

INSPECTION REPORT

WESTLEIGH METHODIST PRIMARY SCHOOL

Leigh, Wigan

LEA area: Wigan

Unique reference number: 106442

Acting Headteacher: Mrs C Lawrence

Reporting inspector: Mr S Hill
21277

Dates of inspection: 7th to 9th May 2002

Inspection number: 196024

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils:	3 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Westleigh Lane Leigh Lancashire
Postcode:	WN7 5NJ
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Miss K Hilton
Date of previous inspection:	March/April 2000

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21277	Mr S Hill	Registered inspector	Science, Art and Design, History.	What sort of school is it? The school's results and achievements. How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
31718	Mrs D Shields	Lay inspector		How well does the school work in partnership with parents? How well does the school care for its pupils?
16930	Mr J Plumb	Team inspector	English, Physical education, Religious Education, English as an additional language, Equal opportunities, Special Educational Needs.	
4262	Mr T Taylor	Team inspector	Mathematics, Music, Design & Technology	How good are curricular and other opportunities?
22398	Mrs L Wright	Team inspector	Foundation Stage, Geography, Information and Communication Technology.	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development.

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This is a small Methodist, Voluntary Controlled primary school in Leigh, a former mining town south of Wigan. The roll includes 60 part-time nursery children, aged 3 and 4, and 127 full-time pupils aged from 4 to 11. Currently, the nursery and reception children work together with two teachers in an early years unit. Most pupils are of white United Kingdom origin, but there are a few pupils of other ethnic origins, including four refugees. Apart from these last four, whose home language is Arabic, all pupils speak English as their home language. The social circumstances of pupils are well below average, as reflected in the very high number entitled to free school meals (over half). The level of special education needs is high, particularly in the main school. The number of pupils with statements of special needs (3.5 per cent) is above average. Most pupils with special needs have either moderate learning difficulties, or emotional and behavioural difficulties. The attainment of children on entry to the nursery is below average. The majority of these pupils leave the school at the end of the nursery. The attainment of the minority who stay on into the reception class is well below average, particularly in their speaking skills. There have been several staffing changes in the last few years. Four years ago, the school was judged to be in need of special measures. Two years later, a brief inspection by Her Majesty's Inspectorate established that the school had improved, and was providing a satisfactory standard of education. The headteacher, who had led the school for almost three years up to April 2002, left at the end of term. During this inspection, the school was led by the deputy headteacher, who was appointed acting headteacher for the summer term. In the last few years, substantial improvements have been made to the buildings and the resources.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very good school, which continues to improve. It provides a good quality of education for all its pupils, including consistent, very good teaching. Leadership and management are very good. Pupils' behaviour is good. The very positive ethos, promoted effectively by all staff, ensures that the school is a welcoming and secure learning environment in which pupils achieve well, attaining at least sound standards in almost all areas of the curriculum. The school now provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards are good in reading at age seven, in science at age 11, and in mathematics at the ages of seven and 11.
- Children get a very good start to their education in the Early Years Unit.
- Teaching is very good, so that pupils achieve well in almost all subjects.
- The school is very well managed, and teamwork from all staff is excellent.
- Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment are very good, and excellent use is made of results to plan the curriculum.
- Provision for pupils' moral development is excellent.
- Pupils enjoy school, form good relationships with each other and with staff, and behave well.
- Good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs.

What could be improved

- Standards in information and communications technology (ICT) at the end of the school are too low.
- Attendance is well below average.
- Pupils' speaking skills are too low.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Since the last inspection, in March and April 2000, the improvement made has been very good. Standards have risen significantly. The overall quality of teaching has improved from satisfactory to very good. The key issues identified at the last inspection have been addressed very well. Effective action has been taken to improve standards in English, mathematics, science, and in ICT, although there is still a need for improvement in ICT for the oldest pupils. The governing body now fulfils its role effectively, and governors contribute well to the school's work. The appointment of the then-acting headteacher to a permanent

position contributed considerably to the improvements made. Leadership and management are now very good. The contributions to leadership from the headteacher and her deputy (who led the school during the current inspection) have been excellent, ensuring the school has gone from strength to strength.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

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

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

A* means results are in the top 5% nationally

Results of tests for 11-year-olds have improved over the last few years in all three subjects, at a greater rate than the national trend. In 2001 they were very high in science, above average in maths, and slightly below average in English. Compared to schools with similar numbers of pupils entitled to free school meals, results were well above average, and were particularly high in science. For seven-year-olds, results have also improved. In 2001 they were above average in reading, writing and mathematics when compared to all schools, and well above average when compared to similar schools. Inspection evidence broadly confirms good standards at the age of 11. Current standards in mathematics and science are above national expectations, and are in line with national expectations in English. The improvement in English is largely due to improvements made in pupils' standards of writing, following extensive work by all staff on this aspect. A weakness of English standards is pupils' relatively low attainment in speaking. In other subjects, standards broadly meet national expectations, except in ICT, where they are below what is expected.

Standards at age seven are above expectations in reading and mathematics, and meet national expectations in all other subjects. Current standards are lower than last year because this cohort has more pupils with special educational needs. Children in the foundation stage, in both the nursery and the reception classes, make good progress. However, because of the very low starting point of those children who start reception, the majority are unlikely to meet the expected national standards (the early learning goals) by the end of the reception year.

In the light of the very low standards on entry to the reception class, the achievement of pupils throughout the school is consistently better than might be expected. The learning of some pupils is hampered, despite the high quality of teaching, by poor attendance.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils enjoy school and their attitude to learning becomes more positive as they get older.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good overall. Most pupils behave well in class and many show very good behaviour. A small minority of pupils find it very difficult to conform and sometimes their behaviour is unsatisfactory. Staff deal well with such instances, so that lapses are infrequent, and there is very little impact on the learning of these pupils' classmates.
Personal development and	Relationships are good with each other and with staff, and personal

relationships	development is good overall.
Attendance	Poor; well below average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The major strength of the teaching is its consistency. During the inspection, examples of very good teaching were seen in every class and from every class teacher. Teaching in English and mathematics, including the teaching of literacy and numeracy, is very good. The management of pupils is excellent and this ensures that there is a positive working ethos established so that pupils work hard and behave well. Positive relationships strongly support this ethos. Lessons are well organised and have a good pace, so that pupils spend their time in lessons learning and make good progress. Teachers have good subject knowledge and high, realistic expectations of what pupils can achieve. Teachers are very clear about what they intend to pupils to learn in each lesson, and concentrate their efforts on this. A major contribution to the high quality of teaching is the consistently effective teamwork between teachers and the support staff. Teaching meets the needs of all pupils well, including boys and girls, pupils with special educational needs, and those who are just starting to learn English. Pupils' learning is good throughout the school. They acquire basic skills well, and work hard.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good for the foundation stage and satisfactory in Key Stages One and Two. It is good for English, mathematics and science, but there is a lack of depth in aspects of some subjects, such as art and design. The provision for extra-curricular activities is very good.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good, so that pupils make good progress. The provision for pupils with statements of special needs is very well matched to their specific needs.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. Good use is made of help from the local authority, so that pupils make good gains in their language skills.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for pupils' moral development is excellent. Good provision is made for their social development. Provision for their cultural and spiritual development is satisfactory, although planning for this is not systematic.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment are very good, and excellent use is made of the data obtained in planning the curriculum. Very good procedures are in place to ensure pupils' health and safety, and for their day-to-day care. Procedures for child protection are satisfactory, although there is a need for further training for staff. Excellent procedures are in place to support good behaviour. Procedures to promote and monitor attendance are good.

The school has a good partnership with parents, and works very hard to maintain and improve this partnership. Parents' views of the school are very positive.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher who has just left provided excellent leadership to the school. During the inspection the acting headteacher continued this excellent provision. Good leadership is provided by all subject co-ordinators, and the work of the English and mathematics co-ordinators, has been very good. The excellent teamwork of all staff is a significant factor in the school's success.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. Governors are very supportive, are clear about the school's strengths and weaknesses, and fulfil their responsibilities well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. The school identifies its strengths and weaknesses very accurately, and takes very effective action to address the latter.
The strategic use of resources	The provision of skilled staff is good. The accommodation and the levels of learning resources are satisfactory. Financial planning provides very good support to the school's education priorities. Good use is made of the principles of "best value".

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
• Parents would feel comfortable about approaching the school with concerns. • Teaching is good. • The school is well led and managed. • The school works closely with parents. • The school expects children to work hard and do their best. • Their children like school.	• Some parents do not feel their children get the right amount of homework. • A few parents do not feel well informed about how their children are getting on.

The inspection team agrees with parents' positive views. Provision of homework is good, as is the information provided for parents. Reports to parents of foundation stage children are of good quality. However, there are weaknesses in how annual reports give information about pupils' progress in subjects other than English, mathematics and science.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Overall, pupils achieve well throughout the school, moving from standards that are well below average, to standards that are broadly in line with national averages by the time they are eleven. This is largely as a result of the consistently good teaching they receive. Standards and achievement have both risen since the last inspection.
2. Children enter the nursery with standards below those normally found. They make good progress throughout their nursery year in all the different areas of learning, and some make up considerable ground, and attain broadly average standards by the time they are due to start their reception year. However, the majority of nursery children move on to other schools for the rest of their primary education. The attainment of those children who start in the school's reception class is well below average. Their speaking skills, in particular, are poor. These children continue to make good progress in all areas of learning throughout their reception years, where they are taught by the same skilled teachers as in nursery. However, because of their very low starting point, the majority of children are unlikely to meet the expected national standards (the early learning goals) by the end of the reception year.
3. In the infant class (Key Stage One) pupils continue to achieve well. Over the last few years, results of national tests for seven-year-olds have generally been average for reading, writing, and mathematics, and have been improving overall. This represents good progress from pupils' generally low standards when they came into the class. In 2001, results improved and were well above average in reading and mathematics, and above average in writing compared to all schools nationally. Compared to similar schools (those with similar numbers of pupils entitled to free school meals), results were well above average for all three elements. Inspection evidence shows that for the current group, standards at age seven are above national expectations in reading and mathematics, and meet national expectations in all other subjects. Current standards are slightly lower than last year because this cohort has more pupils with special educational needs.
4. Results of national tests for 11-year-olds have improved over the last few years, at a greater rate than the national trend. In 2001 they were very good in science, good in mathematics, and slightly below average in English. Compared to similar schools results were well above average, and were particularly high in science. Inspection evidence broadly confirms good standards at the age of 11. Current standards in mathematics and science are above national expectations, and are in line with national expectations in English. The improvement in English is largely due to improvements made in pupils' standards of writing, following extensive work by all staff on this aspect. In other subjects, standards broadly meet national expectations, except in ICT, where they are below what is expected for 11-year-olds. This is because the current group of older pupils have not had the benefit of good provision throughout their school career. They are now making good progress in using the new equipment, and are taught well, but have not made up all the lost ground from previous years.
5. Throughout the school, a weakness of English standards is pupils' relatively low attainment in speaking, although their listening skills are at least satisfactory, and often good by the end of the school.
6. A strength of the school is that the good achievement is applicable to all pupils, whatever their gender, ethnic origin, or initial attainment. Pupils with good academic ability are challenged well and are enabled to achieve at the higher national curriculum levels. The large proportion of pupils with special educational needs (SEN) make good progress in reading, spelling and numeracy work because of the very good teaching assistant support that they receive, both in lessons and through

the range of support programmes they access. They achieve good standards measured against their starting points. 'Wellington Square' and 'Additional Literacy Support' sessions, taught by teaching assistants, result in pupils with SEN gaining in confidence in their reading and writing skills. The teaching of the recovery mathematics programme results in pupils making good gains in their use of number. Those pupils with statements of special educational needs make very good progress in relation to their literacy, physical and behavioural needs. The school has been particularly successful in including some pupils with very complex behavioural difficulties. The small number of pupils for whom English is an additional language are making good progress in their understanding, from a starting point of knowing virtually no English in September.

7. In the light of the very low standards on entry to the reception class, the achievement of pupils throughout the school is consistently better than might be expected. However the progress and learning of a small minority of pupils, and the overall standards, are weakened, despite the high quality of teaching, by poor levels of attendance.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

8. Most pupils have good attitudes to school. Overall behaviour, personal development and relationships are also good, which is similar to the findings of the previous inspection. Parents' perceptions that behaviour in the school is good are correct. Most pupils like coming to school and are glad to be there, as they find it a welcoming and safe place to be, and their parents agree. The youngest children come into the classroom confidently and most separate from their parents and carers happily as they know what to expect from the clearly established classroom routines. Most pupils care well for each other, helping each other in their work if needed and co-operating well in group activities and games. During lessons, most listen attentively to their teachers, answer sensibly and try hard with their work. Many children enter the school with low levels of concentration and poorly developed learning skills. Although the older pupils generally sustain concentration in their work and persevere until it is completed, younger pupils tend to do so to please their teachers, whom they like, rather than because they are particularly interested in learning. Teachers work hard to provide work that is interesting, varied and stimulating and, through their constant efforts, pupils acquire sound learning skills, develop an interest in the work and thus make good progress. They talk about what they have learned with some enthusiasm and knowledge and begin increasingly to make connections in their learning. Where teachers have particularly high expectations of their pupils' efforts, and resources, and lesson content is particularly relevant, pupils show very high levels of interest and concentration. For example, pupils in Year 2 were excited by the animals they found in different habitats in the school grounds and worked very hard to classify the habitats, identifying the animals from reference books.
9. Behaviour overall is good, and the majority of pupils, including those who struggle with their work, behave very well both in class and in the playground. This supports the good progress that pupils make, and contributes to the positive ethos of the school. On occasions, the behaviour of a small minority of pupils in lessons is unsatisfactory. The attitudes and behaviour of such pupils has been an issue over a long period and a significant minority have identified emotional and behavioural difficulties. Although the previous report noted improvement in behaviour, and the reduction in incidents of pupils losing their self-control, this still happens occasionally. The school has many strategies in place to support these pupils; the incident book shows that many incidents spill over from home and family disputes, and a change in routine can trigger challenging behaviour. In such cases, where the pupils still do not have established learning patterns, they take any opportunity, such as a pause for thinking or for discussion, to be disruptive or react with extremes of emotion. Despite this, the school is successful in keeping such pupils in school and participating fully in the curriculum, and there have been no recent exclusions. Although the overall rate of learning of the pupils concerned is slowed, other pupils do not tend to get drawn into this pattern and they continue to progress in their learning.
10. The behaviour of a minority of pupils outside, at playtimes, is unsatisfactory and much play is very

boisterous or physical. However, the majority play well together and playground helpers ensure that younger pupils are happy and secure. The introduction of a lunchtime games club and quiet room, suggested by the pupils, has had a positive impact on standards of behaviour.

11. The quality of relationships is good overall. Teachers and pupils relate well to each other, and most pupils form good relationships in work and play. The caring ethos of the school is evident in class and around the school. In class, most pupils work increasingly collaboratively, effectively supporting each other and sharing resources and ideas. Older pupils are caring of younger ones and are keen to look after them when the opportunity arises. Pupils have a satisfactory understanding of how their actions make others feel and their respect for different values and beliefs grows as they move through the school, and they gain wider life experiences. The school works successfully to tackle any issues of racism or sexism and to overcome stereotypical images and roles.
12. Although opportunities for pupils to use their initiative are limited, their personal development is good. Most readily take up responsibility in their own classrooms carrying out tasks efficiently. As they get older they assume other roles within the school, such as answering the telephone at lunchtime. Residential trips give many pupils increased scope to experience another lifestyle and they respond positively to the routines and duties of community life.
13. Pupils with complex behavioural difficulties are kept on task and behave well because teachers and teaching assistants are so skilled in meeting their needs. Even those pupils with very challenging behaviours are usually kept on task, and so make good progress. The teaching assistants often exercise immense patience in working with some pupils. Those pupils with a lack of social skills, who find it hard to understand the impact of their behaviour on others, are particularly well managed and fully included in lessons. Pupils show sensitivities to the disabilities of other pupils. For example, a child in a wheelchair is included in all areas of the curriculum and in the playground.
14. Pupils with who are just starting to learn English are very keen to learn and do well. Their behaviour is very good and they are keen to please. They are fully included in all activities due to the skilful and sensitive support they receive from a very effective teaching assistant and their class teachers who are committed to equality of opportunity for all pupils.
15. Attendance is well below the national average and statistics show that this is the same as at the time of the previous inspection. Much of the difference is because of high levels of unauthorised absence, which is well above figures found nationally. Authorised absence is usually because pupils are ill, but a relatively large number of holidays taken during term time also reduces the overall totals in each class. The school is well aware of those pupils whose attendance patterns give rise for concern and refers these cases to the education social worker at an early stage. Nevertheless, the poor or irregular attendance of some pupils impacts negatively on their progress and the continuity of their learning. Pupils, in the main, arrive at school on time. However, there are a few in every class who persistently arrive late each morning. This puts them at a disadvantage because they miss the introduction to their lessons. However, they do not cause any disruption to lessons and settle quickly to their work.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

16. The overall quality of teaching in the school is very good. This is a major improvement since the last inspection. Teaching meets the needs of all pupils well, including boys and girls, pupils with special educational needs, high attainers, and those who are just starting to learn English. Pupils' learning is good throughout the school. They acquire basic skills well, and work hard.
17. The major strength of the teaching is its consistency. During the inspection, almost all teaching

observed was at least good, and about two-fifths was very good. Examples of very good teaching were seen in every class, from every class teacher. The consistency of work in pupils' books also shows that very good teaching is provided throughout the school. The one unsatisfactory lesson seen was because of particular circumstances, and was clearly not typical.

18. The management of pupils is excellent, particularly in the younger classes. This ensures that there is a positive working ethos established in all classes, so that pupils work hard and behave well. Positive relationships strongly support this ethos. Pupils like their teachers and are keen to meet their expectations. Despite the relatively large number of pupils who have acknowledged emotional or behavioural problems, the positive ethos and good relationships support secure discipline in lessons, so that most pupils achieve well throughout the school.
19. Lessons are well organised and have a good pace, so that pupils are interested and enthusiastic. They spend their time in lessons learning and make good progress. Teachers' preparation is thorough, and good use is made of a wide range of resources to support pupils' learning. Much work is related well to pupils' understanding of real life, and is firmly rooted in practical experiences, which take forward pupils' learning well. This is a particular strength in science. Good use is made of aspects of the local environment, such as a visit to the local supermarket, to support pupils' learning in a range of subjects.
20. Children of nursery and reception age are given a very good start in the early years unit. Very good teaching, excellent class management, very high teachers' expectations in all areas of learning and a very interesting and relevant curriculum ensure that the children make good progress. Most children have poorly developed learning skills and the teachers have to work at this constantly so that the children get some idea of themselves as learners, but it is a slow process.
21. Teaching in English and mathematics, including the teaching of literacy and numeracy, is very good. Teachers have a very good knowledge and understanding of the National Literacy Strategy. Their very good understanding of how to teach reading and writing results in improved standards across the school. Strengths in English teaching are the very detailed planning, highlighting exactly what is to be taught and learnt, and very good marking which informs pupils of exactly what they need to do to improve their writing. In mathematics, well-planned, well-structured and pacy lessons ensure that the pupils make at least good progress at all stages. Good attention is given to mental and oral work, and to establishing strong numeracy skills. Another very positive feature is that lessons are often made relevant by setting them within the pupils' day-to-day experiences, such as shopping, or working out the cost of holidays. Consequently, pupils can apply their mathematical skills effectively in other subjects.
22. Teachers have good subject knowledge and a clear understanding of how pupils can be helped to learn. They have high, realistic expectations of what pupils can achieve, and this supports steadily improving standards as pupils get older. Teachers use day-to-day assessment very well, so that work is almost always very closely matched to the pupils' needs, and is challenging but attainable. They monitor pupils' progress well, picking up quickly on any misunderstandings, in order to give extra support if needed. Good use is made of additional adults to help with this monitoring and support.
23. Teachers are very clear about what they intend to pupils to learn (the learning objectives of the lessons). They prepare their lessons carefully with this in mind, and focus all their efforts on attaining these objectives. The objectives are shared with pupils at the start of lessons and are usually reviewed at the end. This gives pupils an increasingly good knowledge of their own learning, so they know how they are doing, and what they need to learn next. This is further supported by the good quality of teachers' marking, which acknowledges and praises pupils' achievements, but also often explains what they need to do to improve.
24. A major contribution to the high quality of teaching is the consistently effective teamwork between

teachers and the support staff. Support staff contribute particularly well to the learning of pupils with special educational needs.

25. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good. For those pupils with statements of special educational needs the quality of teaching is very good. The special needs co-ordinator (SENCO) and her team of teaching assistants are very effective and their supportive approach ensures that pupils are very productive and make good progress in acquiring new skills. Individual education plans have specific literacy, numeracy and behavioural targets, which are used well in planning to meet the needs of pupils and to monitor their progress. Teachers and teaching assistants operate as an effective team to ensure that pupils are fully included in lesson activities. In a Year 1/2 games lesson, a pupil who struggles with reading and writing difficulties was selected to demonstrate the skill of travelling with a ball because of his marked aptitude in games, and this lifted his confidence and self-esteem. The teacher used her skills to allow this pupil to blossom where he could succeed. On the rare occasion where teaching for pupils with special needs was unsatisfactory, the teacher did not make sufficient use of pupils' individual education plans in planning the literacy lesson. As a result, the work was not well matched to pupils' needs and their progress was unsatisfactory.
26. The quality of teaching for the pupils with English as an additional language is very good. Pupils are given valuable support by a specialist teacher from the Local Education Authority, who works in partnership with a teaching assistant in the school. The pupils who need it receive individual, one-to-one tuition. Clear language targets are identified for these pupils. The selection of visual aids and bilingual written materials (in both English and the pupils' home language) to support the teaching is culturally relevant and of very good quality. Because of the well planned and demanding teaching, these pupils make good progress with their spoken English. In all subjects they are well included by their class teachers who are sensitive to their needs.
27. Because the deputy headteacher is the acting headteacher throughout this term, she was not able to take her own class during the inspection. This is a class that has a considerable number of pupils with special educational needs, and has some pupils who find conforming to good patterns of behaviour difficult. The school was unable to find a teacher willing to cover for the class during the inspection, although a stable situation has been established for the rest of the term, following the inspection. During the inspection, two skilled temporary teachers took the class, one of whom was "borrowed" from the staff of the Educational Action Zone. In general, their teaching was of good quality, and included some very good teaching. Scrutiny of pupils' work suggests that this reflects the good teaching the class normally receive. However, the one unsatisfactory lesson that was seen during the inspection came in this class. This happened when the teacher, unfamiliar with the pupils, did not take sufficient account of their special needs. As a result, in this lesson, the work was too hard for many of them, they became bored, and the behaviour of the class was unsatisfactory. Evidence shows that this was not typical either of the teaching the class normally receives, or of the work this particular teacher was doing with them in other lessons.

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

28. The curriculum is satisfactorily broad and balanced. It covers the range of subjects of the National Curriculum and provides well for the development of the pupils' literacy and numeracy skills at all stages. The religious education provided matches the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus.
29. The opportunities for children at the Foundation Stage are good, where the curriculum is relevant and interesting. The opportunities are also good at Key Stages 1 and 2 for English, mathematics, science and physical education. In all other National Curriculum subjects, except ICT at Key Stage Two, provision is satisfactory. The shortfall in ICT has resulted from a previous lack of resources and insufficient time being allotted to the subject. This shortfall is now being rapidly

made up.

30. While overall curriculum provision remains satisfactory, certain subjects, such as art and design, and history, have insufficient time allotted to them. In consequence, the depth of the pupils' experiences and knowledge are limited. The design and technology and music curricula have not been provided for fully in the past, but the school has taken very positive action to remedy these needs. Carefully planned curriculum development initiatives are helping very significantly in making up ground.
31. It is a very positive feature of the school that curriculum shortfalls are noted, needs evaluated, and positive action taken to remedy any weaknesses. For example, there has been significant expenditure on learning resources for ICT, leading to rapidly improving provision that is having a very positive influence on the pupils' learning. Planning and provision for design and technology and music have recently been a priority, and have improved. This again is ensuring very positive staff development and higher standards in the pupils' learning. Other curriculum areas have been noted in the school's cycle of review and will be subject to further development in due course, with the aim of achieving an even better overall balance of activities. For example, whilst the school provides a broad range of opportunities to develop pupils' speaking skills, staff have recognised the need to extend this, in the light of most pupils' poor skills on entry to school. More consistent opportunities for role play and drama, for example, need to be planned across the curriculum.
32. The school provides a range of worthwhile opportunities for learning, and tries hard to match the interests, aptitudes and needs of its pupils. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is a strength of the curriculum. Their needs are assessed carefully from an early stage and they receive good levels of support throughout. The school works hard to ensure the inclusion of all pupils. Those with English as an additional language are provided with good support, often, it was noted during the inspection, from other pupils.
33. The range of extra-curricular activities is very good. There is a wide range of sporting, artistic and leisure activity clubs. The school also promotes many and varied visits to local places of interest, for example, to local stores, to Robin Park, and to the Kennet Classroom. Such visits provide additional opportunities for learning and enhance the pupils' experiences well. Many visitors, such as artists, people who work in the community, and sports club representatives are invited into school to work with the pupils and there is strong attachment to local schools and colleges. Peripatetic music tuition is provided in keyboard skills, and there is a drama club that works towards presenting major school productions. The school regularly participates in local musical events, such as 'Eurosing' and steel-pan and samba workshops.
34. The provision for the personal, social and health education of the pupils is good. The school's programme embodies the ethos and mission of the school. In its careful attempts to meet the pupils' needs, the school promotes the pupils' well-being and works hard to help them to become well-rounded personalities with soundly based values. Sex education is provided and attention is drawn to the dangers of drugs misuse. Each class has weekly circle time activities in which issues of moment and importance are discussed. Here, the pupils are offered opportunities to share views, ideas, beliefs and problems, and to gain support in their personal development. The school has recently set up a school council, whose membership is made up of individuals chosen to represent each class. It is too early to define the benefits of such a development, but the outlook is positive.
35. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and leads to good progress for these pupils. They are given a high level of access to good curricular opportunities through the quality of the packages such as 'Wellington Square', the Additional Literacy Strategy, and Recovery Mathematics. A new phonics programme has been planned and is to be launched to support pupils next term. The very good support these pupils receive from their teachers, teaching assistants and

SENCO ensures that they access a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum, which enables them to make at least good progress. However, at present insufficient use is made of good software programs to support pupils with SEN who struggle with their writing.

36. The provision for pupils with English as an additional language is good and is reflected in their good progress and standards achieved. The specialist teacher from the LEA has put together very good language programmes. These are taught jointly by herself and a teaching assistant in the school. These programmes make a very significant contribution to pupils' good achievement in English. Careful attention is paid to each individual's needs. The school also makes effective use of the pupils' cultural background in the planning of provision to make intelligible links for pupils in their understanding of language. There are rich displays of posters and signs, written in English and the pupils' own language, throughout the school. The teaching base used for the individual support given to these pupils provides a good environment for learning.
37. The school has developed very good links with both the local and wider community. Through its work with the Education Business Partnership the school is able to organise a range of educational visits for pupils, which support the curriculum effectively. These visits help to consolidate the themes studied in class, and also form the basis of future work. For example, pupils in Years 1 and 2 visited the local High School CITB Satellite Centre, as part of a science topic, looking at materials and their properties. They enjoyed hands-on experience of mixing cement and building small brick walls. Follow-up work, based on their visit, was used in design and technology in building small model houses and villages, and in mathematics when calculating the numbers of bricks required. These visits also make a valuable contribution to raising pupils' self-confidence and esteem.
38. The school is also involved with the nearby community. For example, pupils visit the local senior citizens home to sing at Christmas. They also collect money for good causes, for example at harvest time when a donation was made to the local hospice. There is a very strong partnership with the local church and "Education Sundays" are regularly held there, and are generally well attended. Representatives from religious organisations frequently lead assemblies at the school. Pupils also benefit from a range of visitors, for example from staff of the local bakery, the local road safety team and librarians. All these opportunities enrich pupils' curricular experiences.
39. Relationships with partner institutions are very good. There is very good liaison with the nearby secondary school, which ensures the smooth transition of pupils to their next stage of education. The school regularly accepts pupils on work placements from the nearby further education college and secondary school. Very good support is received from a number of external agencies that support some of the pupils. There is also a very good relationship with the Local Education Authority and Education Action Zone; this has involved practical support and the sharing of expertise and good practice.
40. There have been improvements in some aspects of the school's provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development since the previous inspection. Provision for spiritual development is satisfactory. The school's Christian ethos is evident in many aspects of its work, as is the mission statement, which reflects a strong belief in promoting self-esteem and valuing others and the environment. Well-planned whole-school assemblies successfully help pupils to understand clearly that they are members of a school community with shared values. This sense of community is reflected in the sincere way in which pupils join in singing hymns and in their response to stories. Skilful links between assembly themes and their own experiences are strengthened by opportunities for personal reflection and prayer, and the pupils respond well to these. During the inspection, pupils of all ages enjoyed an assembly about life. They responded readily to questions and reflected quietly and seriously on how they can use the life inside themselves to lead to God. Spiritual development is not always a strong element of Religious Education lessons and there are missed opportunities to explore this dimension further. Although the school is aware that the pupils' spiritual development can be fostered across many aspects of

the curriculum, further work is needed in this area to ensure that it is developed in a more systematic way, rather than left to chance.

41. Provision for the moral development of the pupils is excellent. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection, when it was good in the nursery, reception and infant classes and satisfactory in the junior classes. The pupils know clearly the difference between right and wrong, especially in their own behaviour and in their relationships with others. This is primarily due to the very firm guidance given by all staff, who provide an excellent example to pupils in their caring attitude and in the fair and consistent way that they reinforce the principles of acceptable and non-acceptable behaviour. Pupils in each class write their own code of conduct and rewards and sanctions are clearly stated. The reward system is appreciated by the pupils and they are very proud of their “star charts” which acknowledge their achievement. The school strongly promotes values such as kindness and respect for each individual, and John Wesley’s rules are the basis for the overarching school aim. Any pupil having particular problems with behaviour or self-esteem is given understanding and specific help by the school, and many pupils understand that sometimes individuals need their help in adjusting to changes in their lives. There are many opportunities planned for the pupils to consider the cause of personal disputes, and honesty is encouraged through reflection. Co-operation and anger-management techniques have been used successfully to help pupils with problems. Older pupils explore moral issues in English lessons and reflect a balanced view in their writing and speaking on such issues as capital punishment and child labour.
42. The social development of the pupils is good, an improvement since the previous inspection when it was sound. From the start, pupils are encouraged to work and play together co-operatively either in pairs or small groups and, as they get older, they have the opportunity for teamwork. Relationships throughout the school between teachers and pupils are good, as are relationships between the pupils, particularly in the classroom. The youngest children share play-areas amicably and older pupils help each other with their work if they are ‘stuck’. Pupils converse politely with visitors and are courteous and helpful. They show care and concern for younger pupils and play with them. There are planned opportunities for older pupils to exercise responsibility in a number of ways, such as preparing the hall for assemblies, washing up, answering the phone at lunchtime and as play leaders. They accept these responsibilities readily and train pupils in Years 4 and 5 to take over from them when they leave, so that the system runs smoothly. The School Council is taken very seriously by all and the agendas and minutes are published so that all pupils feel involved. Issues of importance to the pupils, such as too much butter on the playtime toast, are taken forward, discussed and resolved. Pupils are proud of their school and enjoy being part of it.
43. Provision for the pupils’ cultural development is satisfactory, as it was at the previous inspection. The school’s work is very well supported by participation in local events. These, and local studies in geography and history give the pupils a very strong understanding of their own local culture. This and other cultures are further promoted through art and writing projects. There is a reasonable balance of cultures represented in the art curriculum, and pictures on display have been carefully chosen to enhance the school environment. In music lessons the pupils have opportunities to experience music of different cultures and times, such as Tudor dance music, to which they practised the rhythm and shape of the dance with some success. In contrast, older pupils took part in the Samba project and learned to samba to their own instrumental and rhythmic accompaniment. Aspects of cultural diversity are fostered through studies of other places, such as Chembakoli in India and the Volga region of Russia. Pupils have a reasonable knowledge of other world religions, such as Hinduism and Judaism. Although multicultural images are a natural and normal part of the learning environment in the Early Years Unit, they are not particularly evident in the rest of the school. The school acknowledges the ethnic and cultural diversity of British society through such things as ‘Welcome’ signs in other languages and bilingual books in Arabic and English. However, there is a need to further extend pupils’ awareness of this, through more planned opportunities across the curriculum.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

44. The school takes good care of all pupils. They are equally valued, continually praised and encouraged to try their best. The acting headteacher knows the pupils very well. Together, the teachers, secretarial staff, classroom assistants and mid-day supervisors, all provide a very supportive, friendly and caring environment for pupils to work in. Because of this high level of care and support, pupils' work confidently and grow in self-esteem. This makes a positive contribution to the standards they achieve.
45. Health and safety arrangements are very good. The school gives high priority to this area, and regular health and safety inspections and risk assessments are undertaken and standards monitored. The governing body has appropriate oversight of this area. The school has very good systems relating to pupils' medical and welfare needs and there is a suitable number of staff who have received first aid training. Supervision arrangements, at breaks and lunchtimes, are good. Relationships with adults on duty are friendly and supportive. Child protection procedures are satisfactory. Although all appropriate procedures are in place, which reflect the written policy, no recent whole-staff training has taken place. The school is aware of the need to address this issue. The very good induction programmes, for children entering the nursery or reception class, ensure they soon settle into the routine of school life. The transfer arrangements to secondary school are also very good and this means that pupils are confident about their move to their next stage of education.

46. Excellent systems to ensure pupils' good behaviour and to deal with any form of bullying or racism are inherent in school practice. This excellent provision is also a direct result of the school's excellent emphasis on pupil's moral development. Appropriate behaviour, effort and achievement are given a very high profile and regularly rewarded. Any incidents of inappropriate behaviour are dealt with consistently by teachers, and closely monitored by the acting-headteacher. Those pupils, who sometimes have difficulty controlling their behaviour, are very well supported by teachers and classroom assistants. This enables these pupils to make gains in their learning. Because of this very good level of support, in the vast majority of instances, inappropriate behaviour is dealt with effectively and the learning of other pupils is not interrupted. Systems are in place to deal with any form of bullying or racism. Good relationships, mutual trust and respect between staff and pupils, and the values of co-operation, which are promoted effectively from pupils' earliest days in the school, all contribute to the success of this area. Pupils confirm that the arrangements are effective, and that incidents do not happen very often.
47. There are very good links with external agencies to ensure high quality support for pupils with special educational needs. These agencies work effectively with the school and in partnership provide, for example, very good anger-management programmes for pupils who need this. There is sensitivity to body image and an understanding of the negative feelings some pupils have and the poor self-esteem due to the perception of their own bodies. There is current discussion going on to establish a nurture group for families and children who have a range of complex needs resulting from very significant social disadvantage and learning difficulties. The pastoral support for pupils for whom English as an additional language is very good. Teachers and the teaching assistant allocated to the four pupils who are just starting to learn English are very aware of the social disadvantage facing asylum seekers.
48. Attendance is very closely monitored, and as a result the school is very aware of those pupils who do not attend regularly, or who are often late. The educational welfare officer is a regular visitor and provides good support following up the cases of those pupils whose attendance is poorest. Arrangements to promote regular attendance are good. The school is not complacent and regularly reviews its practice in an attempt to continue the focus on trying to raise parents' awareness of the need for their children to attend school on a regular basis. Although there is a great deal of good school practice, pupils' awareness still needs to be raised, and more done to promote good attendance. For example, no rewards are currently given to pupils whose attendance improves or, for instance, to the class who achieve the highest attendance in a week.
49. Very high priority is given to promoting pupils' personal development. As they move through the school, pupils grow in confidence and self-esteem. This is because of the high level of day-to-day care provided by teachers and the range of opportunities that are offered to them. These include group work in lessons, extra curricular activities, school visits, and the range of responsibilities on offer to pupils, that increase in complexity as they grow older. Because there is a small staff, teachers are able to share information about pupils informally and as a result they know them very well. The school's formal system to monitor pupils' personal development has only very recently been introduced. However, it is well thought-out and provides the school with good arrangements on which they can build.
50. Assessment is a strength. Very good procedures are in place for assessing all pupils, including those with special educational needs, and excellent use is made of assessment to inform teachers planning to meet the needs of all pupils. In English and mathematics, assessment is used to set literacy and numeracy targets for every pupil. Teachers rigorously monitor the progress of pupils in their classes against these targets and regularly revise them with pupils. This results in pupils making good gains in reading, writing, and spelling, and in their development of numeracy skills.
51. The school's model for assessment in the core subjects of English and mathematics is outstandingly good. The procedures for assessing and planning for pupils with special needs is also exemplary and supports the good provision for these pupils. Expertise from the Local Education

Authority is used effectively to assess the language needs of pupils who are just starting to learn English, and good programmes of work are then planned for them. Currently the progress of the four Syrian refugees within the school is good because they have been properly and thoroughly assessed and excellent use has been made of their assessment to plan a high quality literacy programme for them. The good assessment procedures also ensure that pupils with high ability are identified, provided with suitably challenging work, and attain high standards.

52. The baseline assessment of pupils on entry to the school provides an accurate picture and is used to set targets and predict levels for pupils by the end of Year 2. Effective use is made of the Year 2 national test results to set targets in English and mathematics for all pupils at the beginning of Year 3. Effective use is made of the optional national tests throughout Key Stage 2 to revise these targets. However, the school has not analysed what these tests indicate about summer born children and this is a small blip in what are otherwise very good procedures. All information gleaned from assessment is used sensibly and pragmatically to plan to raise standards of achievement for all pupils without putting undue pressure on children. Following the national tests in the summer term the school does a detailed analysis of the test papers to identify areas where pupils do not do so well and the information gained from this exercise is used very effectively to inform planning and focus teaching. Evidence indicates that the excellent use of assessment results in improved standards as all pupils in the school are clear about what they need to do improve their writing, reading and numeracy work.
53. The assessment of pupils who have special needs, including those who have statements of special educational needs, is of high quality. SEN assessments are used to set specific literacy, numeracy and behavioural targets for pupils. These are set down in individual education plans and are used well to support the teaching of pupils with special needs by their class teachers and teaching assistants. The assessment findings are also used to identify which pupils will benefit from a mathematics recovery programme, and strategies to improve their reading and writing. Very effective planning ensures that these pupils receive targeted support in small groups, often delivered by skilled teaching assistants.
54. There is also evidence of good assessment practice in most other subjects, including science. Effective use is made of end-of-module tests in music and religious education. Information gained is used to plan to raise standards for all pupils. In physical education assessment is about to be launched in the context of a new and revised scheme developed to ensure that the profile of dance is lifted.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

55. Many aspects, within this area of the school's provision, have improved since the time of the previous inspection. The school works extremely hard to try to encourage and involve parents in the life of the school, and with their children's education. Although only a few parents attended the pre-inspection meeting, about a third responded to questionnaires, and the views expressed about the school were very positive. The overwhelming majority like what the school has to offer, and all felt suggestions and concerns are dealt with quickly and to their satisfaction. These views and the growing support from parents are also confirmed by the very high return rate of signed home-school agreements; virtually 100 per cent have been returned to the school.
56. Parental involvement is continuing to grow because of the school's continual efforts to involve them. A small number help with classroom activities, and the help they provide is valued by the school. The "Friends of the School" is very active. Although there is only a very small number of parents who attend committee meetings, there is tremendous support for the events that are organised. Funds raised have been used to purchase many items to supplement school resources, such as large outdoor play equipment, a television and video. The school has developed several initiatives that are very successful in raising the awareness of a small number of parents of the

work their children do in school. For example, “Inspire” for prospective parents involves them in pre school activities, “Flying Start” for Reception parents provides fun activity packs to complete at home, and “Family Learning” for parents of pupils aged seven to 11 involves them in mathematics work. Where their children are directly involved, in such activities as school concerts or sports day, support is said to be excellent. Parents and carers generally support the work their children have to do at home but this is not consistent. Homework diaries show that not all are signed by parents, and in some instances homework is not completed. The school is very flexible and willing to accommodate the needs of families. Parents’ evenings often become “parents’ weeks” because the school extends the times available for different families. The school also recognises the practical problems that some families face and will sometimes organise crèche facilities to encourage more parents to attend events. Every opportunity is taken to involve parents. Their views have been sought through questionnaires and, as a result of suggestions made, a computer club for the children has been organised. Despite the school’s very best efforts, however, some parents do not demonstrate support for the school’s work because they do not ensure their children attend school regularly and on time. This puts these children at a disadvantage because their learning is continually interrupted.

57. The information the school provides for parents is good. There are many informal opportunities for parents to meet with teachers after school when they collect their children, if they have matters that need to be discussed. In the nursery, home visits, pre-school information packs and induction events help prepare both children and parents for school life. Regular well-presented newsletters are produced and distributed to parents and within the nearby community. Much useful curriculum information is made available through the “home-planners” sent home each half term, and through curriculum events held at the school. Day-to-day information is very good and letters, for example about school visits, are sent in good time. The school brochure and the governors’ annual report to parents are informative and provide all the relevant information they should. Parents, who indicate they appreciate the information provided for them, confirm these findings. The service provided by the Local Education Authority to supports pupils for whom English is an additional language works effectively with parents. The service acts as an effective bridge between the home and the school.
58. Annual reports, giving detail of children’s progress are good in the Foundation Stage. Comments are well focused and provide a clear picture of what children know and can do and the progress they have made. Other reports are satisfactory. In subjects such as English and mathematics a clear indication is given about what pupils can do and the main strengths and weaknesses in their progress, but in other subjects areas comments are variable and often focus on what work pupils’ have covered, and their attitudes to the subject.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

59. The school is very well led and managed. Since the last report, when leadership and management were good, the school has gone from strength to strength. This is largely due to the excellent leadership of the headteacher (who has recently left) and her deputy, and the very good teamwork and strong commitment of all the other staff. During the inspection, the effectiveness of this could be seen, when the acting headteacher (the deputy) continued to provide excellent leadership and support for colleagues. Established systems ensure that the school continues to run very smoothly, and the teamwork of all concerned supports a continuing high standard of teaching.
60. The school has used the help available from the local authority and from the educational action zone (EAZ) very well to support improvements. The positive working relationships established were illustrated well during the inspection. The EAZ helped the school to overcome a minor crisis when the teacher due to take the deputy head’s class left on the eve of inspection. The replacement teacher “borrowed” from the EAZ helped ensure that the usual high standard of teaching was not compromised during the inspection week.

61. The work of the management team, including all the subject co-ordinators, and those for key stages and special needs, has focused on assessing and raising standards, and improving teaching. Very good procedures and hard work have resulted in a clear view of what is needed for improvement and effective action to bring the improvement about. There has been an appropriate focus on mathematics, literacy and ICT since the last inspection, resulting in rising standards and improving teaching in these areas. The work of the subject co-ordinators has been particularly effective in these subjects, but in other subjects co-ordinators are also doing good work. They have a good understanding of what is needed in their subjects, and are well placed to support improvements when it is the “turn” of their subjects to be the focus for development.
62. A clear, systematic programme for the monitoring of planning, pupils’ work and teaching and learning in lessons is well established. The improvement made in English, mathematics and ICT is partly due to the co-ordinators’ clear vision and hard work, but also because of the way all their colleagues have rallied behind them in pursuit of the goals they have identified. The work in raising standards in writing throughout the school over the last year is a good example of this excellent teamwork. The established staff are in a very good position to build upon their many strengths and improve even further.
63. Since the last inspection, governors have improved and consolidated their role. They have a good understanding of the school’s strengths and weaknesses, contribute well to the school’s direction, and fulfil their statutory duties effectively.
64. Financial planning is very good. Educational priorities are supported through a very good long-term strategic plan. All of the priorities on the plan have detailed costings, which have been discussed and agreed by the governing body. This implementation of this plan results in very significant improvements in the quality of education, and has been particularly successful in raising standards in writing, reading and numeracy. The governing body is actively involved in setting the school’s annual budget and decisions are based on a good knowledge of the needs of the school.
65. The very high spending on educational support staff is justified as the teaching assistants make a very valuable contribution to the good gains in learning made by pupils with special educational needs (SEN). Teaching assistants teach a range of support programmes which make a very significant contribution to the gains pupils make in reading, writing and in their application of number to solving real problems. These effective and efficient teaching assistants enable some pupils with very challenging behaviour to be successfully included with their peers in mainstream classes without disrupting other pupils. This results in these pupils with challenging behaviour making good progress in their learning along with the other pupils in the class. This high spending contributes very significantly to pupils with learning difficulties and associated behavioural difficulties gaining in confidence and self-esteem and so making strides in their reading and spelling. A pupil supported by a teaching assistant in Year 1/2 beamed with joy when he grasped the phonic skills required to enable him to read a story independently. The joy expressed on his face made the high investment worth every penny.
66. The very high carry forward is due to the fact that planned building work was delayed last year through no fault of the school. The carry forward is targeted to a significant building programme to improve the school considerably for the pupils currently on roll. The proposed budget for the current financial year indicates a very small carry forward to the next financial year. The school and local education authority are monitoring the budget set this year very rigorously. Specific grants are used effectively and appropriately targeted on their designated purposes. Funding for pupils with special needs is supplemented by the school’s basic budget and used very effectively to support pupils with a wide range of special educational needs.
67. Financial control is very good. The school buys into a bursar service provided by the LEA. The bursar allocated to the school provides valuable expertise to the headteacher and governing body.

The minor recommendations in the recent auditor's report have not been acted upon because the LEA advised the school to hold fire until the new computer package for financial management was installed. The computer system is now in place and has made the recommendations redundant because the software takes care of the issues raised.

68. The leadership of SEN is outstandingly good, because of the expertise and skills of the co-ordinator. Systems for the management of SEN are very good, particularly the procedures in place for assessing pupils' needs and for monitoring their progress. The revised policy for SEN meets the requirements of the new Code of Practice. The designated governor is enthusiastic, supportive and effective. However, the governors' procedures for informing parents that their child has special educational needs are not sufficiently robust to meet the specific requirements of the new Code of Practice.
69. The management of the provision for pupils with English as an additional language is very good. There is a regular meeting once a week between the specialist teacher and the teaching assistant to discuss the progress of the pupils and to modify their programmes accordingly so that they achieve the highest standards possible.
70. The provision of qualified and experienced teaching and support staff is good. They have the expertise to address the needs of all groups of pupils and to further their learning successfully. The strengths of individual teachers are used effectively to support other teachers and to develop their confidence in new curriculum areas and approaches. The school's system of performance management is excellent, setting clear priorities for shared and individual development and balancing school and individual needs very effectively. Progress against individual objectives and the school development plan are rigorously monitored and evaluated, resulting in many improvements in provision, such as individual target setting in English and mathematics leading to improving standards of attainment and achievement. The school has very good systems for welcoming new members of staff, enabling the smooth working of the school to be maintained and promoting strong professional working partnerships. Support for new colleagues is good, all staff offer support as needed, and the good quality of relationships within the school makes induction of new staff effective. The SENCO and teaching assistants are well qualified for working with pupils with a range of special educational needs. The professional development of the teaching assistants is very good and makes a significant contribution to the way in which they work with pupils with very complex needs.
71. A number of recent building initiatives have improved the accommodation, which is satisfactory. The entrance area, administration office and headteacher's office have been enlarged, and there is now a small, but useful, meeting room. The addition of an ICT suite and the conversion of a small area to a junior library have also improved the facilities. The school makes best use of the available space. Walls are decorated with good quality displays of pupils' work and this enhances the learning environment. The hall is small, but is used well for a range of curricular activities, collective worship and as a dining hall. Classrooms are generally large enough to accommodate all the pupils, but it is sometimes difficult to find adequate space to seat all the pupils on the carpet areas. The intrusion of noise between the Year 3 and 4 classroom and the Year 4 and 5 classroom next door occasionally makes it difficult for pupils to hear the teacher, and likewise for the teacher to hear pupils' answers. There is wheelchair access to the school. Outside there is plenty of space, including a grassed and hard play surface areas. The school building and site are free from any litter or graffiti, clean and very well maintained by the conscientious caretaker.
72. The quality and range of the learning resources is satisfactory overall. There are plentiful and good quality resources for fostering the youngest children's development, for English and the development of the pupils' literacy skills, and for mathematics and numeracy. The recent purchase of ICT equipment and the setting up of a computer suite for whole class use, has extended the range of possibilities for learning substantially. The equipment and facilities for music and physical education are generally good. The resources for other subjects are satisfactory. The quality of

resources for supporting pupils with special educational needs is good. Particular strengths are tactile resources to support the teaching of phonics and basic numeracy skills.

73. Pupils make at least good progress in all subjects from a very low starting point. By the time they leave school all pupils have developed good social skills; they are well-rounded individuals with a love for reading and writing and they are well equipped for secondary school. Standards in mathematics and science are above the national average and standards in English are in line with the national average by age 11. The school gives very good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

74. In order to build upon the current high quality provision, and maintain the very good improvements made, the school should

- (1) Improve standards in ICT for older pupils (paragraphs 101. 134. 135. 136. 137. 138) by:-
 - a. Implementing the training already planned for staff.
 - b. Making more use of modelling and control within the curriculum.
 - c. More consistently and extensively using ICT to support work in other subject areas.
- (2) Improve attendance (paragraphs 15. 48) by:-
 - a. Continuing and extending the good work in raising parents' awareness of its importance.
 - b. Raising the profile of attendance with pupils by measures to positively reward good attendance.
 - c. Drawing on the recent advice from the Local Authority to support a and b above.
- (3) Improve pupils' speaking skills (paragraphs 31. 77. 90) by:-
 - a. Making more use of drama and role-play throughout the curriculum.
 - b. Consistently and systematically identifying and planning for opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking skills in lessons across the curriculum.
 - c. Making use of a whole-school approach to developing pupils' speaking skills, as the school did so effectively last year to develop writing skills.

Another more minor issue, which governors might wish to address in their action plan is to

Improve the quality of reports to parents of pupils in the infants and juniors (in subjects other than English, maths and science), by giving parents clearer information about what their children know, understand and can do, and what they need to do to improve. (Paragraph 58)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

37

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

24

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	15	19	2	1	0	0
Percentage	0	41	51	5	3	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than two percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	30	127
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/A	64

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	4	42

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	4

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	22
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	9

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.8
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	2.3
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 (Year 2)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2001	7	8	15

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	6	6	6
	Girls	8	8	8
	Total	14	14	14
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (70)	93 (70)	93(85)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	6	6	7
	Girls	8	8	8
	Total	14	14	15
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (70)	93 (80)	100 (85)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2001	12	4	16

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	9	12
	Girls	4	4	4
	Total	13	13	16
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	81 (74)	81 (74)	100 (91)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	9	12
	Girls	4	4	4
	Total	13	13	16
Percentage of pupils	School	81 (74)	81 (74)	100 (100)

at NC level 4 or above	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)
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Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	
Black – African heritage	1
Black – other	
Indian	
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	
White	104
Any other minority ethnic group	5

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes**Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	0.4
Average class size	6.4

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	163

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	30
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	33
Number of pupils per FTE adult	15

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000 - 1
	£
Total income	393927
Total expenditure	353831
Expenditure per pupil	2527
Balance brought forward from previous year	20763
Balance carried forward to next year	60859

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	3.2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	5.2
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	1
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1

Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out

187

Number of questionnaires returned

58

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	69	24	5	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	57	38	3	2	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	47	45	3	2	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	33	28	26	2	12
The teaching is good.	71	24	2	2	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	69	19	10	2	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	78	19	3	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	74	24	2	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	60	33	3	0	3
The school is well led and managed.	71	17	2	2	9
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	57	36	3	2	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	52	33	3	2	10

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

75. Sixty children attend the nursery part-time and there are seventeen children in the Reception class. All these children start school in the autumn term so that they get the maximum time in each class. Although the Reception class is under-subscribed, numbers are rising steadily each year. Staff have a good relationship with parents and carers, and are always available to discuss the children's progress in the welcoming and attractive setting. Teachers work particularly hard to involve the parents in their children's education, albeit with limited success, and information on what is happening in the early years unit is prominently displayed. The children like coming to school, and parents and carers know they are well cared for. Well-established routines help the children to leave their parents and carers confidently and settle quickly to the school day. This is largely due to the effectiveness of very good induction procedures, and the very good support offered by all staff.
76. The school's own assessments of children coming into the nursery class show that, although there is a spread of ability, their attainment overall is below the national norm. Attainment in memory skills is lower than in the other areas assessed. The findings of these assessments enable the teachers to identify each individual's potential learning problems early on, and provide a structured teaching programme that will best support them. Children with special educational needs are identified early, and are supported well. Children's progress in their learning is assessed regularly, and records of progress are shared with parents regularly. This very good system enables lesson planning to meet individual needs through the experiences and activities offered. Very good teaching in all areas of learning enables children to make good progress, and they are less behind the national norm when they finish in the nursery class.
77. Less than one-third of the children in the nursery go on to the Reception class, and these are usually children from the immediate area. "Baseline" assessments at the start of Reception show that, although this year's group is more able than those of previous years, attainment is well below the national norm. It is particularly low in the development of speaking skills. Children for whom there is particular concern are noted and their progress watched very carefully so that further help can be provided where necessary. Very good teaching, excellent class management, very high expectations in all areas of learning and a very interesting and relevant curriculum ensure that the children make good progress. However, most children are still attaining below the national expectation in all aspects of their learning when they move into Year 1, except in speaking, where attainment is well below that normally found. Most children have poorly developed learning skills and the teachers have to work at this constantly so that the children get some idea of themselves as learners, but it is a slow process.
78. The nursery and Reception classes are housed within the early years unit and a strength of provision for the Foundation Stage is the excellent partnership between staff, especially the teachers. The curriculum is organised so that many activities are available for all children, irrespective of the class they are registered in. This enables the needs of each child to be catered for much more suitably, whether emotionally, socially or academically, through very effective planning. It also fosters a greater degree of independence as the children have a wider choice of activity and space.

Personal, social and emotional development

79. The children enter both nursery and Reception with few social skills and their poor language development hinders their conversation and co-operative play. They are encouraged in all activities and routines to have an independent approach. They register that they are present quickly and accurately, settle quickly to activities of their choice and sit happily together at snack

time. Some children in the nursery class, with poorer concentration skills, tend to wander around the room and need more help in settling to a chosen activity, often with adult support to get them started. In both classes, the teachers' high expectations of independence, and well-established routines result in the children clearing up at the end of a session quickly and efficiently. Reception children put their coats on quickly and correctly at home time. The patience, persistence and care of the adults ensures that the children make good progress in developing self confidence and in concentrating on what they are doing for increasing amounts of time. Some children in both classes begin to play co-operatively and groups of Reception children sometimes make rules for outdoor play.

Communication, language and literacy

80. Staff take every opportunity to extend the development of the children's speaking and communication skills through their own careful use of language and skilful questioning techniques. Planning includes a daily language focus for the main activities so that all adults work together to maximum effect. Some children entering the nursery will not talk much initially, and staff work very hard to give these children the necessary vocabulary, and the confidence and interest to use it. Many younger children respond to questions by pointing or demonstrating but some answer in short phrases. Continued emphasis on the development of language skills in all areas of learning enables most Reception children to convey meaning, describe events and ask questions in simple forms. They speak increasingly in sentences by the time they enter the infant class. Imaginative play areas give good opportunities for structured play and talk. Children from both classes take their 'babies' to the 'Baby Clinic', wait to be seen by the doctor and nurse and have their 'babies' examined. Although the children readily assume their roles, conversation is restricted although sometimes instructions are given verbally.
81. Children in both classes enjoy listening to taped stories. Nursery children turn the pages on cue, but tend to focus on the pictures, largely ignoring the text. Reception children concentrate for longer periods. When sharing books, nursery children tend to choose randomly and show limited interest in the content. Reception children are beginning to recognise repetitive text and some common words, but do not recognise when what they 'read' does not make sense. More able children read simple words correctly and use the pictures to say what might happen next. The reading and writing skills of the Reception children are developed well through the gradual introduction of elements of the literacy strategy. When they start school most children draw an object, with adult support. With carefully planned further support and very good teaching in very small groups most children make good progress in writing their own sentences about things that interest them, such as writing a letter from the owl baby to his mum and dad. Some children make very good progress and begin to give more structure to their writing. The independent writing area is very well-resourced, with an inviting array of mark makers and papers so that writing is available all the time.

Mathematical development

82. Due emphasis is placed on the mathematical development of the Nursery children. Many have little experience of number or mathematical terms when they start, and little experience of play that enables these concepts to be built up. Many opportunities are planned and offered to help children sort, order and sequence using small world figures, toys and any other objects suggested by the termly theme. Sand and water play are always available to give children time to build up experiences on mass, height, length and size in an informal way. During the Reception year these experiences become more formalised, as the numeracy strategy is gradually introduced. Thorough planning by teachers identifies key mathematical questions and vocabulary. Children make good progress, from ordering numbers from 1-7 correctly, with adult support in September, to finding the missing numbers in a sequence from 1-10 in March. At the time of the inspection they were confidently ordering objects from the largest to the smallest. Average attaining children can indicate "more than" and "less than" or can find a number between two given numbers by

pointing. However, they cannot identify “one more” or “one less” with any confidence or accuracy. Lower attaining pupils choose a given number of objects with help, and can give the correct number of pence from counting coins, with support. Higher attaining pupils add two numbers and record the total accurately, and solve simple problems using plus and minus facts to 10. In this aspect, this minority of children matches expectations. However, overall, children still do not reach the early learning goals for mathematical development by the end of reception.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

83. Many contexts and activities are planned to encourage exploration and observation in order to increase the children’s knowledge and understanding of the world about them. The nursery children are interested in the activities provided to help them find out about their environment, how things work and how things change. The children generally have limited experiences and teaching skilfully links early experiences to their everyday lives in order to make sense of them. Displays, for example on the texture of different materials and of magnets, encourage the children to touch and play, building up knowledge through experience. They play with toys on map-mats, acquiring a sense of place, such as the street and the zoo. Teachers have high expectations of the Reception children’s efforts and expect them to think through and explain their ideas. Clear explanations, given at the children’s level of understanding, lead to them making good gains in their knowledge. The children acquire concepts of history and geography through stories and through looking at their own experiences of dressing for hot and cold weather, and the sort of clothes they wore as babies and toddlers. A group of Reception children drew their own plan of the zoo with an entrance, café, animal enclosures and signs saying, ‘do not feed the lions’. The children are given early knowledge and understanding of religion through stories such as the Christmas story and religious festivals such as Easter.
84. Nursery pupils are encouraged to explore materials, choosing, cutting and gluing them to make, for example, very simple models of people, or cards. They use scissors with increasing confidence but need a lot of help in cutting out and choosing where to place the materials. Reception children show a greater control in their use of small tools and cut and join with increasing accuracy, as when they explore ways of joining materials with staples, paper clips and split pins to make people. In this they require, and receive, help from staff whose gentle guidance increases the children’s confidence to become more independent. All children have continuous access to a computer and many choose that option. Nursery children are acquiring basic early skills in mouse control. Reception children use the ICT suite regularly and the teacher’s clear use of correct terminology and confidence in developing the children’s skills through extending tasks as needed leads to them making good progress, so that most can draw a picture independently. The children enjoy these sessions very much and become totally involved and excited by what they are doing.

Physical development

85. The children make good progress in the nursery because they are frequently given a wide range of opportunities to develop their skills in a safe outdoor environment, and a stimulating and varied indoor environment. They are given time to develop a scenario with toys, persisting in a game and developing social and speaking skills. Nursery children enjoy ‘painting’ the playground with large brushes and water. They steer a simple course around an imaginary track, pedalling and steering large toys happily and confidently. Other activities are well planned to support the children’s physical development. The nursery nurse helps them to play skittles, throwing quoits over the pegs to score. Different apparatus is introduced to give variety and interest. Indoors, there are many good quality opportunities provided to develop finger, hand and eye co-ordination through small games and jigsaws. Reception children sometimes play co-operatively, to build a tower for example. In this play they abide by rules that they understand, but are not apparent to the observer! They show increasing control in the use of scissors, paint brushes and pencils. Teachers plan carefully to support this development of fine hand control through such activities as clay modelling and surface decoration. The clay tiles show a particularly good standard of control and

care. Teaching plans show that children are encouraged in PE lessons to use part of their body to move in a variety of ways and to move imaginatively in ways that represent animal movement.

Creative development

86. To encourage their creative development the children are given many opportunities to develop their own ideas, and to discover and explore through sand and water play, role play and painting. In these activities, nursery children often need adult support, as some of them do not play freely or confidently at first and need adult talk to stimulate their imagination. Equipment provided encourages them to become more adventurous, slicing sand and whisking water. Because many children have very limited language skills, they find it difficult to develop role play or to sustain co-operative play for very long. To develop creatively they receive a lot of help from adults' questioning, focusing their observations and, often, answering for them to model response. As part of the theme of "human development," the nursery children made colourful and correctly proportioned mixed media self-portraits, which started to show style and character. Reception children look at figures in art by looking at the work of artists from a good range of cultures. They say what they do and don't like, before painting and titling their own work, such as 'me walking on a bench'. In this, they are beginning to use colour creatively to denote particular objects but their exploration of colour, shape and texture is limited. All children have the chance to listen to, and make sounds using a range of musical instruments. They enjoy banging and shaking them to make sound, but do not spontaneously try to make a tune or rhythm. Singing songs related to the topic is a regular part of provision.

ENGLISH

87. In the 2001 National Curriculum tests pupils in Year 2 attained standards in reading and writing well above the national average. Compared with similar schools pupils achieved standards that were very high in reading and well above average in writing. Inspection findings indicate that standards by Year 2 are in line with the national average in writing and above in reading. This reflects a different pupil profile in the current Year 2, where there are more pupils with special educational needs, and is not a reflection on teaching which is very good.
88. In the National Curriculum tests in 2001 pupils in Year 6 gained results in English which were marginally below the national average. However, results were well above average compared to similar schools. Current Year 6 pupils attain standards in English which are broadly in line with the national average. This is an improvement on the standards in English last year and reflects the very good teaching in Year 6, and the school's work last year to improve writing.
89. Although pupils with special educational needs attain standards below the national average they make good progress in reading and writing and achieve good standards measured against their prior attainment. They make good gains in their reading and writing because of the well-planned additional literacy and 'Wellington Square' sessions which are taught by very effective teaching assistants. Through fun card and board games these pupils make significant gains in confidence in reading. Pupils greatly enjoy these activities and recognise that they are becoming more confident readers. Because of the skilful teaching, phonics is made interesting and pupils with literacy difficulties were observed getting excited about technical terms such as vowel digraphs. As pupils in Year 2 with significant reading difficulties grasp phonic strategies that enable them to read a story independently, they gain in confidence. This was shown by the pupil with a beam on his face who said: 'I can read that word because it has a double rr in the middle and an e at the end'. The four Syrian refugees who had no English language at the beginning of the school year have made good gains in their grasp and use of functional language and can make themselves understood in a conversation even if they speak in the wrong tense.

90. Standards in speaking are below the national average by the end of Year 2 and also by the end of Year 6. This reflects the very low attainment in speaking on entry to the school and also the high level of social disadvantage experienced by many pupils. Standards in listening are broadly in line with those expected nationally by the end of Year 2 and also by the end of Year 6. Pupils listen to one another and to their teachers carefully and often with interest. They respond well to the instructions they are given and to the questions they are asked. The very good attention paid to teachers in lessons makes an important contribution to pupils' good learning. Only in a Year 4 /5 lesson when the teaching was pitched well above the heads of a group of pupils with learning difficulties and associated behavioural difficulties did the pupils concerned refuse to listen and begin to mess about. Pupils with EAL make good progress with speaking and listening. The school has recognised the need to have a drive on raising standards in speaking. Where teachers are confident in developing language skills, pupils make good progress. Pupils in Year 6, for example, are keen to give their own ideas in their work on analysing a poem. In a number of subjects pupils let themselves down by not using the correct words, for example Year 6 attempted to describe a minaret by 'that thingy' when talking about their work in religious education.
91. Standards of work seen in reading are above the national average by Year 2 and in line by Year 6. Standards have risen over several years at both key stages. The pupils who are currently in Year 6 did not do as well as the current Year 2 pupils when they were in the infants, and have made good progress to reach their current levels. In the infants, pupils make good progress in learning strategies to decode new words. Most Year 2 pupils use their grasp of phonics to tackle a new word and their knowledge of the alphabet to use a dictionary. Pupils make good progress in reading throughout the school and by the end of Year 6 they have a love for reading. They enjoy books but few make extensive use of the school library. By Year 6 most pupils skim and scan quickly and so answer focused questions on texts. They can infer and deduce from texts and refer to texts when explaining their views. Pupils read a wider range of books as they move through the school. Because of the difference in attainment between boys and girls in reading in the past, the boys have been consulted about what new books to purchase for the library.
92. Standards of work seen in writing are in line with the national average by Year 2 and Year 6. By Year 2, pupils use adjectives to describe a character in a story. They know when to use capital letters and full stops. Pupils make good progress in writing throughout the school and by Year 6 they write competently for a range of purposes. They write thoughtful stories, poems, and letters, and can take notes, for example when watching a video. The quality of persuasive writing in Year 6 is a particular strength. They interrogate text well to prepare a reasoned argument. The standard of handwriting is sound throughout the school as is the standard of spelling.
93. Pupils' attitudes to English are good because of stimulating and demanding teaching, which motivates pupils to learn. Pupils respond to teachers' sense of fun and high expectations, and their positive response results in good learning. Fun and laughter is evident in literacy lessons alongside purposeful work and good learning. Pupils in the Year 3/4 class greatly enjoyed providing the next stanza for a poem, using the same rhyme scheme and repetitive pattern that had gone before.
94. The quality of teaching is very good. Teachers' very good knowledge of the National Literacy Strategy and their very good understanding in how to teach reading and writing has resulted in improved standards across the school. Strengths in teaching are the very detailed planning highlighting exactly what is to be taught and learnt; the very good management of pupils to create a positive learning environment for all and very good marking which informs pupils of exactly what they need to do to improve their writing. On the rare occasion when teaching was unsatisfactory, the work was not matched to pupils' needs and this resulted in some unsatisfactory learning and behaviour.
95. Pupils are beginning to use their literacy skills effectively across the curriculum, for example the use of captions in written history work and in the writing about the Five Pillars in Islam. In science, pupils write up their investigations legibly in their own words. However, speaking is a

weakness in most subjects and opportunities are sometimes missed to develop pupils' skills. For example, not enough use is made of role-play or drama to develop pupils' understanding in different subjects. More use needs to be made of structured opportunities for discussion in subjects across the curriculum, if pupils are to make up the short-fall in their speaking skills.

96. The co-ordination of English is very good. Planning and assessment are key strengths. Pupils are set very realistic targets and their progress towards them is monitored regularly. The co-ordinator leads by example. She has successfully enthused other teachers and the commitment by all staff to raise standards is a feature of this school.

MATHEMATICS

97. Standards in mathematics are good at the ages of seven and 11. Results of national assessments confirm this. While the attainment of children when they leave the Foundation Stage is generally below average, they make good, and often very good, progress in their learning. This good progress by all pupils, including those with special educational needs, is continued throughout the school. By the time they are seven, the majority of pupils attain levels above the average. By the time the pupils are 11, most maintain this above-average attainment. A few pupils gain high levels of knowledge, skills and understanding in mathematics.
98. Scrutiny of samples of pupils' work from all year groups and observations of lessons confirm the above-average standards. For example, Year 2 pupils demonstrate good numeracy skills. Most can double and halve varied money amounts up to £100 mentally with relative ease. They can estimate amounts to the nearest ten, and use numbers to a thousand. They have a good knowledge of fractions, and a sound knowledge and understanding of weights and measures, of time, and of shape and symmetry. Year 6 pupils similarly have good knowledge and skills. Most can, for example, work out the costings of using a leisure centre, or total the attendance at Premier League football matches. The older pupils have a good understanding of decimals and fractions, of graphical representation of information and the interpretation of data.
99. The major reason for the high standards is the consistently good teaching of mathematics found throughout the school. The well-planned, well-structured and pacy lessons, with their positive approaches to learning, ensure that the pupils make at least good progress at all stages. The teachers modify the work to match the needs of the varying abilities of the pupils, ensuring that, even in classes of mixed year groups, groups and individuals have appropriate learning targets and support. Good attention is given to mental and oral work, and to establishing strong numeracy skills. Another very positive feature is that often the lessons are made relevant by setting them within the pupils' day-to-day experiences, such as shopping, or working out the cost of holidays. Consequently, pupils at all stages apply their mathematics knowledge and skills effectively in other subjects.
100. The work of the learning support assistants is organised very well. They have good skills and they make invaluable contributions to pupils' learning opportunities, especially those who have special educational needs.
101. One aspect that requires increasing emphasis is the use of ICT in mathematics work. Previously, inadequate resources have limited both pupils' and teachers' opportunities to use ICT. However, during the inspection, pupils in Year 6 used a large-screen, manipulative program to extend their understanding of angles and the use of a protractor. It was very effective for all the pupils, and especially for those with special needs and those with English as an additional language. There is increasing evidence that the school is rapidly developing the pupils' mathematical learning through the use of improved ICT resources.
102. Overall, the quality of teaching is very good. Because lessons are interesting and challenging, the

pupils listen well, follow the instructions of their teachers carefully, and often use their own initiative very effectively. They learn to be independent and to do their best. They support one another and concentrate hard to meet the many, steadily increasing challenges. The teachers take care in marking the pupils' books and it is evident from scrutiny of them that the pupils take note of what is written. One small issue arises from this, however. In their enthusiasm, the teachers sometimes use superlatives such as "super work" and "excellent" when they mean the effort the pupil has made is super or excellent, rather than the quality of the work itself. This can be misleading. Nevertheless, the pupils generally express their enthusiasm for mathematics and see it as an interesting and important subject. They work hard.

103. The co-ordinator for mathematics has a very good grasp of the curriculum and the needs of the pupils, the staff, and the school. She has been fully involved in the development of the school policy for mathematics, the school improvement plan, and the numeracy action plan. Lessons have been monitored and evaluated throughout the school and action has been taken to eliminate any weaknesses in the provision, and to support staff in their work. Appropriate targets are set for attainment and development for individuals and groups, and for the whole school. The school operates a system of yearly tests in mathematics in addition to the two national ones at the end of Years 2 and 6, so that a continuous picture of the strengths and weakness of pupils' attainments can be seen. There are also 'rescue' activities for pupils who are tending to fall behind in their mathematical learning. These features, and other checks, provide good quality information. The school acts upon this effectively to ensure the pupils' continuous progress. There has been a significant improvement since the previous inspection in April 2000 when standards in mathematics were found to be satisfactory. This is a very positive aspect of the school's development since that time. Mathematics is now a strength.

SCIENCE

104. Standards in science are in line with national expectations at the age of seven, and are above national expectations at the age of 11. This is broadly confirmed by the results of national curriculum assessments. This represents good achievement for pupils at each key stage, because they come into the infant class with attainment that is below average overall. This maintains the good progress and sound standards seen at the last inspection in the infants, and represents improvement in the juniors, from sound standards last time.
105. Last year's test results at age 11 were particularly high and were the result of consistently good teaching, and an extensive programme of support to prepare pupils for the tests. This year, despite the lack of such an extensive programme, and the higher numbers of pupils with special needs in the class, pupils currently in Year 6 are attaining standards above the national expectation, because they have continued to receive high-quality teaching.
106. Last year's results of teacher assessments at age seven, while good overall, indicated that no pupils reached the higher Level 3. Discussion with staff indicates that, probably, judgements about attaining Level 3 were made too stringently. Current work by pupils in Year 2 shows several who are working at the higher level, confirming that higher attaining pupils are challenged appropriately. Work in pupils' books also supports this.
107. A particular strength of the work at both key stages is pupils' good understanding of practical and investigative work. This is because of the many good opportunities that pupils have to undertake practical experiments to underpin their understanding.
108. In the infant class, pupils cover a wide range of topics and their work shows clear gains in understanding over the two years. All pupils make good progress, particularly those with special educational needs, and the vast majority show at least the expected knowledge of scientific themes. Some pupils exceed this, and higher attaining pupils have a good understanding of healthy

eating and the properties of materials, for example, and record this effectively in writing, charts and tables. Pupils make good use of their literacy and numeracy skills to support their learning. In the lesson observed with this class, pupils showed a secure understanding of plants, animals and habitats, and used reference books appropriately to further their knowledge. They showed sound knowledge of scientific terms, and used magnifiers capably to look at different seeds.

109. In the junior classes, pupils continue to extend their knowledge across a wide range of scientific themes, and develop their practical skills well. Pupils are given good opportunities to write about their understanding in their own words, although there are some inconsistencies in this between classes. This writing clearly shows pupils' good developing understanding and, in particular, their good knowledge of experimental and investigative work. This is backed up well by the very good opportunities to do practical work. By the end of Year 6, standards are good overall, and even pupils who struggle with academic work are nearly all attaining the expected standard, for example in what constitutes a fair test, and in their knowledge of states of matter, solutions and how these ideas relate to everyday life. Higher attaining pupils show standards above the national expectation, with a very clear understanding of the separation of variables, for example, and a good understanding of food hygiene.
110. Science teaching is consistently good at both key stages, and is often very good in the infants. Class management is a significant strength, and is based on firmly established routines, and very positive relationships. Lessons are planned thoroughly and teachers are clear about what they want pupils to learn. In better lessons, very good attention is paid to closely matching work to the different ages and abilities of the pupils. This is a particular strength in the infant class. The extensive use of practical work both gains pupils' interest and enthusiasm, and gives them a more secure understanding of what they are studying. In a very good lesson in the infant class, the use of extra adults when pupils worked in small groups was very effective. It enabled the work to be more closely matched to pupils' individual needs, and gave one-to-one support when it was needed. As a result they made very good progress in their understanding of plants, animals and habitats. In a good lesson seen with Year 6 pupils, very good use was made of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills when interpreting scientific data. High expectations and a lively presentation ensured pupils' interest, and they made good gains in their understanding. Marking is of good quality, praising good work, and often giving pupils a clear pointer as to how their work could be improved.
111. As a result of the high quality of the teaching, and the good provision of practical work, pupils across the school enjoy the subject. They behave well in lessons, work hard and are happy to share their ideas with each other. They undertake practical work carefully, listen attentively to the teacher when needed, and their behaviour and concentration are good. Their positive attitudes support the good standards they achieve.
112. The subject is well managed. Monitoring of planning, work and teaching is well established, so that there is a clear view of strengths and weaknesses across the subject. A good system of assessment is in place, which identifies how pupils have coped with each topic studied, and gives teachers clear indications of pupils' needs. This is used effectively to plan further work, which is consequently well matched to pupils' different levels of knowledge and understanding. The co-ordinator is new to the post this year, and has not yet done extensive work in monitoring teaching because it has not been science's "turn". The recent low-key approach is sensible in view of the school's other priorities and the existing high standards. There is a good scheme of work, drawing on elements of national guidance to give pupils a broad and balanced curriculum throughout the school. This has a couple of anomalies related to the mixed aged classes, and the co-ordinator is currently considering how these can be avoided, so that pupils do not repeat work. In view of the high standards and pupils' enthusiasm for the subject, it is not currently a major issue.

ART AND DESIGN

113. Standards in art and design meet national expectations at the end of each key stage. Pupils often do work of good quality, because of good teaching in particular lessons or on particular projects. However, the time available to art has been limited over the last few years because of the school's concentration on English and mathematics, where standards needed to improve. As a result, pupils do not undertake the range and quantity of work which would be needed to raise standards above the average. For example, although junior pupils maintain sketch-books, which contain work of a sound standard, the quantity of work is limited, and pupils have had few opportunities to experiment and modify ideas to any great depth. Although they make good progress in lessons on the work they do, their overall progress is only satisfactory overall, because of time constraints.
114. Examples of good quality work include the patterns done by infant pupils, based on the work of Huddertwasser. They have used a mix of media very effectively to produce brightly coloured and individual work, which reflects elements of the artist's style well. Similarly, the work on "ancient Egyptian" paintings, done on real papyrus by younger junior pupils, shows a good understanding of the style and use of colour of Egyptian art. The work by the oldest pupils using batik to make a wall hanging shows good use of line, and imaginative exploration of colour and form. Pupils' work is extended across a variety of media, including textiles, screen printing, and sculptural work using natural materials, all of a sound quality.
115. Pupils have undertaken work based on that of artists from a variety of times and places, although not yet in any systematic fashion. During the inspection, the deputy headteacher's class, working with an advisory teacher, undertook a project to make paper-sculpture models, and to produce joint large-scale pictures, drawing on the work of a contemporary Portuguese artist, Paula Rego. This was of high quality, because of the good quality teaching they received, and because they had the time during the week to develop their work in depth. The finished products showed the clear influence of the artist's style, but also imaginative and individual contributions from pupils themselves.
116. The teaching in this class was good. Lessons were thoroughly prepared and the teacher has good subject knowledge, so the work was challenging and exciting, holding pupils' interest well. The teacher had quickly established positive relationships with the class, and maintained a purposeful working atmosphere in lessons. As a result, pupils worked hard and achieved good standards. No other teaching was seen during the week of the inspection, but pupils' work indicates that teaching is generally good, enabling pupils to attain sound standards, despite the relatively short time devoted to the subject.
117. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator has been in post since September. She has good subject knowledge and has already gained a clear view of provision and standards. She has not yet had the chance to observe teaching, but has made a good start in monitoring the subject by scrutinising planning and collecting examples of pupils' work. The current work is based on a two-year cycle, related to the topics which pupils study in other subjects. The co-ordinator is currently concluding a thorough audit of what work is done, as a preliminary to devising a more detailed and systematic scheme of work. This will have the potential to ensure that each pupil receives a broad and balanced curriculum in his or her time in the school, and bring a more systematic balance to the range of artists studied. The short length of time spent on the subject is to some extent compensated for by work done in the after-school art club, and by the occasional use of visiting artists, or projects such as the art-week done during the inspection with the Year 4/5 class.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

118. No lessons in design and technology were seen during the inspection. Judgements have been

made by looking at pupils' work, at teachers' planning and records, and through discussion with pupils.

119. At the time of the previous inspection, design and technology was "developing well". The picture remains similar. It continues to improve. Standards are satisfactory at the end of both key stages and there are now many good features in the ongoing work at all stages. From the youngest children's use of malleable materials such as playdough, the use of construction kits and, for example, the studies of clothing, fabrics and weaving, the pupils' work in design and technology shows good progression. For example, pupils make puppets in Year 2, books with moving parts in Year 3, make a study of breads and biscuits, or electrically driven fairground rides in Years 4 to 6. The work is challenging and interesting and helps to enhance the pupils' knowledge and skills in the use of tools and components, of manufacture and the effectiveness of artefacts. The work is largely based on themes that link with other areas of the curriculum. There is evidence of some use of ICT to support the work in design and technology, but this needs to be increased, where appropriate.
120. The pupils enjoy their work in design and technology. They can describe what they have done and how they did it. They can discuss the merits of one method of manufacture over another and talk about how what they have made might be improved. The pupils in Year 2 can discuss the various problems met in designing and making model houses, and pupils in Year 6 know that the ingredients, the design of the packaging and the value for money of commercially-made biscuits are important factors in sales and customer satisfaction. Visits to local commercial outlets such as the Asda store help to promote pupils' understanding.
121. Pupils are expected to write, draw and express opinions about what they have been doing when they reach the end of a particular project. This becomes progressively more demanding as the pupils move through the school, and is helpful to the teachers in determining what the pupils have learned.

122. The co-ordination of the subject is good. A good, new policy for the subject was presented to the governors in November 2001, following developmental consultations with local education authority staff. Design and technology is a current focus for development throughout the school. Significant progress is being made in raising the profile of the subject, in supporting staff development, in monitoring and evaluating the quality of the teaching, and in raising standards in general.

GEOGRAPHY

123. Pupils' attainment at the ages of seven and 11 matches that expected nationally. The previous report noted that the geography curriculum included interesting work, and this continues to be the case. Now that national initiatives for literacy and numeracy are firmly in place, the school is developing its geography curriculum, and the policy for geography is currently being revised.
124. Pupils enter the infant class with limited knowledge of the world around them and restricted language with which to describe their experiences. The curriculum is carefully planned with a focus on the pupils' acquisition of skills. The teaching of geographical terms and vocabulary is planned thoroughly, so that pupils' literacy skills are developed well alongside their geographical skills. This helps them to become increasingly articulate in making links between their geographical knowledge and experiences. Much work is done practically, especially with the younger pupils, within the local environment. In this way, pupils are given a good understanding of their own locality. Good teaching, in contexts of immediate interest and concern to the pupils, ensures that they all make good progress in their learning throughout the school.
125. Pupils in the infant class acquire a sound knowledge of the locality in which they live. They recognise, describe and compare features of the area, such as the types of houses in Westleigh Lane. They use this information to help them build a town model, incorporating the features they have observed themselves. Work in Year 2 is very skilfully extended and the teachers' high expectations of thought and effort encourages pupils to become more independent in their approach to learning. This was evident in a lesson where the class conducted a traffic survey outside the school, but as this was the first time, they had trouble with their techniques. However, on returning to the classroom the older group drew plans of the roads around the school, marking the yellow lines, warning signs and car park correctly, indicating that they had understood the concept that parking outside the school is controlled for safety.
126. Throughout the junior classes, these skills are successfully applied to the study of a greater range of themes and places, often outside the pupils' immediate experiences. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 show their awareness of the local environment in their leaflets designed to make people more aware of it. In Year 6 this theme is extended to the consideration of how people's behaviour can effect a place. Discussion on the litter problem and what to do about it preceded a trip to the Town Hall for a talk on citizenship, after which the class performed their own play on the same theme. Older pupils have a sound understanding that human activity can affect a place and recount their map studies of Liverpool landmarks and pollution of the River Volga, and they begin to see how their own patterns of life compare with those of other people in other countries. In these studies, geographical skills, knowledge and understanding are developed soundly through use of the Internet, CD ROMs, videos and mapwork.
127. Pupils in Year 6 say they find geography boring 'because we have to write'! - they prefer drawing pictures and 'going out'. Although most work recorded in books is factual, it is their own work and little is copied from the board. Despite this apparent reluctance to like geography they say they 'do their best' and the work in the books is neat and considered. Teachers' marking of books is good, indicating what the pupils have done well, and what they need to do to improve. Regular assessments enable the teachers and the co-ordinator to check on individual and class progress and to amend teaching plans where necessary. The good progress made by all groups of pupils is due to thorough teaching of geographical themes within an interesting and relevant

curriculum.

128. Co-ordination of geography is strong. The co-ordinator has monitored teaching across the school and from her very good quality evaluations has drawn up an action plan for further development of the subject. She also monitors the pupils' work to ensure agreed plans are followed. She has a good understanding of the state of geography in the school and works hard to bring about improved standards. A good system of assessment is linked appropriately to the schemes of work, and gives teachers information on which they can effectively base their planning.

HISTORY

129. Standards in history meet the national expectation at the end of each key stage. This represents good progress in the infant class, and satisfactory progress across the juniors.
130. In the infant class, pupils cover a good range of work, which is well planned to develop their understanding of historical ideas. There is a good concentration on chronology, and on how things change over time. This is well illustrated by their work on toys and how they have changed over the last 100 years, as well as by their work on the nurses Mary Seacole and Florence Nightingale. Their writing not only shows a good understanding of aspects of these two Victorians' lives, but also shows a sound understanding of how hospitals and nursing have changed since then. Pupils have good opportunities to develop and use their literacy skills in the subject, writing notes on a variety of topics in their own words, and starting to use simple secondary sources effectively to research information.
131. Pupils continue to study a sound range of historical topics in the junior classes, although this is not always reflected in the quantity of their written work. However, by Year 6, standards continue to meet the national expectation. Their writing shows a good understanding of aspects of Victorian life, illustrated by some sound empathetic writing from the standpoint of rich or poor Victorian children. They make sound use of evidence, such as pictures, to make deductions about life in the past. In the lesson observed with Year 6 pupils, they showed a good understanding of the kinds of changes that might happen over time, when they constructed their own questions to research about education in Ancient Greece. In using a variety of books, they showed good research skills and significantly increased their knowledge about Greece as they found answers to their questions.
132. Only one lesson was observed during the inspection. The quality of pupils' work indicates that teaching is good in the infants, and is at least satisfactory in the juniors. The one lesson seen, in Year 6, was good. Discipline was secure, and pupils were given good opportunities to develop their independence and their literacy skills as they worked to find information. Explanations were clear, with the lesson planned to develop pupils' understanding systematically. This enabled good gains in pupils' knowledge of the use of different sources of evidence, as well as extending their understanding of life in Ancient Greece. Pupils behaved well, concentrated hard and made good progress. Good use was made of teaching support to enable pupils with special needs to fully participate, as well as helping them to record their findings effectively.
133. The subject is effectively managed by the co-ordinator, who also co-ordinates the geography curriculum. Good, systematic arrangements for monitoring plans, teaching and pupils' work are in place. History and geography are taught in alternate blocks, and each block is evaluated by the co-ordinator and the relevant class teacher. Useful assessment arrangements ensure that teachers are in a good position to build on pupils' previous understanding, and to give support to those who need extra help.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

134. The previous inspection of two years ago found that standards were too low in ICT. The school

senior management team recognised the need to develop this curriculum area and has ensured that resources have been improved, and that staff have devoted considerable time and effort to the subject. As a result, provision has improved considerably, and is continuing to do so. All classroom computers have been updated and the LEA responds to hardware problems within a week so that no computer is out of use for long. The new computer suite is very well equipped and, for many classes, each child working in it can have their own computer, so that time is used efficiently in the acquisition and practice of new skills. The interactive white board has also been a good investment, as it enables teaching points to be made explicitly and clearly to the whole class. Staff are becoming more confident in their own use of ICT, and produce many signs, labels and banners to enhance their displays of pupils' work. They are keen to start a programme of training to help them to use ICT to support learning in other curriculum areas. At present this is done satisfactorily, but it is not organised systematically throughout the school. The co-ordinator is making a good job of supporting her colleagues and increasing her own expertise.

135. All these factors have led to an improvement in standards across the school. In the infant class, pupils make good progress, due to good teaching, and their attainment matches national expectations. Pupils make especially good progress in their use of word processing, for example to write a correctly spelt and presented list of instructions. They use graphic modelling tools confidently to represent a fantasy situation, such as an undersea world, and use other programs to produce recognisable pictures. They follow instructions correctly to program a floor robot and predict with some accuracy the path a particular set of instructions will produce. This gives them the skills and confidence to input their own programs to make the robot follow their own predetermined pathway.
136. Younger pupils in the junior school are using skills that those in Year 6 are just beginning to acquire, for example matching graphics and sound, and creating shapes using the Roamerworld program. Pupils in the Year 4/5 class use clip art and stamp functions to make interesting plans and scenes. They represent data satisfactorily in a variety of appropriate graphical forms.
137. The oldest pupils, in Year 6, have been particularly disadvantaged by the lack of facilities through most of their school life. Standards at the age of 11 are below those expected nationally because these pupils have not previously had the opportunity to practise their skills across the ICT curriculum sufficiently. However, progress is now accelerating, and is now good, as pupils have more 'hands on' experience and time to use their computer skills and knowledge. Most pupils use word processing techniques confidently, and send e-mails successfully, although some pupils have difficulty in adding images and in the consistent use of text, font and size. Most pupils use spreadsheets accurately, for example in budgeting for a party, but do not always analyse patterns in the data, or the resulting graphs, to check whether the formula is correct. In many respects this class is still working at the level expected of Year 5 pupils. They are working below expectations in the modelling and control aspects of the ICT curriculum and the school does not yet have the necessary software to develop this aspect. In a Year 6 lesson the pupils made good gains in learning in their first use of a multimedia program with which they will design a home page for their own website. Once the principles had been explained confidently and clearly by the teacher, pupils worked quickly, moving independently between menus and text and image.
138. Teaching in specific ICT lessons is now good, although opportunities are sometimes missed in other lessons to use ICT to support work across the curriculum. Teachers' subject knowledge is sound, although variable between individuals, and a programme of further training is planned to improve this. Throughout the school, pupils' attitude to ICT is very good. They enjoy ICT lessons using the computer. Some effective use is made of ICT to support work in other subjects, although this is not systematic throughout the school. The school is well placed for rapid improvement and development in this subject.

MUSIC

139. Standards are in line with expectations at the ages of seven and 11. The school has placed some emphasis on the development of the music curriculum recently. Local education authority staff have worked alongside class teachers to help them to develop their teaching skills in a subject in which they often lack confidence. The dividends of this initiative are beginning to pay off. Standards in singing, in listening and appraising, and in playing and performing are satisfactory and improving. There is good evidence that the pupils are making satisfactory progress in their knowledge of music and in their understanding of its value, and in acquiring general musical skills.
140. Each class has a weekly lesson and there is additional work with peripatetic staff. In the lessons seen and in assemblies the quality of singing was satisfactory. The pupils are able to maintain a rhythm, and to sing songs from memory. Most do so tunefully. Older pupils can follow a sung line efficiently and produce variations upon it to suit a mood or dramatic intention. The pupils are increasing their knowledge of composers and can recognise, for example, a piece by Beethoven or a Tudor pavane. Both the younger and older pupils can add appropriate actions to songs being sung, or simple dance movements to traditional and historical music. Pupils in Year 6 are developing a satisfactory level of skills in the modulation of pitch and volume when composing their own pieces. They learn the structure of an orchestra through their own listening and performing. Pupils of all ages learning keyboard skills are making satisfactory progress, and most can read and play simple melodies. They are learning to add left hand accompaniments.
141. The pupils are stimulated by the good quality of the teaching. However, many are often reticent in their performance. They also lack confidence in expressing themselves and have limited speaking skills. This does not aid their appraisal of music. Nevertheless, they join in the activities willingly and work successfully together. Some lessons are ambitious, where the level of challenge provided for the pupils is often very high. Often after a cautious start, the pupils work capably and thoughtfully and achieve well.
142. The teaching is carefully planned. The learning objectives are precise and carefully followed through. The lessons are organised well and teachers make good use of the variety of good quality instruments and audio equipment. Activities are briskly paced and lively, and the teaching is sensitive and firm in control. When a peripatetic teacher works with a class, the class teacher often joins in. This is beneficial for both pupils and staff and increases the opportunities for in-service training.
143. On occasions, the space used for some singing lessons is rather small and cramps the pupils when they need to be more expansive. During the inspection, it was noted that in keyboard lessons there is a need for a further instrument to be made available to avoid moving the school piano, and the pupils need to be ready for their lesson more quickly to save wastage of time.
144. The school involves itself with numerous local music related events that have varied cross-cultural elements. It also has good links with the local high schools and participates in workshops and other inter-school activities. The extra-curricular drama club provides another opportunity for musical involvement.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

145. By the end of Year 2, standards in gymnastics, dance and games are broadly in line with national expectations. A significant minority of pupils in Year 2 exceed the national expectation in games skills, due in part to their involvement in extra-curricular clubs. By the end of Year 6, standards are in line with national expectations in gymnastics, dance and games skills but well below national expectations in swimming. Too few Year 6 pupils swim the required 25 metres using a range of strokes with well developed breathing technique. The school proposes to use funding for extra-curricular activities to provide additional swimming lessons for Year 6 pupils who fall short of

swimming this distance. Those Year 6 pupils who participate in an annual residential trip have the opportunities to gain suitable skills in outdoor and adventurous activities. The co-ordinator is exploring other ways in which Year 6 pupils can access suitable activities after their national tests have finished. Standards of achievement in dance have improved across the school in the last year because teachers have become more confident as a result of the recent high quality in-service training they have received.

146. By Year 2 pupils perform a range of jumps in gymnastics and have good control on landing. They climb ropes skilfully and walk along a beam with good balance. They are beginning to use their own initiative to perform a series of movements in unison. They have well-developed games skills and can pass a football accurately whilst travelling. Some Year 2 pupils control a football at a standard which exceeds the national expectation. By Year 6, gymnastic skills are well developed and pupils attain levels of creativity and accuracy in body movements that are in line with national expectations. Most Year 6 pupils pass a rugby ball accurately whilst travelling, because of the very good teaching they experience and good advice on how to improve their passing skills, based on very good subject knowledge. The use of coaches who come into school also contributes to pupils' development of games skills.
147. Pupils make very good gains in their development of skills in gymnastics and games lessons because of the demanding teaching they receive based on very good subject knowledge. Too few make satisfactory progress in swimming throughout Years 3 to 6 because most have no opportunities to practise outside school lessons. Progress in dance throughout the school is satisfactory and improving as teachers' confidence grows. As pupils mature, they gain in confidence and skills and become increasingly able to evaluate and improve their performance. Pupils with physical disabilities make good progress because of the high quality support they experience. Those with learning and behavioural difficulties often excel in their PE lessons, and this makes a significant contribution to improving their sense of self worth. Muslim boys access swimming lessons because the sensitivity of the co-ordinator has enabled them to wear swimming gear that is culturally acceptable and good provision is made for them to change safely and in privacy.
148. Pupils enjoy PE and have fun in learning new skills, which they go on to put into practice. They begin to work collaboratively in pairs and small groups. They develop morally as they learn the importance of being a member of a team and why it is important not to cheat in games.
149. The quality of teaching is very good throughout the school, and is based on very good subject knowledge. Lessons are delivered at a cracking pace so that the quality of learning is also very good. For example, in a lesson with the infant class, pupils showed greater confidence in catching and dribbling a ball by the end of the lesson because of the very good teaching. The teaching very skilfully builds the confidence of pupils with learning difficulties, but who have a marked aptitude for PE, by allowing them to demonstrate skills to the class. Very good interventions by teachers to challenge pupils and also to give practical advice enable pupils to improve their skills and technique in games activities. Teaching ensures that pupils understand the importance of warming up before an activity and cooling down afterwards. There is a very good emphasis on the importance of having a healthy body and demanding teaching results in all pupils working hard and getting out of breath.
150. The co-ordination of the subject is good. A new scheme of work has been developed to improve the quality of provision for dance. A very good system for assessment has been developed and is about to be launched in the context of the new scheme of work. The school brings in expert coaches from outside for developing pupils' games skills. All pupils are given opportunities to participate in gymnastic and games events outside of school, and they develop their skills whilst having terrific fun through participating in these well organised events. Excellent resources for games have been accrued through the use of the 'Top Sport' bags, and these resources have enhanced the quality of provision for PE. Quality in-service training and support from an

enthusiastic co-ordinator has encouraged teachers to improve their quality of teaching which in turn has led to improved learning for the pupils and higher standards of achievement.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

151. Standards in religious education for pupils aged seven and 11 are broadly in line with those expected in Wigan's agreed syllabus. By Year 2, pupils have a reasonable knowledge and understanding of the Easter story. They understand that Jesus died on a cross and that Christians believe that He rose again from the dead. Although they have a reasonable knowledge of the stories Jesus told, some pupils in Year 2 confuse the stories told by Jesus with those told by Moses. Most Year 2 pupils understand that Jews and Muslims have special holy books, but a proportion of pupils in this year muddle up the way in which Jews read the Torah in the synagogue with the way in which Muslims read the Koran in the mosque. A few think that Muslims use a pointer to read the Koran because they have confused and merged the practices of two different religions. By the end of Year 6, pupils are less confused and muddled. They have a reasonable knowledge and understanding of the Five Pillars of Islam and use the correct language to express why Muslims go on pilgrimage to Mecca. They have also grasped that the Bible is a library of books and are able to talk about the quality of poetry found in the Book of Psalms in the Old Testament. However, there is some muddled understanding about the fact that Hindus believe in One Being which manifests itself in different forms. Some pupils have not grasped this very important belief system and unfortunately consider that Hindus worship many different gods, which is wrong. However, scrutiny of their written work indicates that most understood the idea at the time they were taught it. The issue appears to be one of the information being taught and written about not really sinking in deeply enough for some pupils.
152. No lessons were observed because the subject is taught by part-time teachers, who were not in school on the days of the inspection. Analysis of work indicates that a serious attempt has been made to cover the content of the agreed syllabus. However, it is evident that the emphasis of the teaching has been on the teaching of facts, and pupils have not had sufficient opportunities to explore and experience religious artefacts. There have been too few visits to places of worship. Evidence indicates that the teaching of facts, divorced from a hands-on experience approach, has resulted in a significant proportion of pupils being muddled in their understanding of the subject. However, scrutiny of books indicates that overall progress has been satisfactory. There is no evidence of work being matched to the needs of pupils with special educational needs and this is a weakness. Discussion with some of these pupils indicates that they have not really enjoyed the subject and they are the most confused in their understanding.
153. The co-ordinator left at the end of the spring term and the inspection took place at the beginning of the summer term. The acting headteacher has stepped into the gap and is currently co-ordinating the subject. Planning is satisfactory, in that it covers the requirements of the agreed syllabus, but is weak in that it does not sufficiently match work to the needs of all pupils. Good systems are in place to assess pupils' understanding at the end of each module of work, but this information has not been used sufficiently rigorously to inform subsequent planning. There has been an over-emphasis on the knowledge attainment target at the expense of the experience attainment target, and this imbalance has resulted in some pupils not really enjoying the subject. There is evidence of monitoring the quality of teaching and learning by the previous co-ordinator, but it is not clear how findings from this monitoring have been used to improve the quality of provision. There are religious artefacts of good quality but there are not enough of them for pupils to explore. Insufficient use has been made of visits to bring the subject alive. Although there is a significant module on Islam for pupils in Year 6, these pupils have not been taken to a mosque.