pupils were keen to talk to inspectors about their favourite subjects and activities. In the classroom they are eager to answer questions and are able to concentrate on their tasks, working well in groups, especially when given clear guidance. In a Year 6 class, for example, pupils collaborated happily and effectively in research about life in ancient Egypt. Pupils listen politely to their peers, applauding their successes and supporting them when in difficulty.
13. The good behaviour in and around the school noted at the previous inspection has continued, in spite of the increased number of pupils judged to be experiencing emotional

difficulties. The inspectors could see no clear evidence to support concerns of two parents about disruption caused by children with special needs. Most pupils with special needs show good attitudes. They are keen to join in with all classroom activities and to offer answers and ideas and they contribute with confidence.

14. There is no evidence of sexism, racism or bullying. Pupils work and play happily together, but some of the play becomes over-boisterous when not checked by adults in the playground. The good behaviour in the classroom reflects the firm guidance and appropriate challenges set by the teachers and leads to good progress. Pupils have developed a satisfactory understanding of the impact of their actions on others and are learning to respect other people's views, aided by various initiatives such as the Peer Mediation Group and Friendship Groups.
15. Pupils have achieved a satisfactory level in their development of a sense of personal responsibility and citizenship. They eagerly accept duties and responsibilities around the school, even when the satisfaction to be gained is questionable as when on door duty at lunchtime while their friends are playing outside. Acting as play leaders and monitors, or taking part in one of the lunchtime activities such as the debating club, has helped to develop the self-esteem and confidence noted by inspectors in their conversation with groups of pupils.
16. Relationships in the school among pupils themselves and between pupils and adults are satisfactory. There is an atmosphere of warmth and mutual respect, and people are polite with one another. There are, however, a small number of pupils who lack social graces and the sense of mutual tolerance that characterises good citizenship. The school has already targeted these areas for development through various new initiatives such as the Behaviour Management Project whose impact will increasingly benefit the school.
17. The school's attendance rate of 93.6 per cent for 1998/9 is satisfactory, since it is now close to the national average, and has improved for the last two years. Unauthorised absence is slightly better than the national average, and registration procedures and records meet requirements. The good levels of punctuality confirm the view of parents that their children like coming to school – an achievement that is all the greater in view of the difficult social conditions experienced by some pupils.

#### **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?**

18. The overall standard of teaching in the school is satisfactory. Ninety-six per cent of lessons seen during the inspection were of at least satisfactory standard. Fifty-five per cent of all lessons were of good quality, and a third of these were very good. Two lessons of excellent quality, both at Key Stage 2, were seen. Four per cent of lessons were judged unsatisfactory, all of them at Key Stage 2 but in a variety of classes. Teaching in the Reception classes of children under five, and those a little older, was of good quality; here two-thirds of lessons were good.
19. Teaching is good in mathematics and science at Key Stage 2, in art at Key Stage 1, and in information and communication technology throughout the school. In all other subjects teaching is satisfactory.
20. The teaching in literacy and numeracy lessons is having a positive effect on standards, which show an improvement since the last inspection. Lesson organisation is based on the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, with lessons providing a good balance between whole-class, individual and group activities. Planning is detailed, with clear learning objectives for pupils of differing abilities to enable them to improve the development of their ideas and understanding. The new strategies have been particularly successful in improving

the teachers' organisation and methods. This type of planning is generally used in the majority of subjects. The pupils' basic skills in reading, speaking and listening and mental mathematics show good improvement. Teaching of writing in English and problem-solving in mathematics are not yet fully developed.

21. The quality of teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. Their learning needs are effectively addressed by both class teachers and support staff. There is efficient deployment of support staff who work effectively on topics in both literacy and numeracy. Teaching is based on carefully matched individual targets, either in small withdrawal groups or within classes. The work is linked with the topic being covered by the class. On occasions there are opportunities for class teachers to work in a support role whilst the support teacher leads the lesson. The class teacher is provided with a good chance to work closely with individual pupils. In most lessons when the support teacher is taking a group within the class lesson it works well. Occasionally the support teacher speaks too loudly, which causes problems for the class teacher who has difficulty communicating with the rest of the class.
22. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of their subject is generally sound. In mathematics and information and communication technology, all staff have attended recent good quality in-service training, with the result that they are much more confident. The resources for these subjects are of good quality and quantity, helping pupils to work productively and teachers to promote new skills. For example, a Year 6 teacher demonstrated spread-sheets successfully to the whole class, using the projector. Very recent improvements in the school's resources for information and communication technology are being enthusiastically exploited by teachers. For example, in English and mathematics lessons in one class, very effective use was made during the inspection of an 'interactive whiteboard' linked to a computer. By simply touching the board, teacher and pupils were able to move words and numbers around to demonstrate very clearly ideas about sentences or mathematical operations. Teachers use resources well in the majority of subjects. For example, in a Year 1 music lesson they are organised well to give all pupils the opportunity to compose music to match the movements of mini-beasts. In a Year 4 science lesson, examples of decayed foodstuffs gave effective impact to discussion of the effect of micro-organisms.
23. Management of pupils is satisfactory. The majority of teachers use the school 'Give me five' strategy successfully and the pupils respond positively. When teachers are inconsistent in their approach, for example in sometimes allowing calling out during discussions, this can lead to too much noise and distraction from learning. Occasionally teachers' attempts to deal with this by raising their own voices are counter-productive and the result is a noisy classroom. In most classes there is good respect when another pupil is talking because the teacher has established clear guidelines on acceptable behaviour.
24. Most lessons are planned and organised well and provide opportunities for pupils to apply intellectual and creative effort to their work. The best lessons are planned for a range of abilities and challenge pupils at their own level, so they make satisfactory progress in the acquisition of new knowledge and understanding. In some generally satisfactory lessons a weakness is that the work does not fully challenge a few pupils of higher ability. In English, not enough opportunities are provided for pupils to produce pieces of extended writing and there are few chances for pupils to write in religious education and history lessons. The promotion of independence through planned written work varies throughout the school. Teachers are skilled at posing searching questions which encourage independence of thought and learning in discussions, but often the written task does not provide the same challenge.
25. The teachers' enthusiasm and use of resources generally stimulates the interest of the pupils and encourages them to concentrate and take a full part in discussions. Teachers

explain clearly what the pupils are expected to learn in the individual tasks. In group work regular intervention by the teacher ensures that pupils stay on task and collaborate well together. In the majority of lessons there is good interaction between the teacher and pupils. The quality of questioning is good, particularly in lesson introductions when the pupils' previous learning is reviewed. At the end of lessons teachers review the work done and by careful questioning reinforce pupils' learning by getting them to say what they have learned. In some lessons not enough questions are directed at pupils of lower ability, so they lose concentration and interest. This can cause unsatisfactory behaviour. A strength of the school is the teachers' technique of asking pupils to explain their thinking. For example, why they think something is good, as in the evaluation of other pupils' work in a Year 1 physical education lesson. This is a particular strength in the teaching of mathematics when pupils are asked to explain how they found an answer. This technique promotes the pupils' ability to develop their ideas and understanding.

26. During lessons, teachers use questions well to assess how pupils are progressing and then make helpful suggestions to help them make progress. Teachers also make useful informal assessments during the conclusions of lessons through questions which give pupils opportunities to share and reinforce their learning. However, written evaluations of what pupils have learned are not generally made to help teachers with future planning. Teachers have few formal records to record pupils' progress. Marking of pupils' written work varies across the school. Some teachers follow the useful guidelines of the school's marking policy and make helpful comments to guide pupils on improvement, but others rely on comments that are simply encouraging or congratulatory.
27. Homework varies in quality and amount required, from class to class. Reading is practised as are spelling and multiplication tables, but not consistently throughout the school. There is good preparation for secondary education in mathematics with regular homework from textbooks. Pupils are required to mark this work themselves in some classes, reducing its value to both teacher and pupil.

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

28. The quality and range of the curriculum for children under five in the reception classes and at both key stages are satisfactory. The school's curriculum is appropriately balanced and meets the legal requirements of the National Curriculum and religious education. All subjects of the curriculum are taught and generally provide pupils with equality of learning opportunities to prepare them for the next stage of education. Girls and boys have equal access to the curriculum.
29. The school has correctly placed an emphasis on the core subjects of English and mathematics and coverage of science and religious education is appropriate. The curriculum for information and communication technology is very good throughout the school and shows very good improvement since the last inspection, with the exception of control and modelling which needs further development. The school provides a good art curriculum where pupils have opportunities to use a variety of resources and to learn and practise a wide range of skills. There has been improvement in the relevant key issue for action arising from the last inspection which was to produce schemes of work for English and physical education. The school has schemes of work for all subjects providing appropriate breadth of learning opportunities and ensuring progress in pupils' learning. The time allocated to English is appropriately high with additional teaching time being allocated to the development of language and literacy skills. The timetable allows for additional extended writing times but this extra time is used inconsistently at both key stages. The time for mathematics is good and for other subjects is satisfactory. Curriculum time is used

effectively.

30. The school has implemented the National Numeracy Strategy well and this has raised standards of teaching and pupils' attainment. The National Literacy Strategy has been implemented appropriately but opportunities for pupils, particularly at Key Stage 2, to write and spell independently are limited. The strategies provide a clear structure for planning in these subjects and planning for English and mathematics is good. Apart from the limitations in writing, literacy and numeracy skills are reinforced in other curriculum subjects satisfactorily. The whole-school curriculum 'menu' is drawn up by all staff and long-term plans are written by subject managers. Key stage teachers meet once per half-term to prepare medium-term plans and there are weekly meetings to devise short-term plans. Long-term and medium-term plans are sound and short-term planning is good with clear learning objectives or targets for pupils. Staff are wisely phasing the introduction of national subject guidance into their curriculum planning. A strength of the planning is the consistency of planning within year groups which means that pupils in both classes within the year have the same learning opportunities. At the time of the last inspection some planning was unsatisfactory but this has been resolved by improvements in planning at both key stages.
31. The provision for extra-curricular activities is good with several lunch-time clubs offered including sport, music, drama, art and debate. Parents expressed concerns about the arrangements for extra-curricular activities but the inspection did not find these to be unsatisfactory. However, although there are a number of clubs, only a few pupils attend sessions. There are well-organised waiting lists for all clubs but this means that pupils do not have access to these clubs at all times of the year.
32. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good, they have equal access to the curriculum through withdrawal sessions to work in small groups in literacy and numeracy or through being supported in class. Those with more significant needs (at Stage 2 of the Code of Practice and above) are provided with clear and detailed individual education plans which identify the particular areas of the curriculum which need attention. Individual education plans are used effectively to set and review targets and are regularly updated, with parents kept well informed. The assessment of work set for pupils with particular needs is effectively used in the planning of future work. The learning support teachers and assistants generally give good support in classes and in groups. On occasions, support staff interrupt whole-class sessions by talking to pupils at the same time as class teachers and causing a distraction. In one class, with a large number of pupils with pronounced special needs, staff were not used well to support learning, groups were too large and some pupils' behaviour was poor and not monitored well. This inhibited learning for them and their peers. Planning and provision for higher attaining pupils is sound, staff plan activities at different levels of difficulty but these do not always match pupils' prior attainment. Higher attaining pupils occasionally do very similar work to other pupils.
33. Provision for personal, social and health education is satisfactory. Learning opportunities include 'Health Weeks' when the 'Life Education' caravan visits to provide information for pupils to make choices in aspects of their lives. This is well linked to follow-up work in science. There are opportunities for pupils to discuss aspects of life in 'circle times' and in 'peer mediation' to help sort out difficulties in relationships and behaviour. There are satisfactory sex education and drugs education policies and provision, with visiting professionals supporting the school in these aspects of the curriculum. Pupils have regular access to library facilities but opportunities for personal, independent study or research are insufficient.
34. Curriculum provision is enriched by a range of educational visits including a residential visit to Kingswood Centre for outdoor pursuits and information and communication technology activities. Pupils benefit greatly from visitors such as poets, artists, nurses and local clergy.



The school has links with the French town of Angers and some staff and pupils visit during the summer half-term holiday. Access to visits is dependent on pupils and their families being able to pay which means that some pupils do not benefit from them.

35. There are good relationships with the local secondary school, teacher training institutions, art centres and other schools; for example, through sports links. The school has not yet fully explored opportunities for sponsorship from local businesses or commerce.
36. Overall the school makes good provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils. It is developed through the curriculum and by the example set by adults in the school.
37. The spiritual development of the pupils is supported mainly through assemblies and 'circle time', when pupils are encouraged to reflect on their own thoughts and feelings, and sometimes by work in religious education. The requirements for a daily act of worship are met in full. This represents an improvement from the last inspection report when inspectors reported that assemblies did not always promote pupils' spiritual growth. There are strong links with local faith communities and visiting speakers enhance the religious education programme and assemblies. During acts of worship pupils listen attentively and sing with enthusiasm. In a year group assembly, the pupils' worship was effectively enhanced as they sat quietly reflecting thoughtfully as a candle burned, before saying the school prayer. In another assembly, effective questioning by the teacher caused the pupils to reflect on how they should care for each other. Acts of worship are well planned and are enhanced by appropriate music, attractive displays and regular pupil participation. Staff encourage pupils to experience a sense of awe and wonder, as was observed in a lower school assembly when pupils reflected on the sun suddenly shining into the school hall. The school visits the local Methodist Church on a termly basis with pupils playing a major part in the services, an event which is much enjoyed by pupils, parents and staff alike.
38. The school promotes pupils' moral development very well. The staff form good role models and the school's use of its assertive discipline policy is effective in strengthening pupils' understanding of right and wrong. Pupils know and understand classroom rules and carry them out to the best of their ability. Throughout the school 'circle time' is used to explore moral and social issues and assemblies are effectively used to recognise good behaviour with weekly awards. A good system of merits and behaviour points in the upper school, together with an achievement tree in the lower school, are two successful examples of strategies consistently implemented by staff to encourage good behaviour.
39. Pupils are encouraged to relate positively to one another and the provision for pupils' social development is good. A particularly good initiative has been the formation of a friendship group at playtime in the lower school, which encourages pupils with particular problems to play together by providing structured play activities. The school council meets regularly and ideas raised by the pupils are acted on by staff. The range of extra-curricular activities provided at lunchtime also has a positive effect on the social development of the pupils and is much appreciated by all involved. The school helps pupils understand their wider social responsibilities through support for many charities. It recently raised over a thousand pounds for the National Children's Home. In addition, last year the pupils collected food for homeless people as part of their harvest celebrations and sent gifts to Romania at Christmas. At special times of the year pupils also visit members of the local community to take part in organised activities often involving music and singing. The school choir often sings carols at Christmas at local supermarkets to raise funds for good causes.
40. Pupils' cultural experiences are broadened through many subjects in the curriculum especially art, music, literature and religious education. A whole-school topic on the millennium, for example, provided an opportunity for the pupils to reflect on the true meaning

of the millennium celebrations using materials sponsored by a local church. In Key Stage 1, pupils have produced some very good artwork as a result of listening to music from Spain and South America. In Key Stage 2, a visit to the Drumcroom Arts Centre stimulated some attractive pieces of artwork which now compliment the work of a local artist in school. The annual visit to Angers gives some pupils the opportunity to learn about life in France and compare and contrast English and French cultures. Whilst there is satisfactory provision for awareness of the diversity of faiths in religious education, not enough is done to encourage pupils to appreciate and value, on an everyday basis, the diversity of cultures represented in the society within which they live.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

41. The school makes good provision for the welfare, health, safety and personal security of its pupils, resulting in a sense of confidence and wellbeing that promotes learning. Several policies have been renewed and improved since the previous inspection, and the school has introduced a number of initiatives aimed at further improving provision.
42. There are good procedures for monitoring and improving attendance. Fortnightly visits from the education welfare officer include scrutinising of registers and the absence records, as well as discussions with the headteacher and targeted follow-up. The school is well aware of absence patterns and takes appropriate action. Parents are sent their children's attendance score in annual reports on their progress and are frequently reminded in the newsletter about the need to maintain good attendance.
43. Procedures for monitoring and improving behaviour are good because they are so varied. They include incentives that promote a team spirit among the pupils and they include special training sessions for supervisors. The assertive discipline approach is supported via circle time, peer mediation, friendship groups, team points, stickers, charts, star awards and 'VIP' status. All these initiatives point to the school's determination to continue to raise standards of behaviour to improve the education of the pupils.
44. The school works hard to include all pupils with special educational needs in all aspects of the life of the school. The great majority of their teaching goes on in classrooms alongside their peers, with withdrawal being used sparingly yet appropriately. Pupils with behavioural difficulties are encouraged to improve and manage their own behaviour through targets written in their individual education plans. Pupils' special needs are identified as early as possible and where there is any degree of concern, their progress is monitored by class teachers. Many with lower levels of need who go on to the special educational needs register at Stage 1 are able to be removed from the register once they have received specifically targeted support and made appropriate progress.
45. The general monitoring of pupils' academic performance with regard to national and other tests is good. The school uses and records such assessments carefully. Strengths of the monitoring are the variety and thoroughness of the analyses of test results which are well developed and influence groupings and support but not always the planning for individual needs other than special needs.
46. A key issue arising from the last inspection was to improve staff's confidence and expertise in National Curriculum assessment procedures. The school has worked hard on this aspect of assessment and is developing teachers' skills in judging the levels pupils attain. Each year group has a file of work samples as examples of attainment at different levels but there is no school-wide portfolio of assessed work which would help staff to develop their knowledge of expectations for all pupils. Another improvement in assessment since the last inspection is the matching of test results and teachers' assessments.

47. Assessment and recording systems for pupils with special educational needs are well established. Progress is carefully monitored and this information is used to inform future planning.
48. Systems to check and record pupils' progress in literacy and numeracy follow national guidance and are being implemented well in mathematics and satisfactorily in literacy. Reading records are inconsistent. They are generally completed well by Key Stage 1 staff but are generally unsatisfactory at Key Stage 2 where teachers contribute infrequently to these records. Most comments in the records are from parents. There is a good guided-reading record being introduced but its use is not consistent. There are no formal records for writing, speaking and listening – this aspect shows no improvement since the last inspection. Science records are being developed. There is no consistent approach to assessment in other subjects; this is unsatisfactory. The use of assessment to inform planning of future work for pupils is unsatisfactory, leading to some mismatch of work to pupils' prior attainment and hinders pupils' progress. Although the school has good 'tracking' procedures to follow pupils' progress through the school in annual standardised tests there are no systems for checking progress in between these points.
49. There are satisfactory procedures for monitoring and promoting pupils' personal development. The pastoral care and welfare of its pupils are among the school's well publicised main aims, and responsibility for it is effectively delegated. Teachers know their pupils well and are watchful over their personal development, referring concerns to senior staff when necessary. Parents are contacted, by visits to their homes if necessary, in cases of concern. Most parents (92 per cent) say that they feel comfortable about approaching the school with any concerns or problems relating to their children's education. The school knows its pupils well, and deals sympathetically with those who suffer or feel isolated. Friendship Groups which seek out those pupils who appear to be lonely or sad, the Friendship Tree, Buddy Groups and Circle of Friends are among the many means for providing pupils with personal support.
50. The child protection procedures are good, in that the designated person is known to all adults in the school and the arrangements take account of the fact that the two sites are separate. The designated person attends Area Child Protection Committee meetings and training sessions, passing on her knowledge to other adults in the school.
51. The revised health and safety policy includes proper arrangements for first aid on both sites, termly risk assessments and termly fire drills and there are good arrangements for reporting and recording hazards. The school also takes positive steps to improve the healthy eating, for which it has won several awards.
52. The good provision, therefore, that the school makes for the care and welfare of its pupils greatly aids their learning, and is one of its strengths.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

53. The good quality of the school's partnership with parents is a strength. This is particularly valuable in the light of many pupils' difficult social circumstances that might adversely affect their education were it not for the co-operation of school and parents.
54. Parents report that it is a good school where their children like to attend, where the teaching is good, and where their children make good progress. Most parents (73 per cent) also agreed that the school works closely with them, though some 24 per cent of parents disagreed, expressing concerns about homework and the extent of activities for pupils outside lessons. Inspectors found both these aspects to be satisfactory, although they noted some inconsistencies between classes in homework arrangements.
55. The school tries consistently to improve links with parents, providing regular, good quality information about school activities through its informative monthly newsletter. Good annual reports on pupils' progress include their attendance record, a section on social development, a facility for parents to add comments and suggestions as to how parents can contribute to their children's learning. Reports also describe not only what pupils have achieved but also what they could do to improve their work. The twice-yearly parents' evenings provide them with a good opportunity to discuss their children's progress with teachers. The prospectus and the governors' annual reports to parents provide all the required information and offer additional information about the school's programme of activities. More informal contact with parents takes place at the school door in the lower school where a member of staff is always on duty to welcome parents as they bring their children to school.
56. The school works closely with the parents of children with special educational needs and both parents and children are always invited to meetings that concern their children.
57. Parents make a satisfactory contribution overall to their children's learning. Some of them assist their children by listening to them read at home and completing the reading diary. Pupils complete varying amounts of homework, especially in the core subjects, though the inconsistent marking of this work reduces its effectiveness.
58. Several parents, some of whom have attended literacy training, help directly in the classroom, while many more support school events and help out on educational trips, ensuring their children's safety and wellbeing. A much-valued contribution is made by a team of parents and grandparents who provide toast and milk for pupils at the morning break.
59. These various ways in which parents support the school have a beneficial impact on their children's education.

## **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

60. The quality of the leadership and management of the school is good. The headteacher and the governing body are particular strengths within the overall picture, pursuing with determination and enthusiasm a clear commitment to make the school as good as they can. The headteacher's day-to-day leadership provides all associated with the school with a model of high expectations and supportive relationships.
61. At the time of the previous inspection the school had recently emerged from the amalgamation of the previously separate infant and junior schools. Since then much progress has ensured that the school operates in a consistent and united way as a single, well-integrated organisation. This has included successful measures to minimise the inconveniences imposed by the school's split site. The school's special unit for pupils with

statements of special educational need is also a well-managed and well-integrated part of the school. The new governing body for the amalgamated school has also seen much successful development and it is now well-informed and closely involved in steering the school's development. They co-operate closely with senior staff to keep a close check on the school's performance, plan its improvement systematically and show initiative and resourcefulness in implementing plans. The right priorities for development are effectively and energetically tackled. Governors and senior staff also ensure the school meets statutory requirements.

62. School aims and a code of good practice to guide the school's work have been agreed by staff and governors. The life of the school is generally true to these aims and guidelines. More detailed policies for specific aspects of the school's work have also been published. These are mainly in effective operation but there are some inconsistencies in the effectiveness of the practice.
63. Good leadership and management by governors and senior management has resulted in a satisfactory level of overall improvement since the last inspection. There has been improvement in most areas of school life, including standards of pupil attainment, with maintenance of already good performance in others. Some areas demonstrate particular improvement: teaching and standards in mathematics show good improvement, while in information and communication technology there has been very good improvement. Within the teaching, the proportion of very good teaching is much improved while the proportion of unsatisfactory lessons has been much reduced. The previous inspection recommended improvements in several areas: teaching and standards in English, mathematics and science; teachers' knowledge in several subjects; assessment of pupils' work; support for new teachers; and monitoring of the curriculum. Since the last inspection all of these matters have been tackled successfully to bring about improvement, though further improvements in monitoring are still required.
64. School improvement reflects good developments in management processes themselves. The headteacher has adopted good procedures for monitoring the performance of the school through two main approaches. First, she leads senior staff effectively in making direct observations of the quality of the teaching and learning. She is a frequent visitor to lessons and, despite the school's large size and split site, has acquired a good understanding of strengths and weaknesses in the teaching and learning across the school on this basis. Checks on teaching and learning have also been carried out with the support of advisory staff of the local authority. Senior staff, too, have made checks focusing specifically, for example, on work in English and mathematics, on teachers' lesson planning and on their questioning techniques. Second, good procedures have been adopted for measuring all pupils' long-term progress in English and mathematics by comparing their performance in standard tests each year with their previous performances. On this basis targets are set for pupils' future achievement. Information from all these sources has been well used as a basis for planning school development, including support for staff and relevant training.
65. Although these means for monitoring the school's performance are valuable they are not sufficient to ensure further improvement in the school. This is evident from the fact that some inconsistencies are found in the application within classrooms of some policies such as those for marking work, for managing behaviour and for organising homework, including reading. Although generally conscientious about their responsibilities, most subject co-ordinators are not keeping a close enough check on performance in their subjects. There is not enough monitoring of the day-to-day effectiveness of teaching or assessment of pupils' progress to identify inconsistencies between teachers and to bring areas of weakness up to the good standard of other areas.

66. The management of the school's provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. There are clear, well-designed systems which are efficiently operated and all statutory requirements for the provision are met. Staff involved meet regularly to review their work and make necessary adjustments. The governor designated to focus on this aspect of the school's work is closely and actively involved and well informed.
67. Successful development of the school has been helped by the school's very good financial planning which ensures development priorities are well supported by suitable allocation of funds and resources. Staff and governors are clear about the school's priorities and through the work of the finance committee the governors are fully involved in the formulation and monitoring of the school budget. Governors evaluate all spending decisions against the impact they have in relation to the aims and priorities of the school, ensuring best value for money. Financial controls, procedures and planning are effective and the recommendations contained in the most recent audit report have been acted on. Day-to-day routines are unobtrusive, efficient and effectively support the work of the school. The school's bursar provides regularly updated financial information to the governing body and plays an important role in the financial management of the school. Budget surpluses are strategically planned for and the school has appropriate measures in place for unforeseen circumstances.
68. Funding for pupils with special educational needs is used appropriately and effectively. Finance allocated by the local education authority for the support of pupils with statements of special educational needs is used well to support pupils' progress. The school has also accessed specific grants to facilitate school improvement and funds have been appropriately targeted. This has resulted, for example, in creating a new lower school library and significantly enhancing the school's provision of information technology.
69. Overall, when considering the socio-economic circumstances of the children and their attainment on entry, the quality of the teaching, the standards of attainment and the level of financial resources, the school provides good value for money.
70. The school has good resources of staff. Since the last inspection, staff in-service training and the adoption of new schemes have ensured that staff now satisfactorily meet the demands of the National Curriculum in design and technology, information technology and physical education, overcoming previous shortcomings. The teachers and members of the non-teaching staff have settled down into one cohesive staff, which is a credit to all concerned, when the distance between the two buildings is taken into consideration. Staff unity is aided by the attendance of non-teaching staff at training events and other meetings and by the sharing of the co-ordination of mathematics, English and information and communication technology between teachers from both school sites. The inclusion of staff and pupils from the learning support centre generally works well, with class teachers and support staff working together to provide for all pupils' needs.
71. An effective appraisal system achieves satisfactorily the governing body's aims to set performance targets for all staff, including the headteacher, and reviews their success each year. The headteacher organises efficient personal development reviews for all teaching and non-teaching staff. Targets from the previous year are reviewed, evaluated thoroughly and new targets set. Personal development issues are discussed along with suitable in-service training. Key tasks relating to specific areas of responsibility are agreed before changes are made in job descriptions.
72. The school provides effective induction of new members of staff through a personal development discussion with the headteacher. This is very detailed and covers all areas of the new member's duties. A fully detailed job description is agreed. The school is an effective provider of initial teacher training. Students are provided with well-qualified mentors and there are good relationships with colleges. These are areas of improvement since the

last inspection.

73. The overall quality of the school's accommodation is good on both sites, providing a spacious, clean, comfortable and stimulating environment that is conducive to learning. The classroom accommodation in the upper school is somewhat cramped, but not to the extent that it adversely affects learning. The bright, spacious teaching areas are supplemented by generously proportioned hard and soft external activity areas where pupils can run freely and play team games or watch the farm animals in neighbouring fields.
74. The school has sufficient resources of books and equipment in all subjects. Resources for information and communication technology are very good. They are also put to very good use both in the teaching and in school administration, for example to keep records on pupils' test scores or attendance records. In English lessons there is good use of audio equipment by pupils. Equipment such as overhead projectors and large and small whiteboards, including an interactive whiteboard linked to a computer, are used well by staff. Resources are good in art and physical education and allow pupils to explore the full range of physical and creative activities. The libraries are well-stocked although books do not relate sufficiently to the diversity of cultures. Apart from the well-organised timetabled sessions, the libraries are underused for independent research and personal study. The school has improved its resources, particularly for art, since the last inspection and maintained its good standards in library and special educational needs provision.

## **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

In order to raise standards and improve the quality of education further, the school should:

- (i) Ensure all teachers apply with consistent success the school's policies for:
- managing behaviour;
  - marking work;
  - providing homework;
  - setting challenging tasks for every pupil on all occasions.
- (Paragraphs 21, 23-27)*
- (ii) Make more systematic assessments of pupils' progress in the short term and use this information for precise planning of future work for individuals and groups.
- (Paragraphs 26, 48, 116, 133, 151, 156, 163, 169, 184)*
- (iii) Extend to all staff with management responsibilities, including subject co-ordinators, participation in regular checks on the effectiveness of teaching and learning through:
- direct observations of teaching and learning in action;
  - analysis of samples of pupils' written work and other achievements;

– analysis of assessment information;

and plan specific actions to tackle inconsistencies and areas for improvement identified.

*(Paragraphs 65, 116, 127, 133, 142, 146, 151, 156, 163, 169, 184)*

- (iv) Provide more opportunities across the curriculum for pupils to practise and develop their skills in writing, ensuring that the expectations for the quality of such writing are consistently high and in line with those in the lessons dedicated to literacy.

*(Paragraphs 5, 30, 109, 115)*

### **OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL**

- Providing more opportunities in lessons across the curriculum for pupils to develop their speaking skills.

*(Paragraph 105)*

- Ensuring teachers' use of home-reading records is consistently thorough.

*(Paragraph 107)*

- Encouraging more independent use of the libraries by pupils.

*(Paragraphs 74, 108)*

- Tackling distraction from learning that sometimes occurs when class teachers and support teachers talk to different groups in the same room.

*(Paragraphs 32, 78)*

- Provide more opportunities for pupils to appreciate and value, on an everyday basis, the diversity of cultures represented in the society within which they live.

*(Paragraph 40)*



## THE UNIT FOR SPECIAL NEEDS – THE ‘LEARNING SUPPORT CENTRE’

75. The school provides a special needs unit for 36 pupils with moderate learning difficulties in Key Stage 2 and accommodation which constitutes the base for this provision is on the upper school site. The unit currently has 27 pupils who have statements of special educational needs but these pupils spend the vast majority of their time fully integrated into mainstream classes and are withdrawn for specialist support on a limited number of occasions. Support teachers and other support staff are deployed to support pupils in these mainstream lessons, which is working successfully in the main and is constantly being reviewed by the special needs manager. The management and organisation systems developed by the school to oversee this provision are good and all statutory requirements are fully met in terms of annual reviews and meeting the needs outlined in individual statements.
76. The range of special needs which this provision caters for has broadened and pupils display a wide range of differing needs which the school is responding to well. Several pupils have noticeable behavioural difficulties and these pupils are well managed by staff for the vast majority of the time. Specialist work in the areas of speech and language and specific learning difficulties is sound and sensitively delivered within the learning support centre.
77. The class which caters for a large number of pupils with special needs in Years 5 and 6 provides good levels of challenge for these pupils. Teaching is well planned and very well matched to the learning needs of the pupils. The working relationship between the class teacher and support staff is strong and effective, with the support teacher leading the lesson on occasions and the class teacher providing the support.
78. This is not quite so effectively managed in other classes, particularly those with high pupil numbers and a range of more complex special needs, and is particularly apparent during literacy and numeracy lessons. The school is aware of this and constantly reviewing the most effective and efficient way to deploy their good range of support staff.
79. In the vast majority of lessons the model of integration is working well and relationships between pupils are of a supportive nature, where most are very willing to assist others who may be finding tasks more difficult. Class teachers plan well for the special needs pupils in their lessons and tasks are usually well matched to abilities.
80. Special needs staff meet on a regular basis to discuss individual pupil progress but are essentially a central part of the school’s staffing team and a valuable asset in the support role which they play. They are well supported by specialist services from outside the school. Individual education plans have clear and appropriate targets which are carefully worked towards and are regularly reviewed.
81. As a result of this carefully planned provision, which the school has supported well both in terms of appropriate staffing and resources, the pupils who it caters for make good progress and are very much a part of all aspects of the whole life of the school.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	84
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	26

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
2	16	37	41	4	0	0

The table gives the percentage of teaching observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

### Information about the school's pupils

#### Pupils on the school's roll

Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	429
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	87

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	27
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	178

#### English as an additional language

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

#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	9
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	20

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

Authorised absence	%
School data	6.2
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.3
National comparative data	0.5

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	23	31	54

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	20	20	22
	Girls	27	29	30
	Total	47	49	52
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	87 (87)	91 (87)	96 (98)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	20	22	22
	Girls	29	31	31
	Total	49	53	53
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	91 (89)	98 (98)	98 (100)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	38	32	70

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	22	22	26
	Girls	23	22	26
	Total	45	44	52
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	64 (67)	63 (52)	74 (56)
	National	70 (63)	69 (62)	78 (68)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	233	22	24
	Girls	24	24	26
	Total	47	46	50
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	67 (68)	66 (62)	71 (70)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (71)

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

## Exclusions in the last school year

### Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	3
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	426
Any other minority ethnic group	0

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	8	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

### Teachers and classes

#### Qualified teachers and classes:

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	24
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.6
Average class size	28.6

#### Education support staff:

Total number of education support staff	13
Total aggregate hours worked per week	288

### Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
----------------	-----------

	£
Total income	994,361
Total expenditure	1,049,239
Expenditure per pupil	2364
Balance brought forward from previous year	100,211
Balance carried forward to next year	45,333

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	429
Number of questionnaires returned	93

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	46	46	7	1	1
My child is making good progress in school.	50	36	10	2	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	29	60	7	1	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	31	38	21	6	4
The teaching is good.	57	29	9	1	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	42	42	10	6	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	59	33	6	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	61	33	3	2	0
The school works closely with parents.	33	40	16	8	3
The school is well led and managed.	52	31	6	1	10
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	51	38	4	6	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	23	33	18	7	19

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

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE**

82. The Reception year fully prepares children for the start of the National Curriculum in Key Stage 1. Children enter the two reception classes in the September after their fourth birthday, giving a wide age range within the intake. They spend their first two weeks attending part-time, older children in the morning, younger in the afternoon and then attend full-time altogether. Most children have had some part-time pre-school experience through a local authority nursery, or the independent 'Headstart' nursery on the school site. At the time of the inspection, only seven children were aged under five. No children have English as an additional language, but two children under five are on the register for special educational needs.
83. On entry to the reception classes, children's attainment is below average, especially in language and literacy, but also in mathematics and personal and social development. This is confirmed by early assessment of children entering the reception classes.

#### *Personal and social*

84. By the age of five, most children reach the officially defined Desirable Learning Outcomes in this area. They work well together in sand play to create an airport or take turns in water play when exploring floating or sinking boats. They show independence and concentration in a range of practical activities with paint, glue and when using the computer. They are beginning to show personal responsibility when tidying up sand and bricks or role-play activities. When preparing for a physical education lesson, they change sensibly and with minimal help, and show independence in personal hygiene. During a thoughtful time about happiness and sadness, children are able to identify how to improve the situation. They experience reverence and awe through making a famous religious painting come alive and being part of it. Through exploring the Chinese Year of the Dragon, eating Chinese food and having dressing up clothes and a video presentation, they learn something of a culture different from their own.
85. The quality of teaching in this area is good. Children make good gains in their learning through the examples set for them by collaboration of adults in their rooms. As a result, they develop a respect for the rights of others and make friendships with each other. Teachers provide activities that promote working together in the role-play or building an aeroplane for outdoor activity as well as sharing the computer. Through this, children gain growing independence in making choices. Respect for other cultures is promoted through exploring the Chinese New Year of the Dragon and sensitive inclusion is made of a child withdrawn from religious instruction time by allowing him opportunity to speak of his activities when he returns to the classroom. Children are managed well to finish an activity or tidy away by being given an advance warning and this contributes to the children learning the efficient organisation at this time and gathering together to review their learning.

#### *Language and literacy*

86. By the age of five, the children do not all meet the Desirable Learning Outcomes for this area, but higher attaining children do. However, by the end of the reception year the majority of children do reach this standard and are ready for the National Curriculum when entering Key Stage 1. A limited vocabulary prevents a significant number of children speaking fluently when replying to questions or holding a conversation. By age five, they join in with stories adding missing words to well-known stories such as 'Goldilocks', and they sing songs and rhymes. They join in role-play in the 'airport' corner and develop language for buying food or suggesting where they may go on holiday, such as Blackpool or Mallorca. The majority of

children like books and by age five know how to handle one and 'read' by using the pictures as a guide. Not all are careful with the books when turning pages. Higher attaining children read simple text with fluency and know some letter sounds that they use to spell out a new word. When writing, under-fives make good attempts to form letters correctly and use them to write at least their first name. They trace over or write under the teachers writing with care. Higher attaining children have better formed letters and use these to write sentences that have recognisable words and content. They use sounds to make rhyming words such as 'fun' and 'run' and write both names using large and small letters. All pupils are aware of different forms of writing when they make lists or cards in the writing area and 'take bookings' at the 'travel agents'.

87. The quality of teaching is good in language and literacy, which results in children making good gains in their learning, especially in listening skills and the development of vocabulary, which is emphasised effectively for understanding in learning situations. Listening skills are promoted well through reading 'big book' stories and visual resources, such as puppets, help to extend their concentration skills. Reading skills are promoted well through guidance from the National Literacy Strategy which results in children gaining confidence with books and knowing how a book is read. Activities such as sequencing pictures, matching words and magnetic alphabet letters are used effectively to ensure a secure understanding of language, words and letter sounds. This is enhanced by provision of stories on the computer which they hear through their own operation of the controls. Parents are encouraged to help in their children's reading through home diaries. Activities such as role-play in the 'travel agents' and 'airport café' give opportunity for children to practise new language in a real life setting. Children with special educational needs are well supported to make good gains in their learning towards targets set for them. Management of all groups of pupils is good and sensitive planning of a range of practical and recorded activities ensures that children are keen to respond to the challenges set at the correct level for their abilities.

### *Mathematics*

88. Most children reach the Desirable Learning Outcomes in this area by the age of five. They count to ten forwards and backward and higher attainers use numbers beyond this. Through using practical equipment, they understand 'one more' or 'less' than a number, and higher attainers combine numbers to five and seven and record them pictorially or with numbers. They sort long and short shapes and understand the passage of time through the day. When handling bricks, they recognise that some are heavier than others and begin to understand and use language of distance when using a robot toy. They recognise shapes such as circles, squares, rectangles and triangles by their size and corners. Higher attaining children recognise cones, cuboids and cylinders and test for rolling or sliding properties. They explore the use of shape when making pictures of aeroplanes or other vehicles and use language to describe the position of their shape above, under or next to another shape.
89. The quality of teaching is good in mathematics and children make good gains in their learning. Planning from recent government guidelines for mathematics ensures children acquire good counting skills and recognition of numbers, shapes and measurement of distance, time, weight and volume. Good organisation of a range of practical activities results in children concentrating and enjoying the opportunity to explore new learning and language, such as when feeling and describing a shape's sides or corners. Well-focused questions and well-targeted activities allows children of differing abilities to achieve the goal set and includes children with special educational needs to be supported well to achieve targets set for them. The provision of role-play opportunities helps develop mathematical language in discussing times for a flight from the airport and an understanding of the use of money as change is given after paying in the café. Discussions at the end of mathematics sessions are used well by teachers to assess the amount of learning that has taken place. Innovative ways using puppets, guessing games or 'interviewing' a child to find the hidden

shape give all children the opportunity to listen carefully and speak to each other using their gains in language.

#### *Knowledge and understanding of the world*

90. Most children achieve the Desirable Learning Outcomes in this area by the age of five, although often show a limited ability to describe what they know, fluently, through limitations of language. They know the names of streets and shops where they live. They know about younger or older brothers and sisters and visits to Blackpool they have made in the past. They know about routes around school that take them to the hall, out to play or the secretary's office. They enhanced their environment by helping to paint flowers on a courtyard wall to brighten the area and carefully water the plants growing there and notice the changes taking place in their growth. Through a visit to Liverpool, they gained a wider knowledge of methods of travel, which has helped them understand a world beyond Wigan, and beyond this country, that may be reached by boat or aeroplane. When making some of these vehicles, they use a range of joining skills such as gluing parts together and using paper fasteners and nails to attach wheels. They build with a range of different size construction equipment to make vehicles to take them on an imaginary journey. They make skilful use of listening stations for stories and of computers to enhance their learning by operating controls for stories or number games in different directions.
91. Teaching is good in this area and is well planned to extend the understanding of children beyond their own area and develop language with which to talk about their experiences. As a result, children make good gains in knowledge and understanding as they show enthusiasm for talking about forms of travel, making vehicles with great concentration and develop scientific predictions as they explore whether their home-made boats will float or sink. Pupils with special educational needs are patiently supported to safely achieve the same skills as others in the class. The effective use of all adults in the team enriches pupils' learning by providing a good balance of planned, safe opportunities, such as exploring, cutting and joining, floating, sinking and programming a robot toy.

#### *Creative development*

92. Most children meet the Desirable Learning Outcomes for this area by the time they are five. They sing songs tunefully in assemblies and sometimes to tape-recorded music in class. They explore a range of rhythms and clap these out. When using musical instruments, they work together well to perform a class composition about travel. They understand the way dough can be moulded as they make shapes from numeracy lessons. They know the way that different kinds of construction fits together and which kind is best for building vehicles with wheels that move easily. Through the exploration of journeys they are using imagination to make pretend visits or prepare for them. In art work, they use a widening range of materials to explore pictures and pattern in two- or three-dimensions, such as making wooden models that had nailed wheels in Class 1, or path patterns using materials, glue and paint.
93. Teaching is satisfactory overall in creative development and it is good in the aspect of provision for musical understanding. Planning for music promotes good listening skills that result in children persevering very well to suggest and reproduce sounds to match the noise a boat, car or aeroplane may make. A very visual resource for a music score that is understood by the children aids their concentration as they work together in a large group. Activities to promote children's exploration through sight, touch and smell, incorporates sensitive intervention to promote language skills and extend vocabulary with a range of art and craft materials. Through role-play, indoors and out, they promote the development of imaginative play. They ensure all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make at least sound progress in this area and promote good gains in musical



understanding.

### *Physical Development*

94. By the age of five, most children achieve the Desirable Learning Outcomes in this area. They move around the classroom and corridors confidently and are aware of others, but in the large hall they are less secure in using personal space. They use and hold pencils and paintbrushes with the control expected of their age. They throw and catch a range of different size balls and work well in pairs to control a ball with their feet. They climb and balance safely on different kinds of apparatus in the hall and outdoors. However, outdoor play with large apparatus and wheeled toys is currently limited until the safe area has its slabbed area extended and central fence removed. Children ride tricycles, scooters and use push-and-pull toys safely when the opportunities are given. They demonstrate increasing control, expected for their age, as they handle pencils, crayons, brushes and glue sticks and when using hammers, musical instruments or carrying water in a can for the plants.
95. Teaching is satisfactory overall in this area and children make satisfactory gains in their learning. Provision for outdoor play has improved since the last inspection and this is now an integral part of teachers' plans, but there is not yet enough space for higher climbing frames or tricycles to be included on a daily basis. This limits the opportunities for progress children make in their physical development, learning of safety and imaginative play. Teachers plan carefully for all areas of physical development and use the outdoor area as frequently as possible, resulting in children making gains in imaginative play and climbing and balancing at a low level on the large construction apparatus. Activities are effectively organised for children to gain skills in the use of a range of tools safely and children with special educational needs are well supported to ensure their success. The way activities are organised in small groups results in children learning to share equipment and talk to each other, with sensitive language development being promoted by an adult.

### *Other aspects*

96. There is a satisfactory curriculum for children under five. It is based on the appropriate areas of learning for children of this age, but does not yet include new guidance to be used from September 2000. However, current planning links well to the start of the National Curriculum. The quality and range of opportunities for learning are good and uses guidance from the National Literacy and Numeracy initiatives. Reception staff work well together to plan and ensure equality of opportunity for all pupils, challenge the higher attainers and ensure support for children with special educational needs.
97. There is a good range of both formal and informal assessment procedures that are used well to inform planning and record children's progress. The comparison of formal assessments from the beginning and end of the reception year indicates the good gains made over the year. Parent helpers, trained by the school, support children's learning in school sessions and co-operate with early reading support and sharing books with children at home.
98. The early years co-ordinator has a clear vision for development of this area. She liaises well with parents and pre-school providers and arranges visits for new children. She encourages a co-operative working environment with all staff for the benefit of the children. All staff working with under-fives are suitably qualified and classroom assistants have received training.
99. Accommodation indoors is adequate for the needs of children, but outdoors awaits improvement through current plans for an extra paved area and removal of a central fence. There is no covered way for the extension of outdoor play. Resources are adequate to meet

most needs, but thought should be given to extending clothes and utensils for role-play to make children more aware of cultural diversity.

## ENGLISH

100. The oldest pupils taking the 1999 National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 2 achieved results well below the national average. However, the proportion of pupils reaching the higher level of attainment (Level 5) was close to the national average and above average for similar schools. The overall picture of results in 1999 was influenced by the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs, especially those with statements of their needs. This is allowed for in a comparison with similar schools which shows overall results to be above the average for similar schools. The school has maintained standards overall since the last inspection but improved the number of pupils achieving higher levels. Girls do better than boys, reflecting a preponderance of boys amongst pupils with special educational needs. Results from the past three years show significant improvement. Present pupils completing Key Stage 2 are shown by inspection judgements to achieve standards in English which are in line with the national standard.
101. Younger pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 taking the 1999 National Curriculum tests achieved results close to the national average in both reading and writing. Compared with similar schools, results were well above average in reading and above average in writing. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher level of attainment (Level 3) was close to the national average in reading but well below it in writing. However, the unverified results of this year's tests show a significant improvement in the proportion of pupils reaching the higher level in writing, though there has also been a drop in those achieving the level in reading. Girls outperformed boys in reading but not as significantly as in the national pattern. Boys and girls performed equally well in writing. Results from the past three years show significant improvement in reading. Writing standards remained above average between 1996 and 1998 with a very slight fall in 1999 but still in line with the national average. Inspection judgements based on lesson observations and examination of past written work show overall standards in English at Key Stage 1 to be in line with the national standard.
102. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Some are withdrawn from classes for support but this links in well with the lesson in class. However these pupils would benefit from some whole-class shared reading and writing sessions before withdrawal to enhance their awareness of a range of texts.
103. Throughout the school pupils' listening skills are above average. They usually listen well to staff and fellow pupils in whole-class and small group sessions. Listening standards are good not only in English but across the curriculum. This is an improvement on the findings of the last inspection. Pupils' listening skills enhance their learning and contribute to the good behaviour.
104. Pupils' speaking skills are broadly in line with the national average at both key stages. However, in a number of English lessons, staff do not encourage pupils to articulate or use volume appropriately and standards are unsatisfactory. Some teachers tell pupils they cannot be heard but then move to another pupil for an answer, not giving the former pupil a chance to improve. Pupils can use language effectively in formal situations when given the opportunity. This finding reflects partially the situation found in the last report but there has been an overall improvement. Staff use the 'literacy hour' lessons to provide opportunities for speaking when discussing features of print or texts. Most pupils can answer questions accurately; for example, when discussing stories or characters. Even pupils who are confident speakers sometimes use limited vocabulary and sentence structures; for

example, Year 5 pupils during an interesting debate about a 'new motorway'.

105. By the end of both key stages, pupils' reading skills are broadly in line with the national average. The school has maintained reading standards since the last inspection. Individual pupils read a range of texts fluently and show good comprehension of books, events or characters. Most Key Stage 1 pupils can recognise words in a simple text and they can read with expression in whole-class contexts such as shared reading of 'big books'. They understand what they read and can make relevant comments about similarities within the structure of words; for example, rhyming words. Staff use whole-class shared reading well in many subjects, for example using 'big books' in science, and use a range of fiction and non-fiction texts in English lessons.
106. By the end of Key Stage 2 almost all pupils read independently, can express preferences in response to texts and understand significant ideas and events in books. Some pupils know and can discuss a wide range of books and authors but a good many do not. Some of the oldest pupils in the sample of pupils who read to inspectors were unable to name more than one author, although most could name a favourite book. Throughout the school some of the higher attaining pupils were reading more difficult books at home than their school reading books; for example, a Year 2 pupil was reading Enid Blyton books and a Year 4 pupil was reading books written by Roald Dahl. These mismatches of readers' abilities and their reading books may be related to the unsatisfactory records kept by teachers at Key Stage 2 and a minority of teachers at Key Stage 1. Of those pupils who read to inspectors most home-reading records were dominated by parent comments and there is very little recording of pupils' progress by teachers other than a list of books pupils read and the date they started. These indicate that a number of pupils have had the same reading book for a long period of time. Parents contribute significantly to pupils' progress in reading.
107. A strength of the reading curriculum is the regular access to libraries where pupils choose and change books. The Key Stage 2 library lesson observed by an inspector was well organised by the librarian and the class teacher had set appropriate work about the Aztecs for pupils to complete. However, with the exceptions of one class in each of Years 1, 4 and 5, and a few individuals, pupils do not use the library for reference, independent or personal study. Reading resources, including the library, are good although the range of texts does not include sufficient materials from different cultures and traditions.
108. Attainment in writing is broadly in line with the national average at both key stages and across the curriculum. This is an improvement upon the findings of the last inspection. A strength of the writing is that pupils are confident to express ideas in writing and willing to record their work even if they use non-standard spellings. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils know that a sentence begins with a capital letter and ends with a full stop and they can copy appropriate words to complete sentences. A minority can write alliterative phrases or clauses successfully. Standards are below average at Key Stage 2 in some English lessons in relation to independence in writing; for example, pupils spend too much time copying from resources or the blackboard. Even the oldest pupils do not redraft work themselves because most teachers correct work for pupils. Quite a significant amount of time is devoted to talking about writing but pupils do not get to write as frequently as they should and this limits their progress. Examination of past work shows pupils frequently leave written work unfinished and staff do not expect them to complete it.
109. Standards of spelling across the curriculum are average at both key stages. Key Stage 1 pupils are learning to recognise spelling patterns through focusing on the structure of words in the 'literacy hour' lessons and they make phonetically accurate attempts at spelling and are confident in doing so. Some spelling in Key Stage 2 English books and lessons is unsatisfactory because pupils simply copy spellings from class resources or teachers correct all spellings for them and they do not learn either from their errors or from

remembering spelling patterns.

110. Pupils' handwriting is above average in many English lessons but not across the curriculum where it is only satisfactory, teachers making lower demands on these occasions. Key Stage 1 pupils form letters accurately and legibly often without prompts. Some Key Stage 2 pupils have good attractive, fluent, well-formed handwriting. However, there is inconsistency in that there is some very untidy work in books.
111. Information and communication technology is used appropriately in lessons, and very effectively in some. Most lessons included the use of this technology to reinforce the learning objectives; for example, devising compound words or constructing sentences. Audio equipment is used well in some classes.
112. The picture of teaching in the subject is mixed but the quality is judged to be satisfactory overall. Effective implementation of the National Literacy Strategy has led to consistently good planning of 'literacy hour' lessons, with clear and precise objectives for pupils' learning. Appropriate expectations in most lessons lead to satisfactory learning and progress. Teaching is frequently good at both key stages and very good in a minority of lessons at Key Stage 1 where teachers' questioning focuses pupils' thinking about rhyme, they use shared writing effectively to reinforce aspects of literacy and groupwork is well targeted to pupils' prior attainment. Teaching is very good in a minority of Key Stage 2 lessons where the very good subject knowledge influences planning, skilful questioning and the effective use of a concluding class discussion to reinforce understanding. Teaching was excellent in one lesson where the teacher listened well, valued pupils' responses, sensitively supported pupils with special needs and had excellent pupil management skills. In most lessons teachers manage pupils well, leading to pupils' good attitudes and behaviour. In a significant minority of lessons at both key stages pupils respond especially well: they are enthusiastic, concentrate well, are very well-behaved and contribute well by answering questions and offering suggestions.
113. Teaching was unsatisfactory in a small minority of Key Stage 2 lessons where the pace of lessons, expectations for pupils, discipline or use of support staff were unsatisfactory and very little work was accomplished. Marking throughout the school is up-to-date but does not usually indicate how pupils could improve. A minority of Key Stage 1 teachers annotate pupils' work to describe the context and support. Oral comments are helpful.
114. In the broader picture of the teaching of literacy skills across the curriculum a weakness is that pupils are not given sufficiently extensive opportunities to write their own sentences and paragraphs, and that when they are, teachers' expectations are sometimes not high enough.
115. The subject is generally well co-ordinated and the monitoring of teaching is developing. One strength of the good planning is the consistent coverage within year groups, staff planning together well to provide consistent learning opportunities for pupils in different classes within year groups. There is inconsistency in the use of assessment records as each teacher has a different system and there are no specified records for speaking, listening or writing.

## **MATHEMATICS**

116. When the oldest pupils took the 1999 National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 2 they achieved results well below the national average. However, a significant minority of these pupils had statements of special educational needs in relation to learning difficulties. Setting this factor aside by comparing results with similar schools, the school is seen to have achieved results above the average for similar schools. Younger pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 achieved results in the 1999 tests which were similar to the national average and above the average for similar schools. Unconfirmed results of the 2000 tests show all

present pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 achieving the expected level (Level 2) of attainment, representing a big improvement since the last inspection. Results at Key Stage 2 have also been improving.

117. Inspection judgements, based on lessons observed and past written work examined, show the attainment of pupils by the end of both key stages to be in line with the national average. This is a similar standard to that achieved during the last inspection in Key Stage 1 and a satisfactory improvement in Key Stage 2 where standards were below average.
118. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils show an average level of attainment in number, shape, space and measures, and in using and applying mathematics. Pupils count in 2s, 5s and 10s confidently and most know addition and subtraction facts up to 20. Pupils of higher ability know their 3s and 4s multiplication tables well. The majority of coins are recognised and pupils give change by counting on to 50p and some up to £1. Pupils solve problems involving multiplication skills. They create a chart of birthdays by tallying and construct simple bar graphs. Pupils of higher ability interpret graphs well. Shapes containing right angles are recognised, as are the common two- and three-dimensional shapes. Pupils know which calculation to use when solving simple problems, but are not confident at solving open-ended investigations.
119. The majority of pupils achieve average standards in all areas of mathematics by the end of Key Stage 2. They are good at mental mathematics and have quick recall of number facts to 100, but a good number cannot quickly recall multiplication and division facts from their multiplication tables. Pupils have a good range of mental mathematics strategies, such as doubling and halving, making approximations and rounding up or down. They use and apply these strategies to solve problems and can explain what they have done. However, they have had little experience of problem-solving involving searching for a pattern by trying out ideas of their own. Pupils of higher ability use protractors to measure angles accurately to the nearest degree. They produce and interpret bar graphs and straight-line graphs satisfactorily.
120. Pupils with special educational needs attain well towards the targets of their individual education plans. There is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls.
121. In Key Stage 1 classes, opportunities are taken to help pupils become familiar with numeracy skills in registration sessions and occasionally in physical education and music. Generally cross-curricular links throughout the school are occasionally made in information technology, geography and science, but not elsewhere.
122. There are several reasons why standards have improved. The school has successfully implemented the National Numeracy Strategy. As a result of the good standard of in-service training for the strategy and further input from the local education authority the standard of teaching has been improved. Planning is much improved. Clear learning objectives are set for each lesson and pupils are set tasks to match their ability, apart from pupils of higher ability who could be challenged to improve further. Pupils are taught good mental mathematics strategies which has improved the speed with which they recall number facts and multiplication tables. A strength of the school is the consistency with which teachers use the strategy of asking pupils to explain how they found an answer. This makes them think very carefully about how they learn and help them to develop their own ideas and understanding. There is very good use of resources in mental mathematics sessions. Pupils have 'show-me' boards so the teacher can see exactly who knows the answer and a range of cards for mental mathematics. Teachers also have good aids, such as the number stick, which gives the pupils something to touch and move rather than relying on abstract numbers.

123. Overall the quality of teaching is satisfactory, but it is good at Key Stage 2. Half of lessons seen during the inspection were judged good or better; one lesson was unsatisfactory. One fifth of lessons seen were very good or better. Lessons generally are well planned, with clear learning objectives. In the best lessons the learning objectives are shared with the pupils. This ensures that they know exactly what they are expected to do. Unsatisfactory teaching was seen when pupils did not know exactly what to do, so they achieved little and became unsettled. Although planning is generally good, on some occasions teachers do not ensure that the pupils of higher ability are always provided with extra challenges with the result that these pupils are not fully stretched. In a few lessons the pupils of lower ability or with special educational needs are not given suitable work at their level and in some cases are not supplied with practical apparatus to help them. This means that too much teacher time is taken up by concentrating on these pupils and the rest of the pupils are neglected. Satisfactory progress cannot be made in these circumstances.
124. Mental mathematics is taught well. There is a brisk pace and a good use of questions to challenge particular ability groups of pupils, so all pupils are engaged and enthused by the inspiration of the teacher. Several teachers time some mental activities such as multiplication tables, attempting to reduce the time taken through the week. This results in a high level of concentration and perseverance by the class and good improvements in learning. Most teachers use mathematics vocabulary well, thus enhancing the pupils' literacy skills as well as their numeracy skills. Speaking skills are effectively developed when some teachers have very high expectations of pupils' abilities to explain how they carried out a calculation. They also insist that pupils give their full attention to what is being said, boosting listening skills and developing the pupils' respect for the work of others.
125. A significant strength seen in very good and excellent lessons is the high standard of questioning when teachers intervene during individual work. They use questions to assess pupils' progress and also to challenge pupils to think for themselves. This encourages pupils to apply their full intellectual effort to acquire new skills and develop their own ideas and understanding, which ensures good progress.
126. The co-ordinators monitor planning documents to ensure the National Numeracy Strategy is being adhered to and some lessons have been supported and observed in the lower school. Interesting evaluations have been made, but not yet shared with the whole staff. The upper school observations were not able to take place because of the co-ordinator's absence. These developments are part of the school development plan to improve standards in teaching and learning. When they have been successfully accomplished the school should have some useful information to help them improve standards further.

## SCIENCE

127. The school's results in the 1999 National Curriculum tests taken by pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 were well below the national average. However, the proportion of pupils achieving the higher level of attainment (Level 5) of the National Curriculum in 1999 was in line with the national average. The school's overall average result reflects the number of pupils with statements of special educational needs who are unable to reach the expected level of attainment. When this factor is removed and the school is compared with other similar schools, the results are above average. Teachers' own formal assessments of pupils aged seven at the end of Key Stage 1 also put pupils above the national standard. Girls appear to do better than boys but this is largely explained by the fact that the majority of pupils with special educational needs are boys. Test results over recent years show an upward trend in standards, at a faster rate than the national improvement. Improvement in the proportion of the oldest pupils reaching the higher level of attainment is marked, answering a weakness

noted at the last inspection.

128. Pupils start at the school with below average attainment but with good achievement in their early years and further satisfactory achievement later, they raise the level of their attainment as they move through the school. Almost all pupils make the gains in knowledge, understanding and skills to be expected and a significant number make greater gains.
129. Inspection judgements based on lessons seen, on discussions with pupils and on examination of recent written work show standards at both key stages to be in line with the national standard. At Key Stage 1 pupils develop some good knowledge and understanding. Year 1 pupils, for example, know the proper names for the main parts of plants and how they help the plant to grow and they understand well that plants need water, light and nourishment. Year 2 pupils know what makes some foods healthy and others unhealthy and can give a good number of examples of each kind. Pupils also progress well in some skills of investigation. During the inspection, Year 1 pupils studying real examples of plants showed good skills of observation which helped them produce good observational drawings which they labelled accurately. Pupils carry out some good experiments which effectively promote understanding, as when they observe over a period of time the effects on plants of depriving them of water. However, pupils' past work shows that they do not have enough opportunities to make measurements and practise skills of systematic recording or presentation of data, for example through tables and bar charts, and this is a weakness in an overall satisfactory picture of attainment.
130. At Key Stage 2 there are further good gains in pupils' knowledge. A strength here is the good vocabulary of proper terms that pupils learn and remember, a reflection of a planned and consistent policy in the teaching. Older pupils talk about electrical circuits with confident use of terms like conductor, insulator and terminal. In talking about the human body older pupils also show a good knowledge of body parts, again using scientific terms, and they can explain the functions of these parts clearly, demonstrating good understanding. Older pupils also show some good understanding of difficult concepts like 'forces' and can explain the nature of an 'upthrust' force, such as that exerted on a floating object, and the balance of forces necessary to prevent gravity causing an object to fall. Good understanding is effectively promoted by the many practical investigations which teachers organise and which both capture pupils' interest and give them first-hand insight into physical and chemical processes. They also help pupils develop a good understanding of the measures necessary to ensure scientific tests are fair and accurate. Older pupils can quickly spot the flaws in the design of an imaginary test that would make it unfair, and correct them. There are some good examples in Years 3, 4 and 5 of pupils making careful observations and measurements of length, weight or temperature which consolidates their mathematical skills, although the presentation of data is generally unambitious, with little use of graphs. The school's newly extended resources for information and communication technology have yet to make the desired impact on handling, presenting and analysing scientific data. Work in Year 6 does not significantly extend pupils' investigative skills though it is effective in developing knowledge and some areas of understanding.
131. Pupils always achieve satisfactorily in lessons, and sometimes well. Achievement reflects the positive attitude pupils show towards the subject: they generally take a lively interest and behave and work well. They concentrate well in individual or group practical work. This in turn reflects the quality of teaching which is satisfactory overall at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2. Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are generally high, except in the case of investigative work in Year 6 where they are not high enough. A strength of most of the teaching is the planning of work which has clear objectives for pupils' learning and devises stimulating and effective tasks with an appropriately strong emphasis on practical investigation. Better investigative work represents an improvement since the last inspection. A clear focus on specific knowledge and technical terms is effectively reinforced by good

questioning and reviews of learning to reinforce key points. Teachers work hard to prepare appropriate resources for practical work. A Year 1 lesson on plants greatly benefited from having real plants for each small group to examine in detail while a Year 4 lesson on micro-organisms was given especial impact by the teacher's thoughtful preparation of examples of decayed foods for pupils to view. Some effective use is made of information and communication technology, for example to show pupils examples of plants or rocks on the screen. Teachers generally manage pupils well in science lessons and they collaborate effectively with support teachers and assistants to help pupils with special educational needs progress well. Key Stage 2 pupils appropriately undertake a good deal of writing in connection with their work. This incorporates some good opportunities for pupils to compose their own sentences and paragraphs but generally there is too much copying of text instead.

132. The good quality of teachers' planning reflects the generally good leadership given to the subject by the co-ordinator. This has helped to raise standards and improve teaching since the last inspection. She has provided colleagues with detailed guidance through a good scheme of work and supporting 'ideas sheets' and resources. She has also made useful analysis of pupils' performances in national tests and led effective action to raise standards. This is seen in the more systematic approach over the last year to teaching pupils scientific vocabulary and language, which is proving successful. Some monitoring of the teaching by observing lessons has been undertaken but checks on teaching and learning are not sufficiently extensive or rigorous to identify ways to promote further improvement. Nor is there a sufficiently systematic whole-school approach to assessing pupil progress and using the information to plan future teaching or developments.

## **ART**

133. The standards achieved by pupils in art at both key stages are in line with those expected for their age. This is an improvement since the last inspection where standards at Key Stage 2 were judged to be below the expected level.
134. Pupils in Key Stage 1 are aware of and have experimented with the colour mixing process and are confident when describing shades of colour. They are secure in expressing their ideas about the work of local artists and the techniques they have used. They use appropriate language to describe what they think about the artist's work and are confident in their attempts to reproduce the styles they are observing. They are able to work in a range of materials to translate these observations into their own work and use pastels, chalk and paint confidently. The standard of their work in textiles is good and several large group pieces have been produced involving a wide range of techniques and processes.
135. It was only possible to observe one art lesson in Key Stage 2 during the inspection but work displayed around the school shows that pupils are broadening the range of materials and developing the techniques they use. Again, their work in textiles and particularly stained glass show that progress is satisfactory. The use of sketchbooks in both key stages remains under-developed, although pupils are planning their work in a range of ways.
136. The quality of teaching and learning observed is good in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory in Key Stage 2. Teachers' confidence in teaching art has been greatly enhanced by the valuable links which have been made with the local secondary school and the local authority arts centre. As a result of these links, teachers have received some relevant training and support and pupils have had the opportunity to visit both venues as part of their art programme.
137. In Key Stage 1 teachers carefully plan a good range of activities and organise a good range of resources. This provides a sound structure for pupils to work in but teachers and support staff also work with individual pupils to help them develop their ideas and skills. As a result of this pupils are very involved in their work and many have begun to work with a good degree



of independence. Teachers encourage their pupils to evaluate their work and that of others. Pupils are very keen to sit in the 'artist's chair' and describe their work to the others and are quite confident when questioned by the others about how they set about it. They work co-operatively in pairs and small groups sharing equipment and resources sensibly. They use computer software well as a means of experimenting with colour mixing.

138. In Key Stage 2, the techniques of quilling and scoring are competently demonstrated by the teacher and pupils show good levels of concentration and perseverance as they experiment with these techniques. Photographic evidence and displays of their work show good cross-curricular links and provide evidence of some effective observational drawing.
139. Pupils with special educational needs are fully integrated into art lessons and are well supported by teachers and other support staff. They are keen and involved in their work and obviously enjoy the range of experiences provided for them.
140. The co-ordinator, although not a specialist, has undertaken relevant training and worked closely with staff from the secondary school and the arts centre to ensure that both pupils and staff have had access to artists and art facilities. The school has a designated art room in Key Stage 2 which also enhances opportunities for pupils. Pupils' work has been entered for a range of competitions and pupils have been involved in community arts projects. Resources are satisfactory with particularly good use being made of the digital camera. Pupils go on a range of visits and have worked with artists in residence.
141. There has not been any formal monitoring of teaching and learning in art as yet, but the school has identified this as an area for further development.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

142. The quality of attainment in both key stages is similar to that found in most primary schools. Pupils are making satisfactory progress in both key stages which is an improvement on the previous inspection when pupils in Key Stage 2 were making unsatisfactory progress. There has been some improvement because the school has adopted the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority scheme. This scheme provides a framework which gives pupils opportunities to design and make, and to improve their knowledge and understanding. As the school has only recently based work on this scheme, pupils have not yet gained enough experience to make more than satisfactory progress.
143. Pupils in Key Stage 1 have designed their own sandwiches, which fits in suitably with Healthy Eating Week. They have a satisfactory understanding of the rules of hygiene and the need for washing hands and work surfaces. Pupils incorporate mathematics skills into the lesson by choosing between triangular and square sandwiches which they fill with healthy ingredients. Older Key Stage 1 pupils designed a hat suitable for wearing in the sun. They had a good understanding of the advantages of particular materials and the importance of the shape. Older Key Stage 2 pupils designed musical instruments of their choice. The standard of their design is unsatisfactory as they fail to communicate their ideas in clear, labelled drawings. They show satisfactory progress in handling tools safely and are beginning to learn the basic skills of sawing using a bench hook. Younger Key Stage 2 pupils used construction kits well to create designs in their work on structures. They investigate the design of commercial packaging before designing their own container for an Easter gift. The packages were very attractive, but again the details of their design were perfunctory. Pupils demonstrate satisfactory skills of measuring, marking, cutting and assembling. These skills are used well in the production of picture frames which were well-made and decorated with gold-sprayed pasta. Pupils show satisfactory numeracy skills when measuring materials before cutting and assembling.

144. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. One-fifth of lessons are good and none are unsatisfactory. The standard of planning is good overall, but inconsistent, as some teachers rely on medium-term plans with very little detail. Resources are used well, apart from lessons when pupils cut wastefully from large pieces of material. There is very good use when a teacher brings in a large selection of hats for pupils to examine as a good basis for pupils to develop their own ideas. Teachers question pupils well, to give them the chance to form their own opinions about materials or design. One lesson gave a good example of a teacher insisting on pupils thinking it out and developing their designs in a systematic manner. Pupils react positively to this and apply greater creative effort. Teacher management skills are generally successful in achieving a co-operative attitude. Pupils are encouraged to share tools and materials, which they do, showing good collaborative skills. Extra support is given to help pupils with special educational needs participate fully and progress soundly.
145. There is a helpful policy for the subject in place and the adaptation of official national guidance is being used increasingly to plan a term's work. So far there has been insufficient time for training and sharing of good practice amongst staff to give teachers full confidence in teaching the subject. Monitoring of plans takes place, but little is done to monitor the quality of pupils' work, so standards show a varied picture across the school.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

146. Three lessons were observed in geography, one in Key Stage 1 and two in Key Stage 2. Judgements are based on looking at pupils' work, talking to pupils and teachers, displays and teachers' planning. These indicate that standards overall are in line with those expected for their ages in both key stages, except in Year 6, where there are inconsistencies in standards of work presented in books and very limited work undertaken in the previous two terms.
147. In Key Stage 1, Year 1 pupils have an understanding about the area in which they live and draw maps of the school area for journeys to be undertaken by different vehicles or walkers. They demonstrate a clear understanding of pollution caused by vehicles. Year 2 pupils build on this as they study the effects of life on an island based on the story of Katy Morag. They show simple map-making skills and indicate use of land and travel to the island. They understand the world further afield as they look at a world map to discover the whereabouts of a bear. They find the kind of weather conditions he would experience and the clothes and safety elements he needs to protect him in the climate, such as Cyprus or Tenerife.
148. In Key Stage 2, pupils develop a range of map-making skills, appropriate to their ages in Years 3, 4 and 5, but pupils in Year 6 demonstrate a lack of understanding of four-figure co-ordinates to match their age. Year 3 pupils have a secure understanding of land use and the local area, while in Year 4 they recognise the effects of weather in the rainforests and conditions for early settlements. They find evidence for their work from a range of books, photographs, videos and visits. Year 5 pupils are able to find out similarities and differences between Wigan and Angers. The majority recognises that factories, schools, churches and police stations are human features. Year 6 pupils are able to compare and use data on weather and land use in the Lake District at a level expected for their age. Recordings of research and from information given are below that expected for their age in one Year 6 class. It lacks rigour and illustration from text or resources provided, because the skills have not been practised over the year. Pupils demonstrate knowledge of why farming is undertaken but not why tourism is an industry.
149. On the basis of evidence available, current teaching of geography is satisfactory overall, with a change of teacher this term for one Year 6 class. The three lessons seen were all satisfactory. However, the school planning for putting geography only in the last term of Year

6 has led to an imbalance in the teaching of skills and opportunities to research and record at a level to match their age. Planning for geography allows pupils to broaden their knowledge and skills and in most cases develop geographical language that is used in written work, such as when comparing Angers and Wigan. Pupils are generally managed well when working as a class or group with directed questions or support that enables pupils to make satisfactory progress in their learning. In a Year 6 lesson, the lack of resources in school for teaching points meant that pupils were not concentrating as well as they might with visual focus. Teachers observed have secure knowledge of the areas taught, which results in pupils generally using their knowledge when writing and using new language. In Year 2, in writing out a passport for themselves, pupils extended their knowledge to a different style of writing to incorporate their name and address and date of birth. Teachers make good use of graphs for statistics where appropriate, to support the learning. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported to achieve at a level to match that of the majority of the class. Good use is made of a number of field trips to enhance learning in map-work and about climate. There is little work to challenge higher attainers in geography and only limited use is made of computer-based information.

150. Geography did not have a co-ordinator for some time until January 2000. The new co-ordinator does not yet monitor any work, but has begun to update planning of the work in line with recent national guidelines. She has established that many resources are out of date and need renewing, or new ones acquired, to match the new plans being drawn up. Although the current scheme is broad and balanced, the decision to postpone Year 6 work until the second half of the summer term is a disadvantage for those pupils and affects overall attainment. There are no formal assessment procedures for geography.

## **HISTORY**

151. Three lessons were observed in history, all in Key Stage 2. Evidence was drawn from looking at teachers' planning, pupils' work, displays and talking with teachers and pupils. This indicated that overall attainment in both key stages is broadly in line with that expected for their ages.
152. Year 1 pupils recognise the past in relation to themselves and members of their families. They demonstrate a sense of time in the use of language of 'before' or 'a long time ago'. Through pictures and videos they appreciate how houses and homes have changed and recognise that 'old' toys often made of china or metal are nowadays made of plastic. Through stories and pictures, Year 2 have a knowledge of some events and famous people such as The Great Fire of London, Guy Fawkes and Florence Nightingale and they understand how they have had an influence on life today. In studying the Celts, they understand how domestic life has changed very much since that time.
153. In Key Stage 2, Year 3 pupils have a sound understanding of what life was like in the Victorian era for children, in school, as a chimney sweep or working in a factory or mine. They comment on how life changed in work and transport and the influence of people such as Lord Shaftsbury. Year 4 pupils demonstrate their research of people in Tudor times and their effects on that society, such as Sir Francis Drake and the Spanish Armada. Year 5 pupils demonstrated ability to research from books and CD-Rom about Ancient Greece and its culture on theatre, or the influence of the worship of Gods and Goddesses on peoples' lives. One Year 4 class researched why Henry VIII had so many wives and concluded it was in the hope of having a son. Year 6 pupils currently studying the Egyptians have an acceptable understanding of time lines and well illustrated work on the life and times of the Egyptians by combining information from different sources. However, they do not find it easy to explain reasons for changes across time from previous work because of limited work in Year 6 until the summer term.

154. On the basis of evidence available, the quality of teaching is satisfactory overall in both key stages, enabling pupils to achieve satisfactory progress in their learning. Teaching observed was satisfactory in two lessons and very good in one Year 6 lesson. Pupils are generally well managed, with special educational needs pupils being well supported. Planning for Key Stage 1 pupils allows for much practical work to observe and comment on pictures, artefacts and video programmes, resulting in pupils being able to explain the past in terms of something they have seen, touched or had a story about. Planning for Year 4 enabled pupils to look at events in history from the perspective of different people and well planned resources for a collection of evidence enabled pupils to order their information before writing an historical account. A piece of work, writing as a deck-hand on a ship, promoted the use of language and imaginative writing. Good planning and guidance for Year 6 enabled pupils to undertake areas of study in greater depth, collect information from a variety of sources, such as books, video, CD-Rom and the Bolton Museum and the ongoing study to be presented to the class. In the very good lesson, the teacher communicated her enthusiasm for the subject and used well directed questioning to promote new learning that stimulated imagination. By involving the girls in discussion, she encouraged their contributions to have the same impact as that of the more vocal boys. The limited study of history from the previous two terms in Year 6 has slowed the progress generally from reaching a higher attainment, even with very good teaching and the opportunity to discuss how the past has been represented and interpreted in different ways.
155. The co-ordinator has clear ideas for the future. She monitors planning, but does not yet monitor teaching. The current scheme of work is being adapted to match recent government guidelines and resources are being updated to match this. There is no assessment of history other than indication of coverage. The planned gap for Year 5/6 and Year 6 for almost two terms in history does not allow for continuity of skills to be practised and gains to be made in historical research or interpretation.

## INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

156. The school has made considerable progress over the last year in its provision for information technology since new equipment has become available. Pupils including those with special educational needs are now attaining above average levels of attainment and making very good progress in the subject. This represents an improvement since the last inspection when standards were found to be satisfactory, with good progress at Key Stage 1 and unsatisfactory progress at Key Stage 2. The school has responded positively to a key issue from the last inspection to improve the subject knowledge of all teachers. Through carefully planned training, both from within and outside the school, all teachers observed during the inspection showed very good subject knowledge and approached the teaching of the subject with confidence. With the exception of control technology at Key Stage 2 and modelling in both key stages, all aspects of the curriculum are in place.
157. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils are able to load programs, use the word processor, save and print their work. They use equipment confidently, demonstrating good mouse control and showing a good understanding of the work they are covering. This was very well demonstrated in a Year 1 lesson where pupils were able to confidently load data onto a computer to produce pictograms, with no assistance from the class teacher. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils were able to control the movement of objects on the screen, produce sequences of commands to control the movement of a robot and record their work accurately.
158. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils use a CD-Rom confidently and effectively to research information. They also use a database and create a spreadsheet effectively. They can interrogate the data, organise it into a range of graphical forms and use formulae to process data. Year 5 pupils access the Internet to obtain information related to their work in geography.
159. Work in several areas of the curriculum, particularly literacy and numeracy, gives good support to the development of pupils' skills in information and communication technology. For example, in a Year 4 lesson pupils were able to enter and interrogate data to produce 'pie charts' linked to their science work on healthy eating. In one Year 5 literacy lesson pupils produced a poster incorporating word processing and importing pictures taken with a digital camera, while in another they moved clauses around by 'dragging' them on an interactive whiteboard to show the different ways sentences can be formed. The provision and teaching of information technology is now a strength of the school.
160. As in the previous inspection report, pupils concentrate well when using information technology and their attitudes to learning are good. Pupils work independently of the teacher very effectively and their personal development is enhanced as they trouble-shoot their own problems. They are confident to take responsibility for their learning as was demonstrated in the effective use of an interactive whiteboard to access information in a Year 5 religious education lesson. Behaviour is good and pupils use the equipment sensibly, collaborating with each other as appropriate.
161. Teaching is of good quality at both key stages. In all lessons observed the quality of teaching was good and in some cases very good. Very good teaching is characterised by the use of specific and appropriate learning objectives and the opportunity for pupils to consolidate previous knowledge and acquire new skills. In a Year 4 lesson for example, building on work involving data-handling, pupils were taught how to interrogate data linked to their work on healthy eating. Following a whole-class demonstration by the class teacher using a computer and projector, the pupils clearly understood the set task and were able to apply their skills and knowledge to produce a variety of pie charts to interpret the results of a

survey. The very good subject knowledge of the teachers together with skilful questioning ensures that pupils of all abilities, including those with special needs, make very good progress gaining in knowledge and understanding as they move through the school. Teaching is well supported by very good resources of equipment. In addition to computers in all classes, the school benefits from two well-equipped computer suites. The available resources are used well across the curriculum to support work in other subjects, including young pupils basic spelling and number skills, and at the same time develop specific computer skills.

162. The subject is effectively managed by two enthusiastic and knowledgeable co-ordinators who have a considerable vision for the subject and lead by example. Following the introduction of new equipment the rate of improvement has been great and the co-ordinators have been very effective in supporting colleagues. Their role now needs to be extended to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching throughout the school. They have a sound general oversight of the curriculum but recognise the need to formulate a detailed scheme of work together with related assessment procedures to ensure that pupils progress in all aspects of the subject.

## **MUSIC**

163. Throughout the school pupils generally achieve standards in their work in music which are satisfactory in relation to their ages. This is a broadly similar picture to that described at the previous inspection.
164. Awareness of rhythm and pitch are good. Starting in the reception classes most pupils are able to clap rhythms set by the teacher accurately. Pupils are keen to play instruments and as they progress through the school develop a satisfactory ability to play with control and contribute effectively to a class performance. Most pupils develop a sound basic understanding of the idea of following a simple musical score, starting with pictures for the youngest pupils and progressing to more complex symbols later. They also learn to respond to the signals of a conductor.
165. In assemblies at both key stages almost all pupils join confidently in good singing which is accurate, tuneful and pleasant in tone.
166. Pupils at Key Stage 1 show sensitivity to music from other countries when they produce vivid paintings inspired by careful listening to the music. At Key Stage 2 the oldest pupils, in thinking about composition of music to create a particular mood, recognise the many aspects that need to be considered: tempo, rhythm, dynamics, pitch and instrumentation, although they do not always use the correct terms. They can then make appropriate selections in relation to these aspects of music for the creation of the chosen mood. The oldest pupils also listen carefully to music played to them and identify some distinctive features and some instruments played. Knowledge of the range of musical instruments, though, is weak.
167. Teaching in the subject is of satisfactory quality overall, although some good lessons were seen. It is consistently well planned on the basis of a detailed scheme of work and good support with ideas from the co-ordinator. Teaching also shows good organisation of resources of instruments to allow all pupils in instrumental sessions to play, and it benefits from the availability of rooms devoted to music on both school sites. Pupils are generally managed satisfactorily. Sometimes, though, the stimulus for pupils' ideas in composition is not effective enough to secure enough concentration in pupils' response. Pupils with special educational needs are given sensitive support and encouragement which promotes satisfactory progress. Staffing changes, reducing the level of available musical expertise, mean there is less good teaching than at the previous inspection. However, a very recent

staff appointment has brought additional musical expertise to the school which is beginning to have a beneficial impact on teaching for several classes.

168. Although provision in the subject is well planned its effectiveness is not checked systematically, either by observation of teaching and learning or assessment of pupils' progress. There is not therefore a reliable way to identify pupils who show particular talent or the need for extra help. Nor are there adequate means to identify ways the provision for the subject could be improved.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

169. The standards achieved by pupils in physical education are in line with those expected for their age at both key stages. This is an improvement since the last inspection where standards at the end of Key Stage 2 were judged to be below the expected level.
170. Pupils in Key Stage 1 are able to make a range of body shapes and travel around the hall using various ways of travelling and using the space sensibly. Most can throw and catch with a satisfactory degree of accuracy. Their movement skills are less well developed and many struggle to create a satisfactory piece of work with a partner.
171. In Key Stage 2, pupils are developing their movement skills and show a good variety of movement in their solo and paired performances. They use shape and gesture well matching movement to the theme they are working on. Group work is less successful but is currently being developed. Ball skills are sound and pupils can throw and receive the ball consistently well. They are currently working on hurdling skills and understand the importance of rhythm in developing their own style.
172. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory over both key stages, with some good teaching and learning in Key Stage 2. Teachers are secure in their knowledge and understanding of the various areas of physical education and motivate the pupils well on most occasions.
173. In Key Stage 1, teachers use appropriate warm-up activities which the pupils enjoy and are keen to join in. Lesson plans identify specific skills training and the pupils are prepared to practise to improve their performance. Clear instructions are given and the majority of pupils listen carefully to them. Teachers use praise effectively to encourage pupils' efforts and demonstrations to help pupils evaluate their work and improve their own performance. On occasion, the task set is left too open-ended with insufficient direction for the youngest pupils and this results in some pupils not knowing exactly what is expected of them.
174. In Key Stage 2, lessons are clearly planned and teachers have sound knowledge and understanding which results in some good coaching. Pupils listen well and work hard to improve their hurdling style. Their levels of concentration are high as they practise and they do evaluate their own performance. An athletics lesson is well adapted to the restrictions of the hall when rain prohibits work outdoors. In movement, the class work systematically towards a whole-class dance. The lesson is carefully managed and structured and well led by the teacher. Pupils are involved and work systematically on developing their work from the previous lesson. Pupils are well challenged and work well in the solo and paired sections but are less clear and confident in the group situations. They are prepared to practise the whole dance and evaluate their own performance. Pupils with special educational needs are fully integrated into lessons and well supported by teachers, support staff and other pupils. They show great enjoyment and work hard to improve.

175. The enthusiastic co-ordinator has worked hard to establish links outside the school and raise the profile of the subject which she has done successfully. All aspects of the National Curriculum for physical education are in place and the school is competing in a good range of local competitions with a good degree of success. Specialists from the local secondary school and local sports clubs have been involved in work in the school and more able pupils have benefited by being introduced into appropriate clubs and societies. There is a good range of school-based clubs and teams practise regularly. Relevant training has been provided and the co-ordinator has advised staff on the use of the resources available. She has monitored teaching and learning in physical education and kept sound records of her work in this area.
176. The subject area is being well developed and pupils are offered a good range of opportunities which they are responding to well. There is a sense of pride in what is achieved by the teams who are involved in tournaments and this is celebrated by the whole school.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

177. At the end of both key stages, pupils attain standards in line with those expected in the locally agreed syllabus for religious education and make satisfactory progress in the subject. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection and the quality of teaching remains satisfactory. Pupils of all abilities in both key stages, including those pupils with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress as they move through the school.
178. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils show a sound understanding of the richness and diversity of different religions by looking at Christianity, Judaism and Islam. They understand that the Bible is a special book for Christians as is the Qur'an for Muslims. Pupils are taught to pray through the use of song in class and assembly and collective worship makes a significant contribution to the pupils' spiritual development. In one lesson pupils discussed a picture about Jesus and his disciples re-enacting the Last Supper, whilst in another Year 2 class pupils sensitively discussed their observations from a video on Muslim family life, responding well to the effective questioning of the class teacher.
179. By the end of Key Stage 2 most pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of the origins of Christianity. They know the main events of Christ's life and the succession of events that shape the Christian year. Throughout the key stage pupils continue to gain knowledge and understanding of Judaism, Islam, Hinduism and Christianity. Pupils are able to find out information from a variety of sources as was seen in a Year 5 lesson where books and computers were effectively used for pupils to research information. Work in religious education is effectively supplemented by visiting speakers and visits to local places of worship. A visit to a local Independent Methodist Church by Year 6 pupils for example, provided the opportunity for pupils to learn about important church artefacts and discuss the significance of communion and baptism. Throughout the session, led by the church leader in conjunction with the class teacher, the pupils were attentive, showing respect for their surroundings and carrying out their set tasks with enthusiasm. Provision is also made for Year 3 pupils to visit Southport Synagogue as part of their studies related to Judaism.
180. Attitudes are good. Pupils are interested in religion and take advantage of the opportunities provided for discussion. Much of the work however is oral and the small amount of pupils' recorded work does not compare well with other subjects. Further opportunities need to be found to encourage pupils to make a written response to their work.



181. Teaching is of satisfactory quality. In all lessons observed the standard of teaching was at least satisfactory and in some cases it was good. Throughout both key stages teachers display good subject knowledge and work hard to engage pupils' interest by effectively involving them in class discussion. Good lessons are characterised by clear learning objectives, skilful questioning and an appropriate use of available resources to encourage pupils to explore ideas for themselves. Teachers lead discussions of good quality and provide some opportunities for pupils to experience a sense of awe and wonder and reflect on their own thoughts and feelings, but there are not enough such opportunities.
182. Resources for the subject are satisfactory, but there is still a need to purchase additional artefacts and further develop their use throughout the school.
183. The co-ordinator has a good understanding of the subject, which makes a positive contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils. Following the introduction of the new agreed syllabus last September, the co-ordinator recognises the need to review the religious education policy and develop a detailed scheme of work together with appropriate assessment procedures that will ensure pupils make progression through a comprehensive programme throughout the school.