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INSPECTION REPORT

**Light Oaks Infant School
Salford**

LEA area: Salford

**Unique Reference Number: 105894
Inspection Number: 186711**

Headteacher: Mrs Ann Taylor

**Reporting inspector: Mrs Cecile Corfield
21026**

Dates of inspection: 8 - 12 November 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 706782

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
Type of control:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Lancaster Road Salford M6 8LU
Telephone number:	0161 788 8099
Fax number:	n/a
Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of Chair of Governors:	Cllr A Clague
Date of previous inspection:	26th January 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mrs C Corfield, RgI	English Art Geography History	Attainment and progress Attitudes, behaviour and personal development Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development Attendance Support, guidance and pupils' welfare Partnership with parents and the community Staffing, accommodation and learning resources Equal opportunities Leadership and management Efficiency English as an additional language Teaching Curriculum and assessment Special educational needs
Mr G Stockley, Lay Inspector		
Mrs P Parrish, Team Inspector	Children under five Science Information technology Design and technology	
Mrs S Herring, Team Inspector	Mathematics Music Physical education Religious education	

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MAIN FINDINGS

What the school does well

- The quality of teaching is good and enables the pupils to make substantial progress.
- The headteacher's clear vision for the development of the school has helped to raise standards significantly.
- The pupils' good attitudes to learning promote their high level of achievement.
- There is good provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The organisation of the day for the children under five indicates clear understanding of the needs of the youngest children.
- The enhancement of the school grounds has enriched the pupils' learning experiences.

Where the school has weaknesses

- I. Standards in handwriting are below the levels achieved in other aspects of English.
- II. Teaching plans for subjects other than literacy and numeracy are not available in advance of lessons for perusal by the headteacher.
- III. The school does not have written details of its longer-term plans for development as current documents only give details of priorities for the current year.
- IV. Where assessment procedures exist [English, mathematics, science and information technology], they are good, but little assessment takes place in other subjects to set targets or guide curricular planning.
- V. The curriculum co-ordinators' role is at an early stage of development and does not yet take full account of monitoring the quality of teaching and pupils' learning or the effectiveness of assessment procedures in their subject.

The strengths of the school far outweigh the weaknesses. The governors will produce an action plan showing how the weaknesses will be resolved. Parents and guardians of pupils at the school will receive a copy.

How the school has improved since the last inspection

Most of the weaknesses identified in the last report in January 1996 have been dealt with efficiently and the school has made very good improvement overall. There has been a significant improvement in the quality of teaching and as a result, the pupils' standards of attainment have risen. The management of the curriculum is now effective and the headteacher ensures that the planned curriculum takes place to enable the pupils to make good progress. The provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development has been given strong emphasis within the curriculum and is now good. The teachers' use of time has improved dramatically and is now very good. Not a moment in the day is wasted. Very good systems are in place to manage the pupils' behaviour and all staff, including mid-day assistants, use them consistently. The school has given a good deal of thought to the pupils' safety on the school site and has taken necessary measures to protect the pupils from harm. Parents' involvement in their children's learning is very good and the school has devised a number of activities, including the popular "Family Challenge" to develop this important aspect of school life. The school's capacity for further improvement is judged to be very good.

• **Standards in subjects**

This table shows the standards achieved by seven year olds in 1999 based on the National Curriculum tests:

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

The comparison with similar schools is based on the number of pupils eligible for free school meals. On entry to the school, the children in the Reception classes undertake assessments, the results of which indicate that the majority are at the level expected for this age group. By the age of five, the children have exceeded the learning objectives in their personal and social development, language and mathematics and physical development. They achieve the objectives for literacy, knowledge, understanding of the world and creative development. Inspection findings confirm the Key Stage 1 test results in 1999, although current evidence is based on a different cohort. Since the tests for seven year olds in 1998, there has been a rise in standards in reading and mathematics to well above the national average. Standards in writing, however, remain in line with the national average. The introduction of joined writing in Year 2 is later than in most schools, and this prevents the pupils from achieving a higher level. The school has now introduced preparatory work in the nursery, Reception and Year 1 to enable standards in handwriting to rise. In science, attainment is high and well above most other schools. Standards have risen considerably since the tests in 1998, when attainment was close to the national average. Emphasis on the provision of investigative work and improvement in planning through clear learning objectives for lessons are instrumental in this rise in standards. Attainment in information technology at the end of the key stage is at a satisfactory level. In religious education, attainment at the age of seven years meets the requirements of the agreed syllabus. Standards in art are higher than those found in most schools, and learning in all other non-core subjects is effective. The pupils leave school with a good foundation for the next stage of their education.

• **Quality of teaching**

Teaching in:	Under 5	5 – 7 years
English	Good	Good
Mathematics	Good	Good
Science		Good
Information technology		Satisfactory
Religious education		Good
Other subjects	Good	Good

Teaching was good in 55 per cent of lessons and very good in 17 per cent of the lessons observed for children under five and Key Stage 1. Teaching in 28 per cent of lessons was satisfactory. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen. The quality of teaching has improved dramatically since the last inspection, when 19 per cent was judged to be unsatisfactory. The teaching of English had a very high proportion of unsatisfactory teaching in 1996, but evidence from the current inspection indicates that most teaching in English is at least good, with a significant proportion judged to be very good. The teachers throughout the school have high expectations of their pupils and plan interesting, challenging lessons.

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

Other aspects of the school

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	Good in lessons, around the school and at break-times. Further observations of pupils in assemblies and in the dining hall indicate that behaviour has improved since the last inspection.
Attendance	Broadly in line with the national average. Punctuality is good. The prompt start to the school day has a positive impact on the pupils' learning.
Ethos*	Very good. The pupils' attitudes to learning are good. Staff and pupils enjoy good relationships. The staff are fully committed to the pupils attaining high standards.
Leadership and management	The headteacher gives strong leadership and has a clear vision for the school's development. A new governing body has been formed recently and is enthusiastic about its role. The role of the curriculum co-ordinators is not yet fully developed, but much good work has taken place in managing their subjects.
Curriculum	The curriculum is broad and balanced and has suitable emphasis on literacy and numeracy. The curriculum for the children under five is imaginative and well-matched to their needs. Assessment procedures are an area for further development.
Pupils with special educational needs	Provision is good. Early identification and close support enables the pupils to make good progress. Thorough documentation is in place and reviewed regularly.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Provision is good. Improvements since last inspection have been effective.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Good overall. Very good level of support staff provided and they are used well. The accommodation is good and the school grounds

Value for money

have been enhanced to a very high standard. Learning resources are satisfactory overall. The school library has been developed well.
Good.

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

The parents' views of the school

What most parents like about the school

VI. The school encourages parents to play an active part.

VII. Easy to approach the school with questions.

VIII. The very good information the school provides.

IX. The school enables children to achieve a high standard of work.

X. The school's values and attitudes.

XI. Their children like school.

What some parents are not happy about

XII. The work children are expected to do at home.

The inspectors' judgements support the positive views of the parents. As in most schools, parents' views differ concerning the amount of homework provided. The inspectors' views are that the range and amount of homework set are appropriate.

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KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

To support the school's aims and raise standards further, the governing body, headteacher and staff should:

- a) raise standards of attainment in the handwriting element of English; (*paragraphs 10 and 107*)
- b) monitor teachers' short-term plans in advance of the lessons being taught; (*paragraphs 28 & 61*)
- c) extend the school's development plan beyond the current year to provide for the longer-term development of the school; (*paragraphs 62 & 71*)
- d) establish and use assessment procedures in all subjects, except in English, mathematics, science and information technology, where they already exist; (*paragraph 42*)
- e) further develop the role of the curriculum co-ordinators in monitoring standards and the effectiveness of assessment procedures in their subjects. (*paragraphs 61 & 126*)

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

-) develop further curricular links with the junior school, as has been introduced with information technology; (*paragraph 57*)
-) undertake a formal risk assessment in line with good practice for health and safety systems; (*paragraph 51*)
-) consider more effective ways to collect the pupils' work in science to enable pupils and teachers to judge progress over time more clearly. (*paragraph 126*)

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INTRODUCTION

- **Characteristics of the school**

1. Light Oaks Infant School is situated in Salford. The catchment area is of great diversity and the pupils come from a wide variety of backgrounds. The majority of pupils live in privately-owned semi-detached housing.
2. The school has 232 pupils on roll in the main school and 68 children with a part-time place in the nursery. The nursery has been managed by the school from September 1998, with a new extension for this age group opened in January 1999. Assessments undertaken during the first half-term in the Reception classes indicate that the children's attainment is at the level expected of this age group.
3. Based on current figures, the percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is 7.3 per cent which is below the national average. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs is 14.7 per cent, broadly in line with the national average. Two pupils receive support from outside specialists. The proportion of pupils speaking English as an additional language [four per cent] is higher than in most schools. No pupils have a statement of special educational need.
4. The school's main aims stated in the foreword of the prospectus are to provide high quality education for all pupils in a welcoming, secure and happy environment. The pupils will be helped to achieve standards at the highest level of their capability, to value themselves and others, and to develop positive attitudes of thoughtfulness, caring and sharing.
5. The school's main priorities for 1999/2000 are the further development of literacy and numeracy, review and development of the school's provision for special educational needs, and further development of assessment, monitoring and evaluation procedures.

5. **Key indicators**

Attainment at Key Stage 1¹

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for latest reporting year:	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	42	43	85

5. National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils	Boys	40	41	42
At NC Level 2 or Above	Girls	37	40	41
	Total	77	81	83
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	90 (78)	95 (80)	98 (93)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

5. Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils	Boys	42	42	42
At NC Level 2 or Above	Girls	40	41	43
	Total	82	83	85
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	96 (85)	98 (91)	100 (94)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

5. **Attendance**

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year:		%
	Authorised	School 5.7
	Absence	National comparative data 5.7
	Unauthorised	School 0
	Absence	National comparative data 0.5

5.

5. **Exclusions**

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

¹ Percentages in parenthesis refer to the year before the latest reporting year

5. **Quality of teaching**

Percentage of teaching observed which is:

	%
Very good or better	17
Satisfactory or better	100
Less than satisfactory	0

5. **PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

5. **EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL**

5. **Attainment and progress**

6. In the national tests in 1999, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected level for seven year olds [Level 2] at the end of Key Stage 1 is well above the level attained by most schools in reading and mathematics and very high standards in science are indicated in the teacher assessments. Standards in writing are in line with the national average. The proportion reaching a higher level [Level 3] is well above the national average in reading and mathematics, above average in science and close to the national average in writing.
7. In comparison to schools with pupils from a similar background, based on national benchmarks, results in reading are above average, mathematics well above and writing broadly in line with similar schools.
8. The results for 1999 demonstrate a significant rise in standards from the tests in 1998 in reading, mathematics and science. Standards in writing have stayed at the same level. Inspection findings indicate that the rise in standards is a result of the school's concerted efforts in refining planning to establish clear learning objectives, providing challenging work for all ability groups and making very good use of time and resources. The school is to be congratulated on what it has achieved in the past two years in providing the pupils with a firm foundation for their future learning. The school is aware of the need to raise standards in writing and this is the next area for development.
9. On entry to the nursery, assessment indicates that a wide range of attainment is represented, but overall, the level of attainment of the children is at the level expected for their age. By the time they are five, the majority of the children attain the national learning objectives for this age group in all six area of learning, and exceed the objectives in their personal and social development, language, mathematics and physical development. In their literacy, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development, the children attain what is expected of them. The children make good progress in both the nursery and Reception classes, and by five, they are ready to embark on the National Curriculum fully prepared and confident. Self-esteem is high.
10. In English, the pupils' literacy skills are developed effectively throughout the key stage and the pupils make good progress. Inspection findings confirm the test results in 1999 that are well above the national average in reading and speaking and listening skills and broadly in line with the national average in writing. Reading is fluent and the pupils enjoy a wide range of books that are well-matched to their abilities. A particular strength of the pupils' reading skills is their very good use of phonics to help them read unfamiliar words. The procedures for the Literacy Hour make good contribution to the development of speaking and listening skills, reading and writing for different purposes, such as stories, poems, letters, lists, and recording facts. The school has allocated time in the school week for the pupils in Year 2 to experience extended writing. The pupils were observed writing extended stories and they expressed imaginative ideas very successfully. Although the pupils are given opportunities to write in a range of forms and for different purposes, insufficient attention has been given to developing the pupils' handwriting skills to enable them, by the time they are in Year 2, to write in a legible

joined-up script. The school has introduced 'flicks' to letter formation for the children in Year 1 to enable them to make better progress towards using cursive script in Year 2. There is now sufficient challenge in writing tasks to enable a greater proportion to attain the higher level in national tests than has been achieved in the past.

11. In mathematics, at the end of the key stage, the pupils' attainment is well above the national average and at the level found in the tests of 1999. The higher attaining pupils are very good at devising and explaining mental strategies for adding series of numbers. All understand odd and even numbers and know number bonds to ten. Average-attaining pupils can add single digits to double digits [37+4] correctly and lower attaining pupils add two numbers together accurately to 20 and beyond this when using apparatus to aid counting. Overall, the pupils have good mental arithmetic skills, which are promoted daily in "quick fire" sessions at the start of lessons. The National Numeracy Strategy has been implemented successfully and the pupils enjoy the structure and variety of activities in these lessons. Standards are high in numeracy by the end of the key stage. Most pupils have good knowledge and understanding of appropriate mathematical language. The pupils' good progress in lessons and over the key stage is promoted by the school's emphasis on the pupils learning through practical activities and by providing opportunities for investigations through games. For instance, when playing Dominoes, all the pupils can give a criterion for sorting the pieces and can give explanations for their choices. There is good use of number puzzles to challenge their thinking. A review of the pupils' work from last year indicates that the pupils had little experience of measurement in weight or capacity.
12. In science, the pupils' attainment is well above that attained in most other schools, which represents a considerable improvement from the last inspection when standards were broadly in line with the national average. The rise in standards is due to the emphasis on the pupils learning through investigations and experiments. The teachers have developed their subject knowledge, provide clear learning objectives for lessons and assess the pupils' understanding through good questioning skills. By the end of the key stage, the pupils know how to make a simple circuit. They all know the dangers of electricity and the need for safety precautions. They understand that many every day objects use electricity. They collect and collate information and design posters to advertise dangers. Good progress is made throughout the key stage. In Year 1, the pupils were observed predicting what will happen when an oil lamp is lit and how it can be extinguished. They can name a variety of sources of light and know that some surfaces are reflective. The higher attaining pupils understand that reflection in a mirror is "backwards".
13. By the age of seven, the pupils' attainment in information technology is appropriate for their age. They use computers satisfactorily for reading, numeracy and logic programs and control programmable toys with confidence. The pupils understand the differences between block charts and pictograms. They can access menus and select choices. They are learning how to print their work without help from their teachers. During the inspection, pupils in Year 2 were introduced to a "World Explorer" program and, during the session, the pupils demonstrated good control of the mouse and cursor and understanding of how to move through a program. Progress is satisfactory over time.
14. In religious education, the pupils' attainment exceeds the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. The subject makes a significant contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The pupils know that the Bible is a special book and the original book was written in a different language. They are developing awareness of the nature of holy books and scripts, not only in Christianity, but in other major world faiths. The pupils explore situations in everyday life such as the concept of friendship and understand that it is a two-way

process. They know the meaning of Sabbath for Christians and Jews and they can explain the importance of Diwali for Hindus. The pupils make good progress over the key stage. The different cultures represented by the range of ethnic backgrounds in the school are used well to support the subject.

15. An interesting and relevant curriculum is provided in the non-core subjects [art, design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education] and the pupils are working broadly at a level suitable for their age, except in art, where attainment is higher than in most schools. Overall, the pupils make good progress in the other non-core subjects throughout the key stage, except in design and technology where progress is satisfactory.
16. The good progress achieved by the vast majority of pupils throughout the key stage has been promoted by the school now having a much clearer picture of what it wants the pupils to attain and of how this can be achieved. The commitment to raising standards is paramount in all of the school's work. The teachers' high expectations and provision of challenging tasks have a positive impact on attainment and progress.
17. The pupils with special educational needs make good progress with their individual education plans. These contain realistic targets which are regularly reviewed and updated to maintain the pupils' rate of progress. At present, the plans are mainly based on the development of literacy skills, but the special educational needs co-ordinator is working with the mathematics co-ordinator to introduce numeracy targets where necessary. The early intervention and good support given to these pupils by teachers and classroom assistants, especially in Year 2, enables them to attain standards to the level of their ability. The pupils with English as an additional language receive good support from their class teacher supplemented with effective teaching by the local education authority's bi-lingual teachers. These pupils also make good progress which enables them to take full advantage of the whole curriculum. All pupils in the key stage have equal access to the full curriculum.
18. Since the last inspection, the school's curricular provision has been improved and developed considerably, especially the provision for the children under five. This enables the children to make good progress from their earliest days in nursery and this is maintained to the age of seven. The drive and commitment of the headteacher indicates that the school's capacity for improvement is very good. Her enthusiasm is well balanced by the staff's hard work and determination to raise standards further.
18. **Attitudes, behaviour and personal development**
19. In the 1996 inspection report, the pupils were judged to be generally well-behaved in class, compliant and willing to do what was asked of them. Concerns were expressed, however, over the pupils' behaviour when entering the school and moving through the corridors. In whole-school activities, such as assemblies, behaviour was judged to be unsatisfactory. Over-long passive sections in some lessons led to the deterioration of the pupils' behaviour.
20. In the current inspection, findings indicate that the school is a happy and secure place where the pupils' attitudes to learning are good. Positive attitudes are promoted in the nursery and Reception classes and the children under five respond with enjoyment and enthusiasm to all their activities. They quickly settle into the routines of the nursery and Reception and react well to good teaching in each of the classes. The children work and play well together, sharing resources amicably. They are beginning to understand the differences between right and

wrong. Independence is shown when selecting equipment, dressing and in personal hygiene.

21. In Key Stage 1, most of the pupils show that they can work independently and concentrate for good periods of time. The majority take a pride in their work and are keen to talk about their tasks. The older pupils especially, express their feelings confidently when working in groups. They ask questions, concentrate, persevere and seek help when they need it. The pupils show obvious enjoyment and commitment to their work and play. Most listen carefully to their teachers and contribute eagerly to discussions, responding quickly to requests or instructions.
22. The pupils' behaviour is good, with examples of very good behaviour in lesson times. They are courteous and trustworthy and work responsibly together, even on occasions when they are not directly supervised, for example, when the teacher's attention is focused on another group in literacy and numeracy lessons. The pupils respond positively to the classroom and school rules. When asked, the pupils can explain the need for such rules. A marked improvement from the last inspection is the safe movement of the pupils around the school. The pupils now move between the hall, classrooms and playground in an orderly and safe manner. The playground and "sandhills" area are non-threatening places where the pupils play together harmoniously. There have been no exclusions for unacceptable behaviour in the past two school years. Although a small number of parents mentioned an element of bullying at the pre-inspection meeting, none was evident during the inspection. Discussions with pupils about bullying did not yield any evidence and pupils say that they are happy and know what to do if another child upsets them.
23. Relationships throughout the school are good, contributing to the caring ethos and have a significant impact on the pupils' attainment, progress and personal development. The pupils co-operate well with each other, often sharing resources and taking turns. They enjoy open and friendly relationships with the school staff, including mid-day assistants. Meal times, although noisy due to the acoustics in the dining hall, are pleasant social occasions.
24. The pupils respond well to the school's provision for their personal development. Each day, pupils return registers to the office, they help teachers prepare for lessons and are quick and sensible when asked to tidy up and care for the classroom. They bring in the skipping ropes, balls and stilts at the end of play and lunch-times. Pupils tidy the library and generally respond positively to the trust that is placed in them. They are well mannered and show respect towards each other, to adults and visitors. Respect is shown for the school building and the pupils take care of the equipment and the resources they use.
24. **Attendance**
25. Attendance is satisfactory and in line with national averages. The role of authorised and unauthorised absence is below the national average. The vast majority of pupils arrive on time. A prompt start is made to lessons. This helps to ensure that pupils derive the maximum benefit from their time in school.

25. **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED**

25. **Teaching**

26. In the last inspection report, the quality of teaching was judged to be unsatisfactory in 19 per cent of the lessons observed, with 42 per cent of English lessons unsatisfactory. The school has taken steps to improve the standard of teaching through training for teachers and support staff, a focus on English and a review and revision of the English scheme, with more use of assessment in literacy and numeracy. Together with the hard work, enthusiasm and commitment of the staff, a significant improvement in the quality of teaching has taken place throughout the school.
27. The quality of teaching is good. All of the lessons seen were at least satisfactory, 55 per cent were good, 17 per cent of lessons were very good and 28 per cent were satisfactory. No unsatisfactory lessons were observed. The consistency of good teaching has a positive impact on pupils' progress and the standards achieved. Teachers are willing to learn and have worked hard to implement the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies successfully.
28. For the children under five in both the nursery and the Reception classes, the quality of teaching is good. Teaching is never less than satisfactory and in 62 per cent of lessons the quality of teaching is at least good. In ten per cent of lessons, it is very good. In the nursery, the teaching in 75 per cent of lessons is good, and occasionally lessons are very good. In the Reception classes, 57 per cent of lessons are good, and ten per cent are very good. In both the nursery and the Reception classes, teachers and support staff have a very good awareness of the needs of young children. Teaching plans are clear and utilise the contributions of all staff effectively. However, lesson plans in all subjects, except literacy and numeracy, are not available for review by the headteacher before they are taught. The day is very efficiently planned to provide frequent opportunities for the children to work in pairs or small groups with adults. This makes a significant contribution to the good progress in speaking and listening skills. Efficient plans for the deployment of staff mean that the children not only have frequent access to all available resources, but also benefit when indoors from the small class remaining while one group works outside. Teaching is very good when well structured, purposeful activities are built upon by high quality questioning, promoting very good progress. Support staff are an important element of the teaching team, and delegated work is carried out very well, making a good contribution to the children's progress.
29. In Key Stage 1, the quality of teaching is good or better in 77 per cent of lessons and in 20 per cent of lessons it is very good. Teaching is good in English and mathematics. It is particularly good in the literacy and numeracy sessions, where pupils rise to the high expectations of their teachers and the work is suitably challenging and interesting. Teaching in science is good and develops the pupils' investigational skills well. The teaching of religious education is good, both in assemblies and in specific lessons, and reflects the guidance of the locally agreed syllabus. In information technology, teaching is satisfactory and is integrated well to aid learning in other subjects. The teaching of physical education is good overall and is particularly good in dance, where the teachers' skill and enthusiasm inspires pupils to achieve a high standard. In art and music, teaching is good with pupils experiencing a wide range of interesting, practical activities. Teaching of history and geography is also good with interesting artefacts used effectively to aid understanding. In design and technology, teaching is satisfactory overall and sometimes good. Opportunities are provided for planning and evaluating work and these are effective.
30. Teachers are secure in their subject knowledge, enabling them to teach the National Curriculum effectively. They plan together in year groups to ensure all pupils have similar experiences and all their work is thoroughly prepared. Lesson planning is detailed, clearly identifies what it is that pupils are expected to learn and, in most lessons, activities are specified to take account of

pupils' different levels of ability. Resources are carefully chosen and used very effectively to promote pupils' understanding.

31. Teachers use a good range of teaching methods. The best lessons start with a clear, lively introduction with opportunities for mental practice and discussion. Good questioning skills enable the teacher to assess and extend pupils' understanding. Pupils are skilfully moved on to interesting, practical group activities. Groups are generally well supported enabling pupils to make good progress. Classroom assistants have been allocated to support pupils in Year 2 this term and this is having a positive effect on the pupils' progress. Most lessons end with the pupils coming together to share their learning, and this plenary session is used well to ensure pupils have understood their work.
32. Time and resources are used very well. Lessons start promptly and no time is wasted, for instance in a dance lesson, the teacher was singing instructions as soon as the pupils entered the hall, and at the end of registration, pupils in Year 1 count the time for the two monitors to return from taking the register to the office. Teachers have spent considerable time making resources for literacy and numeracy that are very specific and suitable to help pupils in their class, for example, number cards and number fans, for use in mental practice in mathematics, and large sentence cards for use in class discussions in literacy lessons.
33. Teachers enjoy good relationships with their pupils. The good management of pupils and the well-established routines promote the positive ethos of the school. Pupils respond well to the high expectations of the teachers and no instances of bad behaviour were seen.
34. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. Quick identification of pupils has a high priority and this is achieved through the early assessments and by the concerns of the class teacher. Pupils causing concern are closely monitored by the class teacher, discussed with the special educational needs co-ordinator and placed on the register as appropriate. Individual educational plans are drawn up and regularly reviewed. Good support is given in class through well-planned activities in ability groups. The pupils in the Year 1 classes do not yet receive support from classroom assistants for their special educational needs, although the school is reviewing this situation. The school refers to local educational authority professionals should the need arise. Pupils with English as an additional language receive effective support from their class teacher, which is supplemented successfully each week by specialist teachers.
35. Since the last inspection, the school has made commendable improvements in the quality of teaching and is well placed to improve further.
35. **The curriculum and assessment**
36. The curriculum provided for children under five in the nursery and Reception classes is good. It is based on appropriate areas of learning with an appropriate emphasis on literacy and numeracy. It is well planned and the wide range of activities are suited to the age group and effectively promote the children's knowledge, understanding and skills, so that they are fully prepared for the next stage of their education.
37. The curriculum in Key Stage 1 is suitably broadly based, well-balanced and all subjects meet the requirements of the National Curriculum and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. All the subjects of the National Curriculum are taught, with appropriate priority placed on English and mathematics. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been efficiently introduced on a daily basis and are already having a positive effect on pupils'

progress. There are schemes of work for all subjects, apart from design and technology, and these give clear guidance to ensure that there is continuity of learning and progress throughout the key stage. Religious education is planned according to the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus.

38. The last inspection indicated that the school should take full account of the need to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development as indicated in its documentation and examine the use of time. Both of these issues have been successfully addressed. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is now good. Lessons start promptly and teachers make good use of every minute in lessons. Sex education is approached through answering children's questions as appropriate.
39. Staff plan effectively together in year groups to ensure that children of the same age in different classes receive similar coverage of each subject taught. The half-termly plans are monitored by the curriculum co-ordinators, a year group per term, and all medium-term planning is monitored by the headteacher.
40. Good provision is made for those pupils identified as having special educational needs and early identification of such pupils is a high priority for the school. The school closely follows the Code of Practice and careful attention is paid to the needs of the individual within the planned curriculum. Individual education plans are drawn up by the class teacher with support from the special educational needs co-ordinator for those children at Stage 2 or 3 in the code. These are used effectively, regularly reviewed and specialist advice is sought when needed. Good provision is made for pupils for whom English is an additional language, with some support from specialist staff. The school provides a curriculum which is fully accessible to all pupils.
41. There is a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities. There is an extensive programme of indoor and outdoor games at lunchtime, violin tuition is provided for three pupils by the local education authority and there is football in the summer. The curriculum is enriched by visits to local places of interest.
42. There are good procedures for assessing the attainment of children under five. Nursery children are assessed on entry and then at the start and end of the Reception year. Ongoing assessments of pupils' attainment are used appropriately to plan the next stage of development and good records are kept. The school fulfils the requirements for statutory testing. In Key Stage 1, good systems are in place to record pupils' progress in English, mathematics, science and information technology, but little assessment takes place in other subjects. Good use is made of assessment information in literacy and numeracy and teachers plan carefully in these subjects for pupils of different abilities, a considerable improvement since the last inspection. However, the use of assessment is not developed in other subjects. The school recognises the need for a whole-school policy on assessment, but this is not yet in place.

42.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

43. In the last inspection report, the opportunities provided by the school did not promote the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development as indicated in the school's documentation. Assemblies and collective worship did not constructively help pupils to develop a sense of meaning, values and belief. There were no overt opportunities for spiritual development in art or music. The inspectors also judged that the systems for management of

behaviour throughout the day should be reviewed. These two areas of weakness were formulated into key issues for action. Both have been attended to and the concerns expressed in the last report have been resolved.

44. The school's provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. In the current inspection, the provision for spiritual development is judged to be good. Assemblies and collective worship are planned for thoroughly on specific themes. Detailed records are kept. A suitable atmosphere is prepared at assembly time; the pupils enter the hall to music and a candle is lit for the "special time". When it is time for prayer, a second candle is lit for "thinking time". The pupils are given a moment to reflect on the theme for the assembly and how they can apply it to their own lives. Many such moments are built into religious education lessons. Pupils in Year 2 were observed thinking about how they can resolve conflicts with friends. This involved role-play, to which the pupils responded whole-heartedly. The pupils' experience of awe and wonder was observed during the inspection when mixing primary colours to find secondary colours and when using their senses of sight and smell in lessons on sources of light with paraffin lamps and candles. The pupils are taught about the influence of Christianity on our every-day lives and the pupils are beginning to appreciate aspects of other faiths, such as Judaism and Hinduism.
45. The provision for both moral and social development is good. The school provides clear guidance for pupils on what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour and it has high expectations of them. The "Pause for Thought" programme, taught throughout the school, has a high moral and social content. Circle time, when every class gathers together with their teacher, is used effectively to discuss social and moral matters. The teachers deal positively with unacceptable behaviour in a firm, but friendly manner and they are good role models. They use specific rewards, such as tokens, and their high expectations, to maintain the good behaviour seen throughout the school. All staff have received training, including the mid-day staff, in the positive management of behaviour. Staff are positioned in all corridors when the pupils are entering or leaving the building, and mid-day assistants manage all aspects of the lunchtime break well. The lunch-time is long, but the school has compensated for this by providing a wide range of activities, both in the hall and outside to keep the pupils gainfully and happily occupied.
46. The provision for the pupils' cultural development is good. A wide range of art and music from other cultures is included in the curriculum. The pupils in Year 2 draw Rangoli and Mehndi patterns and make Rakhis bracelets for a friend. During the festival of Diwali, the pupils listen to Indian music. Opportunities for listening and appraising the work of a range of composers are built into the music scheme of work and the appreciation of the work of artists is promoted in the art curriculum. This provision gives a wide perspective to the pupils' lives. A good range of visits to historical and geographical locations enrich the curriculum and give the pupils interesting insights into their own heritage. For example, a visit to Croxteth Hall stimulates learning about the Victorian era and a visit to a local mining museum promotes understanding about the hard lives of many families at that time.
46. **Support, guidance and pupils' welfare**
47. The school's provision for the support, guidance and welfare of pupils is good. It provides a welcoming and caring atmosphere in which pupils, including those under the age of five and those with special educational needs, feel safe. The close liaison and shared routines of the nursery and reception classes enables the children under five to settle quickly into school.

Teachers are caring, accessible and responsive to pupils' needs, making an important contribution to their progress. The evidence of the inspection supports the views of the majority of parents who feel that the school is approachable.

48. The school has good procedures for monitoring pupils' academic and personal development and this enables teachers to help pupils to make good progress. Relationships between teachers and pupils are good and parents feel that teachers really get to know their pupils well.
49. Procedures for monitoring discipline and promoting good behaviour are very good. There is a positive whole-school approach to behaviour with the emphasis placed on praise and reward. Good behaviour, caring for others and achievements in and out of school are celebrated by the award of certificates in the Friday assembly. This helps to promote positive attitudes amongst pupils. Lunch-time supervisors have been trained in behaviour management and this has helped to ensure that standards of behaviour remain high throughout the school day. The management of behaviour, particularly at break and at lunch-time, was identified as a key issue for improvement at the time of the previous inspection. In response to the report, the school has introduced a number of initiatives – including revision of the discipline policy, training of staff and the appointment of an appropriately qualified senior mid-day supervisor - which have significantly improved behaviour and discipline.
50. Procedures for monitoring and promoting pupils' attendance are good. Attendance and punctuality are monitored by class teachers and the secretary reviews the completed registers daily, informing the headteacher of any attendance or lateness matters that need following up. The school discourages the taking of family holidays during term time and parents are made aware of the importance of good attendance, both in the prospectus and in the governors' annual report.
51. The school has good procedures for child protection and for promoting pupils' wellbeing, health and safety. There are effective child protection procedures in place and teaching and non-teaching staff understand their roles. The health and safety policy has recently been reviewed and awaits governors' approval. Regular safety checks are carried out by the caretaker and a new health and safety governor has recently been appointed. However, formal risk assessments have not yet been completed. Any accidents to pupils are recorded, parents are informed as necessary and the school has a number of staff trained or experienced in carrying out first aid procedures. Health education is provided with the help of the school nurse.
52. Amongst the key issues in the previous inspection report were a number of concerns relating to pupils' safety in the hall and around the playground areas. These concerns have all been addressed successfully. Overall, the school's arrangements for the support, guidance and welfare of its pupils make a good contribution to the educational standards achieved.
52. **Partnership with parents and the community**
53. The school's links with parents and the community are good and enrich the educational process. The school's initial partnership with parents of children under five is effective and promotes both parents' and children's confidence. Parents receive a lot of useful information, provided on a regular basis and this keeps parents well-informed of events in school and the work their children will undertake. Open evenings and the annual reports ensure that parents are advised about their children's progress. Regular curriculum evenings and workshops keep parents updated on developments in education, such as the National Numeracy Strategy, as well as giving them an insight into other subjects, such as information technology. Annual

reports comply with legal requirements, but do not usually contain sufficient information about what pupils need to do to improve their performance. The school liaises well with parents of pupils with special educational needs and keeps them fully informed.

54. Parental involvement in their children's learning is very good. Parents are encouraged to support the school by helping out in classes and on school visits, and many do. Parental helpers in the classroom are given very good guidance on the tasks that are expected of them, which increases the value and quality of this additional support to pupils. Other parents help by repairing games and school books at home, which is a useful way of using the help of parents who are unavailable during the school day. There is a parents' room which is available for use by parents helping in school.
55. Parents are expected to enhance the quality of education by helping their children with work at home, and the school provides a range of opportunities for this to take place. Pupils take home their reading book every day and the reading diaries are used effectively both by parents and teachers to record reading achievements and difficulties. Parents find this regular dialogue valuable and the reading diaries are often used to exchange other information between parent and teacher. Family Challenges – where the whole family is given a homework task, such as a weaving project or collecting memories of school through the years - are a valuable way of involving parents in their children's learning. However, a small number of parents feel that these tasks place too much pressure on pupils and their families.
56. Helpful guidance is provided for parents about activities that they can do with their children at home, in order to support topic work and other aspects of their children's learning. This includes suggestions on ways to help with spelling homework in Year 2 and mathematical games which can be borrowed to play at home. Parents have been invited to complete a short questionnaire giving their views about the school and responses indicate a high level of satisfaction with what the school provides. An active Parent Teacher Fellowship holds many social events with the prime intention of raising money for the school. Money raised by the group has recently paid for the creation of a "roadway" in the early years' play area and the refurbishment of libraries.
57. The school has good links with the local community, including the church. Two local vicars visit school regularly and take assemblies and pupils visit the church as part of their studies in religious education. Administrative and social links with the junior school are good, but curricular links are as yet underdeveloped. Links have been established with local organisations such as the probation service and the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers who have supported the school with the improvement of the grounds. A number of small local businesses regularly provide raffle prizes and pupils visit the local post office, garage and mining museum as part of their studies.

57. **THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL**

57. **Leadership and management**

58. Since the last inspection, a new headteacher has been appointed and in post for over two years. In that time she has worked tirelessly in reviewing the school's routines and structure, and in establishing a clear vision within the school for its educational development. She has prioritised improvements in the quality of teaching; the standards attained by pupils; and the

quality of provision for the children in their early years in school. This has included the opening of a nursery class. The deputy headteacher and staff have demonstrated a high level of dedication to the school, conscientiously responded to this vision for improvement and there have been many positive developments in addressing the key issues from the last inspection report. These have included a review of the aims of the school; improvements in planning for the curriculum and for teaching; amended procedures for assessment; additions to provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education; a greater efficiency in the school's use of time; secure and successful behavioural management systems; improved lunch-time arrangements; the greater safety of the pupils on the school site; and increases in liaison with parents as co-educators of pupils. In addition, the establishment of a nursery class has provided a focus for fundamental improvements within the provision for the children under five. Standards for these children have risen, and results in the national tests in Key Stage 1 in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science have risen significantly.

59. The quality of education provided owes much to the hard-working and committed team of teachers and support staff. The deputy headteacher has also been instrumental in enhancing the curriculum through the further development of the school grounds, and in improving information made available to parents. The strong ethos of the school reflects the commitment of the headteacher and staff to the highest educational standards and equality of opportunity for all pupils.
60. The governing body has been re-constituted recently in response to current legislation, and shows enthusiasm and commitment to the aims of the school. It plans to maintain the structured committee system of the former joint governing body with the junior school, which supported the school well. An increased involvement is planned between the new governors and the school, enabling them to become appropriately more involved with the development planning and review of the school's performance. All statutory duties are met, with the exception of some omissions from the annual governors' report to parents. These are listed within the school's latest audit report and are to be addressed by the new governing body.
61. The headteacher monitors the performance of the school rigorously, and has a clear understanding of its successes and areas for further development. The management structure in the school is based on a senior management team, supporting the role of co-ordinators for every subject. The role of subject co-ordinator has been developed significantly over the past two years, and now effectively includes a greater responsibility for monitoring teaching and learning within each subject. The local education authority has provided helpful support through close involvement in the exemplification of these skills. The role of the two English co-ordinators successfully includes monitoring of teaching and learning in the classroom, aided by the National Literacy Strategy, and the role of the co-ordinator for mathematics is developing along similar lines. The co-ordinator for special educational needs fulfils her responsibilities conscientiously. The school now plans to put staff training into practice by setting up a framework for monitoring in other subjects, notably science and information technology, as the remaining core subjects. A weakness in the school's provision is the lack of opportunity made available to the headteacher to monitor lesson plans before lessons are taught. This prevents adjustments and improvements of benefit to pupils, and in some cases, limits the headteacher's ability to monitor health and safety, such as when flames are used within science lessons.
62. Although the schools' development plan identifies relevant priorities and targets, the overview for staff and governors is limited by its short-term nature. It is a comprehensive document outlining the action plan for the year in good detail, overall, although it is not fully costed and

this limits the efficiency of budget planning. An outline of plans for the coming years is not included and this, again, limits the ability of the governing body to manage the school's budget effectively. A full evaluation of action and expenditure is not currently made, although plans are in hand for this to be addressed by the new governing body, working in co-operation with the headteacher and subject co-ordinators.

63. The change achieved by the school since the last inspection is very good. The school has made significant improvement to all issues identified within the last report. With the zealous enthusiasm of the headteacher, the dedication of the staff and the newly affirmed commitment of the governing body, the school's capacity for further improvement is extremely good.

63.

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

64. There are sufficient teaching staff for the number of pupils on roll and they are suitably qualified to teach the children under five and all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education effectively. There is a balance between experienced teachers and those more recently qualified. All teachers have detailed job descriptions that include specific as well as general responsibilities. The role of curriculum co-ordinators has been developed since the previous inspection and some have benefited from the opportunity to monitor standards through classroom observation, though as yet this is not fully developed to include all subjects. There is a fair and equitable distribution of responsibilities.

65. The school is generously staffed with education support assistants and they are valued members of the school community making a very effective contribution to the good standards achieved. Their skills, abilities and interests are used well to support pupils' learning and they demonstrate commitment, enthusiasm and involvement in their work. The efficient and capable school secretary ensures that office routines run smoothly, providing good support to the headteacher. Lunch-time supervisors and catering staff promote good attitudes and behaviour from pupils during the midday break. The caretaker and cleaning staff help to provide a clean and cared for environment throughout the school.

66. Professional development is linked to appraisal and the school development plan, whilst still meeting the needs of individual staff. Opportunities for professional development are considered by the headteacher and deputy headteacher and discussed with the member of staff concerned. This enables staff to further develop their teaching for the benefit of their pupils. The school follows national guidelines for the induction of new teachers, including the appointment of a mentor, and the opportunity for release from the classroom to observe other teachers teaching.

67. The accommodation, a single storey building attached to the partner junior school which shares the same overall site, meets the needs of pupils and enables the curriculum to be taught effectively and has a positive impact on standards. It provides access for disabled pupils and visitors. A 40 place nursery unit has recently been built adjacent to the Reception classrooms and this has enabled a formerly separate nursery to be amalgamated with the school.

68. There is a rolling programme for improvement and redecoration. The school has extensive grounds which have recently been developed to provide an exciting and stimulating area for outdoor play. There is a well-planned early years section, including a soft play area, a roadway and a woodland garden.

69. Resources throughout the school are satisfactory overall for the curriculum and for the age range of the pupils. This is similar to the position at the time of the previous inspection, although the report noted that resources for pupils with special educational needs were underdeveloped. These are now satisfactory. There is a wide range of artefacts for history, geography and religious education. Resources are generally stored tidily. There are sufficient computers in classrooms, but some of these are now out of date and unsuitable for running the more sophisticated software now available. Visits made by the school to such places as Wirral Country Park, the local mining museum and Croxteth Hall are valuable educational resources, and have a positive impact on pupils' learning.

69.

The efficiency of the school

70. The efficiency of the school is good, and the headteacher and staff work diligently on a daily basis to maintain high standards.
71. Financial planning is sound overall. The school development plan is a suitably comprehensive document and sets appropriate priorities for improvement. However, it is set after the budget has been allocated and projects development over only one year. Although a detailed annual action plan is achieved, the lack of overview for forthcoming years limits its usefulness to the school community. In particular, it limits the efficiency of the governing body in allocating the financial resources made available to the school.
72. The school's budget is appropriately allocated, including specific grants for staff training and the establishment of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Funds included for the support of pupils with special educational needs are suitably utilised for maintaining support staff. This support is currently available for the children under five and pupils in Year 2. At the time of the inspection, the pupils with special educational needs in Year 1 did not benefit from this provision, although extra support is to be provided during this half-term. The school has recently used a surplus of funds appropriately to update computer resources, and this is proving successful in improving pupils' progress in information technology. The expected underspend for this financial year is prudent at less than four per cent of the total budget.
73. Teachers are well deployed and good use is made of existing expertise. The school allocates a much higher than average proportion of its budget to the employment of support staff, and this expenditure is generally well utilised. Nursery nurses and classroom assistants are integrated very well into the teaching programme, have clear plans for their work and play a significant role in the good progress of the children under five and those with special educational needs at higher levels in the school. Arrangements for teaching are most efficient and time is used very effectively in all classes. Time is utilised particularly well for the nursery and Reception classes, where the staff timetable for the week is expertly 'dovetailed' in order to meet the children's needs.
74. The role of subject co-ordinators has improved in efficiency over the past two years, and each subject is now set within a clear information framework, linking curriculum, teaching and pupils' progress. Arrangements for monitoring teaching and learning in lessons, as a means to improving teaching quality and efficiency are not fully established, although documentation has been produced to provide guidance for the future. Provision for the pupils with special educational needs is managed efficiently, and the school rightly prides itself on early identification and a rigorous response to the requirements of these pupils. Those with English as an additional language are very well supported in their work, and the class teacher works

closely with support staff to maximise their progress.

75. Accommodation and available resources are well organised. The school grounds provide a valuable resource for the school and supplement the curriculum very effectively. They are in use throughout the year, and the children under five have constant access to their 'outdoor classroom'. This has been carefully planned, and has a positive impact on the attainment and progress of children in their early years at school.
76. The efficiency of day-to-day financial control and school administration is very good. Expenditure is carefully monitored by the headteacher and governors throughout the year, supported by the very efficient budgetary systems operated by the school's clerical assistant. The effective and efficient organisation of the office enables the teaching staff to concentrate on the education of the pupils. The minor recommendations of the comprehensive recent audit report are being addressed.
77. In relation to the pupils' attainment on entry, costs per pupil, the school's context and the quality of education it provides, the pupils' good progress over time and then positive attitudes to learning, the school gives good value for money. The last inspection reported the school's value for money to be sound, and this improvement reflects the increased success of the school in meeting the needs of its pupils.

77. **PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS**

77. **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE**

77.

78. All children in the nursery and the three Reception classes are in this category for the Autumn term. Almost all the children in the Reception classes have attended the school's nursery, which has been open on the school site since last January, but under the school's management since September 1998. The children are generally admitted into the nursery in the September after their third birthday, and transfer to the Reception classes in the September of the school year in which they have their fifth birthday. Children in the nursery work daily with staff from the Reception classes within the 'outdoor classroom' and this enables a smooth transfer. During their early weeks in both the nursery and the Reception classes, the children's attainment is assessed to provide a baseline for teachers' plans and for monitoring progress. At the end of the Reception year, assessments are revisited to review progress as children transfer to Year 1. The children's skills vary over a wide range of attainment, but overall, attainment is average for the children's age when compared with other schools in the local education authority. The children make good progress in both the nursery and the Reception classes. By the age of five, the attainment of the majority of children reaches the nationally set Desirable Learning Outcomes in all areas of learning, and these levels are exceeded in personal and social development, language, mathematics and physical development.

79. For the last inspection, there was no nursery at the school, but provision for the children under five in the Reception classes was said to meet requirements generally, with a good level of independence and social skills demonstrated. No judgement was made on teaching specific to this age group. Standards are now higher in language, mathematics and physical development. Standards are similar in personal and social development, literacy, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development. This is due to the new headteacher's high focus on the quality of the early years of the children's education, and the opening of the new nursery within the school.

79. *Personal and social development*

80. The personal and social development of most children by the age of five exceed the level expected of the age group, and good progress is made in both the nursery and the Reception classes. The children's confidence and independence develops quickly and by five, they demonstrate a good level of maturity for their age. They show appropriate self-respect and good ability to develop relationships with other children and with adults. They are interested in all activities included within the day's work, showing a good attitude to learning. The children settle quickly into the nursery, secure in the knowledge that a parent can stay with them until they have sufficient confidence for the parent to leave. Transfer to the Reception classes is made easy by relationships already established with 'their group' of children, and with teachers and support staff from shared activities throughout the year within the outdoor area. In both the nursery and the Reception classes, the children are familiar with the routine of the day and know, for example, that a band is needed to go outside, and if the bands have run out, so have the spaces outside. They also know that they need to either put their name card on the window or tick the 'outside chart' so that teachers are able to keep track on their whereabouts. They decide when to take their snack-time and easily find their own milk carton without help. They enjoy this opportunity for a chat with friends.

81. The children in the nursery concentrate increasingly well and soon persevere with tasks until

they are complete. Children in the Reception year sustain concentration for quite long periods of time, such as when a group of children working with a construction activity developed a longer and longer model of a boat, adding, usually in agreement with their playmates, increasingly complex features. Many children play co-operatively well before they are five. The sensitivity of teachers and support staff helps to develop the good relationships both between adults and children, and between the children. Activities are shared fairly and with goodwill. Children who have special educational needs are supported sensitively and helped when necessary. This very effective beginning to the children's personal and social development provides a successful foundation for the good behaviour and positive attitudes to learning evident throughout the school.

82. The quality of teaching for this area of learning is good in both the nursery and the Reception classes. The successful management of the children is achieved with friendliness and good humour. An appropriately high emphasis is placed by the staff on the personal and social development of the children. They provide sensitive role models and learning is promoted in all areas of the curriculum. Frequent opportunities are provided for the children to learn to make choices from the earliest stages, such as which activity is selected, when to have snack, which boxes are used within modelling with reclaimed materials, and each opportunity carries a responsibility for completing the task and tidying afterwards. Children are frequently praised for kind and helpful behaviour. Stories, such as those about Kipper and Chip, are used well to highlight moral and social concerns. Circle time provides a good opportunity for children to express their feelings, for example, about when they have done something they regret, when things have gone wrong and how pleased they were when someone helped. The frequent opportunities made available for the children to work in small groups together or with an adult provide very successfully for the development of personal and social skills.

82. Language and literacy

83. By the age of five, the majority of the children meet the Desirable Learning Outcomes for the age group overall, and most exceed them with regard to speaking and listening skills. The great majority of children, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in listening to others and using language to express their thoughts and needs. Well before they are five, most children speak clearly, ask and answer questions, contribute to small and large group discussions and 'tell stories' using picture books as a prompt. By five years of age, most use a good range of vocabulary with confidence. Their good level of personal and social development promotes the easy use of conversation for most children. Even the quieter children are heard to contribute well to conversations they choose to join.
84. In both the nursery and the Reception classes, the children love listening to stories and using books when given the opportunity to do so. The children in the nursery enjoy looking at the pictures and turning the pages, and in the Reception classes, the children tell a story, using the pictures, and are aware that print carries meaning and is read from left to right. Literacy skills are not as advanced as speaking skills, but most children meet the Desirable Learning Outcomes for the age group. By five, most children read a selection of words linked to the school's reading scheme, and learn to follow print whilst others read, both at 'Big Book' time and when reading in groups. Most children learn to recognise their own name before the age of five, and by five, can read the names of others, including characters in the reading scheme, and most can write at least one of their names correctly.
85. The children in the nursery begin to write through using materials made available within play activities, such as completing the lottery forms in the shop, and MOT certificates and work

sheets in the garage. Children in both the nursery and the Reception classes send thank you cards, using drawings, lines of symbols or letters. By the time they are five, most can not only write their own name, but also try other words. Most know a selection of single letter sounds and with support, can utilise them at the beginnings and end of words. Higher attaining children develop a small writing vocabulary of frequently used words to provide a useful support to their work. The children are taught the correct way to hold a pencil or pen in the nursery and this skill is generally established by the time they reach the Reception class. Letter formation is generally satisfactory, and the children enjoy practising this skill in small groups with an adult. An example of this was seen when children made number-plates for the cars in the class garage.

86. The children enjoy the wide variety of imaginative activities provided to develop language and literacy, from the role-play opportunities, such as the class garages to the many letter-matching and writing practice activities. One such activity allows them to trace their name on a laminated card with coloured felt tipped pens before wiping it off and starting all over again. The children are sociable and like talking with both adults and children as their activity progresses.
87. The quality of teaching is good overall, but satisfactory with regard to the development of literacy skills. Speaking and listening skills are developed very well through carefully planned discussion work within large groups, and very frequent opportunities for conversation within small groups, both with and without an adult. A wide range of activities is in progress throughout the day, and no time is wasted or opportunities lost to engage in useful dialogue with children, both individually and in groups. Learning objectives are sometimes presented as questions, and this emphasises the role of dialogue. An appropriate range of books is provided, and although presented well within the early years' library area, the same care is not taken within classes. There is no permanent book area in the nursery, although a small basket of books is brought out daily and shared with a group of children. Book boxes are established in the Reception classes, but are usually overfilled and the area is not made sufficiently attractive and inviting, and few children choose to use them during the day. However, they are very happy to accompany the classroom assistant to look at books in the library. Story times within both the nursery and the Reception classes, are carefully planned and include a wide range of information about the book, such as details of authors, illustrators and book cover 'blurb', and very successfully interest children in reading. However, 'Big Book' sessions with the whole class in Reception are not always extended sufficiently to include work on letters or words at the level many children are working. For example, one 'Big Book' session successfully involved a small number of children in finding specific single letter sounds, but was not extended through the provision of a selection of similar letter cards to allow the whole group to try to identify the letter sounds. 'Big Book' sessions do not include a short focus time on specific high frequency words, such as a chosen 'word of the week' or words beginning with the same letter. This limits opportunities for progress early in the Reception year. However, staff are diligent in assessing progress in the early stages of reading, and children's progress in word recognition within the school's reading scheme are checked weekly. Staff write sentences suggested by the children to accompany story books without texts, and this provides an effective contribution to early progress in both reading and writing. Children are closely supported as they make their early attempts to write independently in the Reception classes, but this good support is not always supplemented by the provision of visual prompts, such as alphabet strips, or the provision of frequently used words to enable progress. For example, 'the' is not provided as an aid to memory or pointed out within classroom displays. When sentences are written for the children in their own books, they are not always written from the viewpoint of the child, to enable them to see correct letter formation.

87. Mathematics

88. The attainment of the majority of children exceeds the level expected nationally by the age of five. They make good progress in both the nursery and the Reception classes. In the nursery, the children count, match and sort in a variety of practical activities. The children quickly learn to count, and well before they are five, many children know what one or two more, or less, make. They enjoy number rhymes, such as the Five Frogs, and happily join in counting games and activities. Outside, children in both the nursery and the Reception classes play 'shape stations' which involves them in recognising the names of three-dimensional shapes, such as cubes, spheres and cones. They use counting and comparing vocabulary whenever the opportunity arises. By the time they are five, most children count at least to ten and many beyond. For example, one child counts accurately to 28 when he is four and a half. Other higher attaining children count in tens to 100, and can identify the figures that represent a hundred. However, most recognise figures to ten by five years of age. Some of the younger children who are in the Reception class well before their fifth birthday add and subtract proficiently to ten by the time they are five at the end of the year. Most can name basic shapes and make simple repeating patterns. Higher attaining children can also name three-dimensional shapes.

89. Teaching is almost always good, and sometimes very good. Lively and interesting activities provide the basis for learning in both the nursery and the Reception classes, which encourage the active participation of the children and develops their confidence well. For example, the 'shape station' game in the outside area shared by both the nursery and Reception children, the shop in the nursery with lottery tickets, the variety of domino games in Reception and the many counting games available each lunch time in the library. Teaching is less successful when it is insufficiently challenging, such as always returning to one to start counting, rather than learning to count forward or backwards from any starting point, then using these skills to count on or back when adding on or taking away. Teaching is very good when children are fully challenged at a good pace in counting activities, counting on and back, spotting figures, and drawing them quickly in the air, before moving on to a range of support activities. The teacher carefully notes progress to enable her to continue to create an appropriate challenge next time. Activities are well-matched to the children's needs. In all classes, the children with lower attainment or special educational needs are supported effectively individually or in small groups by the teachers and support staff.

89. Knowledge and understanding of the world

90. The attainment of most children at the age of five meets the level expected nationally. They make sound progress in both the nursery and the Reception classes. By the time they are five, most children, including those with special educational needs, talk about their families and where they live, and past and present events in their lives. 'Small world' play areas in the nursery, such as the town layout mat, and role-play opportunities in both the nursery and the Reception classes, such as car repair areas, provide good opportunities to find out and talk about the world in which they live. The children visit the local garage to learn about its work and equipment. They watch the weather and record what they see in pictures in the nursery, and on a weather chart in Reception. The children investigate, for example, floating and sinking, or the movement of marbles in trays of water-based paste, flour or sand, wet and dry. Their answers to questions indicate very careful observations. A sense of change over time develops when children discuss the past, such as when the children in Reception remembered their time in the nursery, and children in the nursery looked at wheeled toys they used when

they were younger, and those they might use when they are older. The children use the variety of construction activities available to demonstrate their understanding of technology. For example, children in Reception made transport models, such as boats and aeroplanes. Similar models are made from reclaimed materials. The children select their own materials and equipment, and use skills such as cutting and sticking. They can explain the main features of their models. The children enjoy the opportunity to prepare food, and in the nursery were seen engrossed in icing and decorating 'traffic light' biscuits. The children in the nursery soon learn to control the 'mouse' on the computer by selecting nursery rhymes and matching numbers to pictures, using on-screen keys. By the time they are five, the children are confident in using the computer and begin to use it as a word processor through writing and printing out their names.

They make a good start to controlling a programmable toy and know the sequence of keys to press to make the toy, dressed as a mouse fetching cheese, move forward and backwards. They learn to review the distance travelled and make adjustments on the next journey. From the earliest stages, the children are familiar with using tape players and headphones to listen to stories, songs and weather noises.

91. In the individual activities observed, the quality of teaching in this area of learning was good, overall. The teachers plan the curriculum carefully and try to link all the different skills through an overall topic, such as 'transport'. The visit to the local garage provided a successful starting point for learning about features of the area in which they live, and added significant value to the 'garage' in each class. However, the links with the everyday world are sometimes not quite so successful, such as when children in the nursery examined photographs, picture books and small model cars to discover differences between vehicles over time, rather than being given access to viewing real vehicles. This activity was adjusted after discussion to include cycles for children of different ages, as well as an adult's bicycle, which interested the children more and linked learning about time to their own lives. In the activity requiring the children to make models of vehicles, there was a shortage of large colourful pictures to help the children to recall the vehicles and encourage them to note and reproduce details on their models. Sometimes the teachers move too soon towards the subject divisions of the National Curriculum as a source of ideas, rather than closely focusing on the world in which the children live. The school grounds provide very good opportunities for the children to experience growing plants, trees and small wildlife at first hand.

91. *Physical development*

92. For the majority of children, attainment is better than average and exceeds the level expected nationally. The children's progress over time is good.

93. By the age of five, the children move confidently and with good control. They have an appropriate awareness of space and of others. They use the wheeled toys outside with enthusiasm, and can steer and guide them with ease by the time they are in the Reception classes. In physical education lessons in the hall, the children show agility and their movement is co-ordinated well for their age. They balance successfully on beams and move imaginatively along benches, sometimes pulling themselves forward with their arms. With guidance and in groups, they can get out the jumping stools and landing mats safely. Outside, the children learn to throw and catch balls, and to use a bat, with increasing dexterity.

94. Within activities in both the nursery and the Reception classes, the children demonstrate increasing control of their pencils, crayons, felt-pens, scissors, paint brushes, construction and malleable toys. By five, most children achieve well for their age, using for example, glue spatulas without spills or wastage when making models of vehicles. The good

range of activities available each day in both the nursery and the Reception classes for the children to use their physical skills enables continuous practice.

95. The quality of teaching is good overall and sometimes very good. Teaching intervention is appropriate, and many opportunities are utilised by teachers and support staff to unobtrusively help children on an individual basis with the control of smaller implements, and this considerably aids progress. Frequent use is made of the very good facilities available outside. Groups of children are working there throughout the day, involved in a variety of good quality activities, giving plenty of opportunity for fresh air and enjoyment of exercise. Lessons in the hall for children in both the nursery and the Reception classes are carefully planned, use time well, and the children respond well to the teachers' high, but realistic, expectations. Good relationships between staff and children promote best efforts and have a positive effect on attainment and progress.

95. Creative development

96. Attainment is at the level expected nationally by the age of five. Progress is sound overall, but occasionally very good in relation to the children's prior attainment. The children explore sound through singing a variety of songs, listening to recorded music and saying what thoughts and feelings come into their minds, and through using percussion instruments. They experiment with colour, texture, shape and form through their art and technology activities. Through art, stories and imaginative play, they show an increasing ability to use their imagination, to listen and to observe. In the nursery, the children use a range of media to explore colour and texture, painting pictures, printing with coloured bubbles, and with their hands and feet. They make collages and decorate plastic bag kites with different papers and fabrics and these activities continue in the Reception classes. Examples of computer-generated artwork were seen in both the nursery and the Reception classes. The children respond with enjoyment and increasing skill to this range of opportunities for creative work. Imaginative role-play activities, such as the car repair centres, promote early drama work.
97. Teaching is good overall and occasionally very good. The wide variety of activities keeps the children interested in learning. One very well thought out activity involved the children in responding to a picture of the work of Umberto Boccioni and Picasso with clay. The children rolled clay cylinders and spheres, before assembling them into sculptures, using potters' techniques. The children's individual creativity was evident from the range of very different work produced, usually at a high level for their age. Where the teacher had very good subject knowledge, progress was very good.

97. **ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE**

97. **English**

98. The current inspection findings indicate that the pupils' attainment in English is good overall. In the last inspection report in 1996, the standards of achievement were judged to be appropriate for most pupils' ages and abilities. Although reading was good, more attention needed to be given to the development of writing and speaking and listening skills, so that all pupils could achieve their potential. Teaching was found to be a cause for concern with 42 per cent of teaching judged to be unsatisfactory. The range of resources was limited and narrow.
99. Taking the three years 1996-1998 together, the pupils' performance in reading and writing is above the national average. Girls performed slightly better than the boys.
100. Since the last inspection, there have been considerable improvements in most areas of the subject and the standards of the pupils' attainment and the quality of teaching have risen significantly. This is as a result of staff development in the teaching of literacy skills and the school's emphasis on planning with clear learning objectives and monitoring of standards.
101. In the teacher assessments for speaking and listening skills in 1999, the percentage of pupils attaining the expected levels was:

* well above the national average;

102. The pupils make good progress in speaking and listening. By the age of seven, they are confident in expressing their ideas and in answering and asking questions. The pupils particularly enjoy discussions in "Circle time" and religious education, when they describe their experiences clearly to the whole class. Most pupils listen carefully to follow instructions accurately and concentrate for a good length of time when listening to the teacher or to a taped story. They communicate with each other articulately in informal situations, such as in group activities, when working in pairs or in the imaginative play areas.
103. In the statutory tests in reading in 1999, the percentage of pupils who reached the expected standards in reading was:
- * well above the national average;
 - * above average when compared to similar schools.
104. Inspection findings confirm these test results. Progress in the development of reading skills is good over time, enabling 90 per cent of the pupils to attain the expected level [Level 2] and 45 per cent to attain the next higher level [Level 3]. The good teaching of phonic skills throughout the school promotes the pupils' confidence in tackling unfamiliar words.
105. By the end of the key stage, the pupils read with accuracy and understanding from a range of texts. Most of the pupils decode unfamiliar words very well by using phonic, picture and contextual clues. They express opinions on their favourite stories and are becoming independent in their library skills. Although the pupils understand the roles of "author" and "illustrator", few pupils could name the authors whose work they have experienced in the Literacy Hour or at story time. The higher and average attaining pupils know how to look for information in reference books using the contents pages accurately. The majority of the pupils are given good support at home by reading to parents and other family members. This has a positive impact on the pupils' rate of progress.
106. In the 1999 statutory tests in writing, the percentage of pupils' attaining the expected level was:
- * broadly in line with the national average;
 - * close to the average of similar schools.
107. Inspection findings confirm these results. By the end of Year 2, the majority of the pupils can use various forms of writing and identify the differences between them. They write interesting stories and develop their imaginative ideas with a beginning, middle and end. The school allocates time for extended writing for the pupils in Year 2 to enable them to complete stories in one session. This is good provision. Factual accounts follow educational visits, such as Croxteth Hall and they record their findings in science lessons. They write letters and invitations and detailed book reviews. The pupils make good attempts at drafting and redrafting their work. They are starting to use capital letters and full stops appropriately and spelling is justifiable phonetically. Handwriting skills are weak and most pupils do not attain their potential in this area of the subject. Skills are insufficiently developed to enable the pupils to achieve the higher level in the statutory tests. Progress over the key stage is satisfactory. The pupils in Year 1 progress from independent writing of simple sentences to a growing understanding of basic punctuation and story structures. The introduction of "flicks" to letter formation in the nursery, Reception and Year 1 will facilitate the pupils' progression to cursive script earlier than at present.

108. By the end of the key stage, the pupils' literacy skills are good. Literacy skills make a good contribution to other subjects, for example, in history and geography, when the pupils record their findings after visits to Croxteth Hall and the mining museum and in science, when writing about their investigations. Speaking and listening skills are used extensively to discuss and organise work. Reading skills are utilised to research for historical evidence in reference books and when following instructions on the screen in information technology.
109. The pupils with special educational needs make good progress with their individual education plans, the targets of which are generally based on reading and writing skills. The support they receive from their teachers and the high level of classroom support meets their needs effectively. Good support is also provided for those pupils for whom English is an additional language. Three pupils benefit from a weekly session with the local education authority's bi-lingual teachers.
110. Throughout the school, the pupils' attitudes to learning are good. They talk confidently to the rest of the class and work independently without fuss during group tasks in the Literacy Hour. Most pupils are co-operative and share materials, such as dictionaries, amicably.
111. Overall, the quality of teaching is good. Ten lessons were observed, out of which five lessons were good, three lessons were very good and teaching was satisfactory in the remaining two lessons. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed. The impact of this good teaching is that it permits the pupils to make good progress. The structured planning for the Literacy Hour enables teachers and pupils to do their best. High expectations of behaviour and levels of concentration have a significant impact on the standards achieved. Marking is used to inform planning of future work and, in some classes, provides pupils with information of how to improve their work. The weak aspect of teaching in the subject is the teaching of handwriting. The school recognises this and has already taken steps to redress the situation. Teachers know their pupils well and, overall, day-to-day assessment is good. Formal procedures for assessment at every stage of the pupils' development are good. Classes are managed most effectively and all teachers have positive skills of class control. Homework supports learning and consists of reading practice and weekly spellings. A small number of parents at the pre-inspection meeting thought that the spelling lists are not always closely matched to the pupils' attainment. The vast amount of parents are satisfied with amount of homework given and inspection findings confirm their views.
112. Resources for the Literacy Hour are of good quantity and quality. The central library has been developed well with effective professional help from a librarian. The pupils throughout the school are taught library skills to enable them to make effective use of the facility. In some classes, library corners are uninviting and generally unappealing to young children. The books are not displayed attractively and the carpets and cushions are shabby. Some books on shelves are worn and out-dated. This is an important area to be developed.
112. **Mathematics**
113. In the 1999 end of Key Stage 1 National Curriculum tests, the percentage of pupils attaining the level appropriate for their age was well above the national average. The performance of Light Oaks Infants pupils was well above average in comparison to similar schools. This is an improvement on the previous year and is confirmed by inspection evidence. There has been a considerable improvement since the last inspection report in 1996 when standards were judged to be in line with national expectations at the end of the Key Stage 1.

114. By the end of Key Stage 1, standards in numeracy are high. Most pupils have a very good understanding of place value to 100, with the higher attaining pupils working confidently with numbers beyond this. They have good arithmetic skills; the higher attaining pupils can calculate double 78 in their head and the lower attaining pupils can quickly recall addition and subtraction facts to 20. The majority of pupils know the two, three, four, five and ten times tables and the lower attaining pupils can count in twos and tens and work out multiplication sums by continuing to add the same number. Their ability to use mathematical knowledge in problem solving is a strong feature of the school. Pupils are encouraged to think of their own ways of working out the answer and they are able to explain their methods, for example, one pupil explained that to double 99 in his head he first doubled 100 and then took two away. When asked why she was working alone, one girl explained that not everyone could have a partner as there was an odd number in her group. Most pupils can identify and name the main two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes. Higher attaining pupils investigate the number of faces, corners and edges on pyramids and prisms and all pupils have a good understanding of symmetry. The majority of pupils know *o'clock*, *quarter past* and *half past* and many know minutes to and past the hour. They use a good variety of charts and graphs to display information.
115. Pupils have many opportunities to apply their knowledge and understanding of mathematics in other areas of the curriculum. For example, pupils in Year 1 use their knowledge of shape to classify every day objects and packages into cubes, cuboids and spheres and count to see how many colours they can mix from their three primary colour paint. In science, pupils in Year 2 question their class and display the information on their favourite proteins in a pie chart, whilst another group of pupils displays their findings about the class's favourite fruit and vegetables on a pictogram. They use the computer to draw a line graph about their liking for "naughty" foods. On the millennium time line in the corridor, older pupils can point to the year in which their school was built.
116. The vast majority of pupils make good progress over time through appropriate, well- planned, practical activities which take account of their ability and level of understanding, and through regular mental practice. They respond to their teachers' high expectations and extend their knowledge through regular problem solving activities such as the weekly "maths challenge". Progress for pupils with special educational needs in relation to their prior attainment is good through careful questioning in class time and through well-structured activities and support when working in groups. Pupils with special educational needs in Year 2 are benefiting from additional support in mathematics from classroom assistants this term, and after evaluation, it is planned that this extra help will then be given to help the progress of younger pupils. The school gives suitable priority to numeracy and the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy is having a positive effect on the pupils' mental mathematical skills and every opportunity is taken for pupils to count or work out problems. For example, in a class in Year 1 the teacher asks the pupils to see if they can count to 100 before the two children return from taking the register to the office. Pupils in Year 1 are developing a good understanding of place value through challenging games and problem solving. Higher attaining pupils can split a number into hundreds, tens and units, the majority can reassemble a 100 square and know that one ten pence can be exchanged for ten pennies. Lower attaining pupils know that 19 is 1 ten and 9 units. All pupils develop an understanding of time and the sequence of the day, and can compare objects as being taller or shorter, heavier or lighter or containing more or less liquid.
117. Pupils enjoy their lessons and are eager to participate in the oral sessions. They listen attentively to the teacher and to each other and have the confidence to offer answers and to

explain their thinking. They move quickly from the carpet sessions to the group activities and get on with their tasks without delay and the majority sustain concentration and complete their work. The pupils work well together, follow the rules fairly and take turns. They tidy up quickly and take responsibility for their own particular jobs. Behaviour is good in all lessons.

118. The quality of teaching is good and all staff have worked hard and with enthusiasm to implement the National Numeracy Strategy successfully. The last inspection also judged the teaching to be good overall, but identified lack of pace and challenge for the more able as an area of weakness. The staff have since undertaken in-service training and lessons are now suitably challenging for all pupils. All the lessons observed were at least satisfactory, 57 per cent were good or better and 14 per cent were very good. Teachers have a good understanding of mathematics and lessons are well paced. They use a range of methods, and lessons begin with challenging mental practice for the whole class, clear explanations of the group tasks with pupils, then working in groups according to their ability. There is a good balance between discussion, practical activity and written work and a strong feature is the bringing together of pupils at the end of each lesson to share their results. Teachers know their pupils well and, through careful questioning, their day-to-day assessment of pupils is good and is used effectively to help or extend individual pupils. Teachers manage the pupils skillfully and discipline is good. The whole of the lesson time is used most effectively and very good use is made of resources such as dice, games and number lines to help understanding, and satisfactory use is made of computers to support learning. The best lessons are well paced and suitably challenging. Teachers work supportively with their particular focus group, but in the less successful lessons are not always fully aware of what is happening in other groups. Throughout the key stage, work is carefully planned and prepared with close co-operation between colleagues teaching parallel classes. Some use is made of homework to support learning in class. Teachers have made a good start in implementing the National Numeracy Strategy and now need to continue to improve their confidence.
119. The subject co-ordinator is now supported by the co-ordinator for special educational needs to develop support for mathematics in pupils' individual educational plans if appropriate. Together they provide strong curriculum leadership. They now monitor teachers' plans and pupils' work and the headteacher is monitoring teaching this term. There is an effective learning environment with mathematics having a suitably high status in school and this is supported by the enthusiastic, newly appointed numeracy governor. There are sound systems in place for assessing pupils' progress over time but this is recognised as an area for further development by the school. The curriculum meets statutory requirements, is balanced and broadly based and there are sufficient resources to deliver the curriculum effectively.
119. **Science**
120. In statutory teacher assessments in 1999, the percentage of seven year olds reaching the expected standard of Level 2 was very high compared to schools nationally. Standards have been above the national average for the past three years, but the new national benchmark tables in 1998 indicated that standards were average compared to similar schools. That level has now been exceeded. Only limited evidence of previous work was available for inspection, but work in classes in Year 1 in particular and discussions with pupils in Year 2 indicates that standards are above the national average. The curriculum is firmly rooted in experimental and investigational work. Teachers' good questioning techniques generally ensure that pupils at all stages in the school learn to think scientifically, setting logical hypotheses and drawing carefully considered conclusions, based on accumulated evidence.

121. A review of pupils' work is limited by the practice in the school of using loose paper for science work, without an effective storage system. This limits opportunities for pupils to track their own progress and review past learning. However, available evidence indicates that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, have a good knowledge of life processes and living things, materials and physical processes by the end of the key stage.
122. The progress of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, is good. Building on the good start in the early years, pupils in Year 1 draw minibeasts found in the school grounds and learn their names and their favoured habitat. In Year 2, pupils extend this work through classifying creatures according for example to physical features, the way they move, and types of habitat. In Year 1, pupils see recorded information about the colour of people's eyes in pictograms and block graphs, and in Year 2, pupils learn to collect such information themselves on tally charts before entering it into a computer program for conversion to similar diagrams. Pupils in Year 1 learn to utilise all their senses in making observations before drawing conclusions, such as through carefully observing candle wax melting as a candle burns, then solidifying as it cools. In Year 2, pupils observe and record changes to iron nails when stored in boxes containing sand, water, salt water or just air. They learn how to change materials by, for example, attempting to make dirty water clean through sieving and filtering procedures. Pupils in Year 1 know a range of light sources, identify characteristics of light and dark and investigate reflective and non-reflective materials through the use of their dark room. They learn that some everyday objects are controlled by electricity, and in Year 2, pupils classify these appliances into groups, such as those which provide heat or light, and those that move. Pupils in Year 2 know how to construct a simple electrical circuit, and understand that batteries provide a source of electricity but need to be placed with positive and negative poles in the correct position. They also learn about wind power through making land yachts, and the transference of sound amplified through cones and cylinders, and string telephones.
123. The pupils respond eagerly to opportunities to investigate, are generally very interested in observing outcomes and consider questions carefully before answering. They contribute keenly to discussions in both large and small groups. They co-operate amicably during group work, and share space and materials fairly. All resources are handled with care and due regard for safety.
124. The quality of teaching is good. In the lessons observed, all teaching was at least satisfactory, and 60 per cent was good. A review of planning indicates that some lessons are very good. Introductions to lessons are clear and effective, raising pupils' interest and reminding them of significant previous work. Frequent opportunities are provided for working on interesting activities in small groups with the teacher, with a clear learning focus. Examples are the candle burning under safe conditions, based on questions answered only by pupils, and the opportunity provided for pupils to work with the teacher with an interesting range of battery powered toys to discover changes to the battery which controlled whether they worked successfully or not. Within large and small groups, teachers work diligently to develop the vocabulary, thinking and language skills of the pupils to a very effective level. These methods are particularly valuable for lower attaining pupils, those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language. Expectations are high for all pupils, and the interesting activities chosen and frequent opportunities provided for investigation help to ensure that the needs of higher attaining pupils are met. The teaching is well structured in all classes, but reaches higher levels where the teacher's knowledge and understanding of the subject is good, and pupils' knowledge and understanding are extended significantly within each lesson. Good teaching includes useful summary lists to provide pupils with an overview of the learning achieved, such as the different groups of electrical appliances. Very good teaching includes

particularly challenging tasks, such as making dirty water clean, and opportunities for pupils not only to investigate, but also to plan their own investigations. A strength of the teaching at all levels is the effective questioning techniques employed to help pupils formulate hypotheses and reach conclusions, providing good opportunities for them to explain their ideas. Occasional opportunities are found to provide homework, such as when pupils are asked to identify the electrical appliances within each room at home, noting where many or few are situated. Careful planning within and between year groups generally ensures equality of opportunity for pupils in different classes. The recent adoption of the national scheme of work is improving continuity between different year groups.

125. Literacy skills are used appropriately in lessons, and mathematical skills, through comparisons in quantity and measurement of differences, form part of most investigations. Information technology is utilised through data processing and occasional research through electronic encyclopaede. Control of technology forms part of the pupils' work on electricity. Health education and drugs awareness is appropriately included in the curriculum, as is an early awareness of the reproduction of living things.
126. Two co-ordinators have responsibility for the subject and both have received recent training in monitoring teaching and learning within lessons. However, this aspect is still underdeveloped and plans are in hand to provide opportunities to further this work. Both co-ordinators are currently based in early years classes rather than Key Stage 1, and this limits their impact on practice in the subject throughout the school. Assessment systems have been recently revised, and now provide a more secure basis for making teaching plans according to pupils' differing needs. There is no collection of work to provide examples for teachers of the different levels of learning, linked to the school's scheme of work. Resources are suitable in range and quantity, and are easily accessible. The school grounds provide good opportunities for work in the subject.
127. Since the last inspection, standards in the subject have improved from an average to a well above average level. This is due to continuous improvements in teaching methods to provide more successfully for the lower attaining pupils and a full challenge through imaginative and well-structured activities for the higher attaining pupils. The reorganisation of the school's timetable to accommodate the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies has reduced the time allocated to the subject. It is important that the subject retains its core status within the curriculum for these high standards to be maintained. Science is intended as a priority within next year's school development plan.

127. **OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES**

127.

127. **Information technology**

128. Attainment at the end of the key stage is in line with the requirements of the National Curriculum, as it was reported to be during the last inspection, and progress for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and having English as an additional language, is satisfactory.

129. By the end of the key stage, the pupils have a suitable understanding of the use of computers in everyday life, can process and communicate information, and control technological equipment. Work in Year 1 builds on the sound skills established in the early years. Pupils establish sound 'mouse' control skills through a wide variety of programs linked well to other subjects in the curriculum, such as literacy, mathematics, art and music. They word process invitations

and, using art programs, create their names, pictures and captivating abstract designs. They use data-handling programmes to record information collected within the class on subjects such as shoe sizes and eye colour. A programmable toy is given directions to travel forward or backwards, to turn left or right, and to repeat its actions. These skills progress to a more advanced level in Year 2, where skills are used with greater independence. On the word processor, stories and narrative accounts are written, saved and printed out. Pupils are introduced to composing music on the computer, and create increasingly complex artwork. Data collections, such as hair colour represented in the class, are entered and reproduced as pictograms, block graphs and bar charts, and converted between the different options. The pupils at all levels in the school operate audio-tape players unassisted, and play pre-recorded story and song tapes.

130. The pupils enjoy the subject very much and derive pleasure from using computers and programmable toys. They are quite fascinated by the control they learn to use in operating technology. They are confident, generally absorb new learning quickly and concentrate well for extended periods of time. The pupils co-operate effectively when required to do so, taking turns to use the 'mouse' and the keyboard, supporting one another in their learning.
131. In the lessons observed, the quality of teaching was at least satisfactory, and in a third of lessons, it was good. There is a short class lesson each week to review the week's work and take learning forward for the next week. This is generally effective, although pupils cannot always see the screen adequately from where they are seated on the floor. Teaching is of higher quality when all pupils can view the screen, and the teacher's input is particularly clear, shows enthusiasm for the subject and allows pupils to try out instructions during the class lesson. Lessons that do not include access to the computer by pupils limit understanding. Teachers generally use appropriate technical vocabulary. Individual tuition available as pupils operate the computers is usually adequate. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. As in most primary schools, the small number of computers available per class limits the pupils' opportunities for practice, and reduces opportunities for progress that is more than satisfactory. Workshops are made available for parents to share the school's approach to information technology and these are helpful in enabling those with computers at home to improve their understanding.
132. A useful policy and scheme of work backs up the half-termly programme of work for each year group, and a newly-introduced list of subject skills informs assessment. The present range of equipment and software is sufficient to meet the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum, and is in frequent use. The roles of the two co-ordinators are not developed sufficiently to include working alongside staff in their classes, to enable them to monitor the quality of teaching and learning.
133. Since the last inspection, standards have been maintained overall in relation to the national expectation, but current technology in schools is now more sophisticated. Seven of the school's stock of 12 computers offer the latest technology to pupils. The school's scheme of work has been updated, and the co-ordinators are preparing a bid for the National Grid for Learning in an attempt to improve resources further to raise the pupils' standards of attainment.

133. **Religious education**

133.

134. By the end of the key stage, pupils reach levels of attainment above those outlined in the locally agreed syllabus and this is an improvement since the last inspection, when attainment was judged to be satisfactory.

135. By the age of seven, pupils have a good understanding of the life of Jesus and of the events surrounding His birth and death; they also have a good knowledge of Bible stories and can relate these to their own lives. For example, older pupils relate the story of The Good Samaritan to their own ideas of the qualities a friend should possess, creating a poster advertising for a friend who does not fight, plays nicely and will share. They link this to the Hindu festival of friendships and develop an understanding of friendship as a two way process by making friendship bracelets to give to others. The pupils know that Moses was a leader of his people and work together in groups to devise rules they would have if they were a leader, such as “Don’t fight other countries; don’t drink and drive or drop litter!” They use a wide vocabulary in circle time and use role play to begin to understand the need to control emotions, and relate this to squabbles and disagreements.

136. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. They gain an understanding of different world faiths through listening to stories, discussion and through the good examples of respect set by the teachers. For example, pupils in Year 1 develop an appreciation of the importance of the Qu’ran to Moslems and the Torah Scrolls to Jewish people by the careful way they are handled by their teacher, and of the Bible by listening to the views of a committed Christian on the importance of the Bible in her daily life. They gain further knowledge of different religions in celebrating Christmas, Easter, Diwali and Eid. Younger pupils develop a good understanding of prayer when they make up their own prayers to create a class scroll, thanking God for family, friends and the future.

137. Pupils have good attitudes to the subject and contribute freely and sensibly to discussions, obeying the rules of circle time. They think carefully about the qualities of a friend, and co-operate well and sustain concentration when working in groups. They treat the sacred books and artefacts of all religions with great respect.

138. The quality of teaching is good, showing some improvement since the last inspection. All the lessons observed were at least satisfactory, 60 per cent were good and 20 per cent were very good. All teachers have a good understanding of the subject and make good use of artefacts to enrich their teaching. They set a good example to their pupils by the respect they show to sacred books and by the value they place on the contributions of all pupils. Lessons are well planned and there are good links with literacy as pupils are encouraged to explore their feelings through stories and discussions. Good questioning skills and appropriate practical activities are used to ensure that all pupils are involved at their own level of understanding. There is generally a good balance between discussion and activity but in one lesson the pupils became restless as they were kept a little too long in discussion on the carpet.

139. Visits are made to two local churches, contrasting a modern and a traditional place of worship. However, there has not yet been the opportunity to visit the special places of worship of other religions. One child is withdrawn from assembly and from religious education at his parents’ request and suitable provision is made for him.

140. The co-ordinator provides strong curriculum leadership. There is a useful, comprehensive scheme of work and procedures for assessment are being developed. A monitoring plan has been developed for the current year. The school has sufficient resources to teach the

curriculum. The previous report identified a lack of suitable artefacts and the school has improved this provision. The subject makes a good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and positively promotes the ethos and aims of the school.

140.

Art

141. From evidence in lesson observations, scrutiny of pupils' work and displays indicates that the pupils throughout the school are performing better than in most schools and making good progress. By the end of the key stage, most of the pupils are familiar with work of several artists and can represent the styles of Andre Derain in their work on colour, and Katsushika Hokusai in their work on portraits. In Year 2, the pupils understand the language of shade and tone. They successfully add black paint to make a shade and white paint to make a tone. There is good evidence of their skills on display in the classrooms and several pupils of varying ability could describe how they had investigated developing shades and tones. During the inspection, the pupils were observed carefully exploring shading with pencils and charcoal by varying the pressure used. They understand that pressure is important with the range of pencils HB to 4B, but that a different level of pressure is required with charcoal. The pupils are particularly good at observational drawing. They were observed drawing Victorian artefacts in history and electrical appliances related to their work in science. In the corridor, the pupils' work on observational drawing of segmented fruit during their science work on healthy eating and of a spinning wheel provides an attractive displays of high quality work. Information technology is used effectively to enable the pupils to use art programs to create pictures and patterns in a kaleidoscope of colours.
142. The pupils make good progress throughout the school. In Year 1, the pupils are introduced to mixing primary colours into secondary colours. The pupils control their brushes well and know not to carry too much water on them. They make patterns using a variety of drawing pencils and willow charcoal. They use oil pastels to draw pineapples and use fruit and vegetables to print patterns. These experiences, although important in themselves, provide the right foundation for continuity and progression into the curriculum for Year 2. A "Family Challenge" to produce a weaving has resulted in many attractive, imaginative displays around the school and families are to be congratulated on their response. The pupils' knowledge and understanding of textiles and the processes of weaving have been promoted significantly by the experience. During 1998/99, a whole-school monitoring exercise was carried out using observational drawing of a bicycle completed by every pupil from nursery to Year 2. This allowed the staff the opportunity of identifying the pupils' progress in observational drawing over time and also allowed a consideration of quality. The school plans to use this effective approach to monitoring progress again in the Spring term 2000 to look at a different aspect of art. Three-dimensional work, apart from clay work, is an area for development in the curriculum. The scheme of work concentrates on the skills and techniques of drawing, methods of mixing colour and painting. The attention given to the work of artists is appropriate, enabling the pupils to make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of different genres.
143. The pupils' attitudes are good. They concentrate hard to learn techniques and are confident to pursue their own ideas. They share materials co-operatively and praise each other's work. The pupils are enthusiastic and show a pride in their efforts as they discuss the methods and techniques they have used and explain how they think and feel about what they do. Their art work makes a significant contribution to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

144. The quality of teaching is good. The teachers show secure understanding and enthusiasm of for the subject. They are well-prepared and organised, lessons have a clear focus and are presented in a lively and imaginative style. The teachers give clear instructions, sometimes demonstrating to further the pupils' learning. Encouragement and praise are used effectively to sustain their efforts. Much successful work is linked to other areas of the curriculum, as reported above. A notable good aspect of teaching is the promotion of skills and techniques to enable the pupils to investigate and experiment with materials. The pupils' good colour-mixing skills in Year 1 come from the skills of painting taught in the Reception classes.
145. The curriculum co-ordinator has worked hard to produce good quality documentation to guide her colleagues' planning. These clearly provide for continuity and progression, except in three-dimensional work. Assessment procedures are not in place, although the development of criteria are included in the development plan for 2000/2001. The collection of samples of pupils' work as records of their attainment is at an early stage. The samples observed during the inspection were not annotated to provide evidence of what individual pupils have achieved. Resources are adequate to meet the requirements of the subject and equipment for wearing has supplemented the stock.
145. **Design and technology**
146. Only two lessons in the subject, both in Year 1, were observed in Key Stage 1. A review of a small selection of previous work and teachers' planning indicates that pupils are generally working at an appropriate level for their age, and complete a 'design and make' task each half term. The majority of pupils, including those with special educational needs and the small number of pupils with English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress. The sound standards identified in the previous report have been broadly maintained. Pupils have the opportunity to participate in a variety of activities and use a satisfactory range of tools and materials, although little use is made of woodworking tools.
147. In Year 1, in food technology, pupils design their own sandwiches complete with fillings, before assembling them, inviting friends to try them before reviewing the success of their plans. A block graph was made, using a computer program, to demonstrate the pupils' favourite choices. Linked to science work on light, and a school assembly on Diwali, pupils in Year 1 design candle holders. They first discuss the significant features required, such as stability for safety purposes, size to enable accommodation of the required candle, and other features such as an attractive finish. Following a visit to the mining museum, one pupil intended his design for use in a coal mine in past times, and added a hook to allow the candle to hang from the wall without protruding too far, to allow horses to pass safely. The candle holder is constructed from clay, using the 'coil pot' technique, before being smoothed ready to be marked with a chosen finish. Working with textiles, pupils complete felt finger puppets, based on a prepared design, and decorate them with a variety of finishing techniques, such as braid or sequins, attached with glue.
148. In Year 2, pupils generally extend these skills to a suitable level for their age. Linked to science work, they design and make a toy that will float, using reclaimed materials. They make puppets from card, with joints secured with paper fasteners, before finishing with colours or fabric. A Christmas mobile is planned, with decorations hanging from a dowelling frame. A variety of joining and fixing techniques are included. Working in small groups, the pupils design and make a go-kart, using reclaimed materials. Wheels are mounted on axles, and models are reviewed, noting 'things that I like' and 'things that I would change'. Although

these models demonstrate a clear advance on features included in reclaimed models made at earlier stages in the school, the finish achieved is not always sufficiently improved for the pupils' ages. All pupils throughout the school have suitable opportunities to build models using a range of construction activities.

149. Pupils' enjoy their work and their attitudes to the subject are good. They work with interest, concentrating well, and generally persevering until the work is complete. They use and share equipment sensibly, and tidy away when required to do so. Pupils are confident in explaining their designs and contributing to discussions.
150. Although the teaching in the two lessons observed was judged to be of good quality, a review of other work and teachers' planning suggests that it is satisfactory overall. Lessons are well planned and clear instructions are given. Good opportunities are given for pupils to discuss preparations and evaluations of their work. Techniques, such as making clay 'coil pots', are carefully structured, and the outcome is generally of a high standard for the pupils' age. There was insufficient evidence to report on teaching in the subject in the last inspection.
151. There is a useful policy document, and suitable outline planning for the 'design and make' task for each half term. There are sufficient resources to meet the demands of the curriculum and statutory requirements are met. The subject makes a good contribution to literacy through discussion and reading written instructions, and to numeracy through measuring and counting. The co-ordinator has had no opportunity as yet to monitor the teaching and learning in lessons to help disseminate good practice throughout the school.

151. **History and geography**

152. At the time of the last inspection, standards in both subjects were judged to be in line with national expectations. In history, the pupils demonstrated an appropriate sense of chronology for their age. They could distinguish between past and present in their own and their families' lives. In geography, the pupils showed an awareness of the features of their immediate locality and some of the characteristics of places beyond. The pupils made sound progress in both subjects. No significant weaknesses were observed.
153. By the end of Key Stage 1, in history, the pupils attain standards appropriate for their age and they make good progress in developing their sense of the past. In lessons in Year 2, the pupils studied a wide range of Victorian artefacts which reinforced the learning from a visit to Croxteth Hall. They talked knowledgeably about life "above and below" stairs and discussed the similarities and differences between the artefacts and those used in the present day, for example, the flat iron and electric iron and a carpet beater and vacuum cleaner. In another Year 2 lesson, the pupils learned about the diaries of Samuel Pepys and the importance of first-hand accounts when researching aspects of history. The pupils understand the importance of a range of primary and secondary sources of information and make good progress in understanding methods of finding out about the past. The pupils in Year 1 visited the mining museum. Back in the classroom, they make observational drawings of a canary cage, boots, miners' lamp, pick and shovel. They are greatly interested in the descriptions of family life at the turn of the century. Through the use of educational visits and artefacts for the pupils to handle, history is brought alive for the pupils. This first-hand approach enables the pupils to have opportunities to develop their sense of the past and its differences from the present. A recent Family Challenge based on the history of the school provided pupils with interesting facts about similarities and differences in school life over the past 50 years.

154. In geography, the pupils in Year 2 develop their mapping skills effectively. They discuss the route to Croxteth Hall having looked at contrasting environments on the journey. They observe, draw and write about the gardens and farm, drawing good plans of both. The pupils look closely at maps, plans and aerial photographs, developing understanding of the importance of accuracy when mapping and of the use of symbols. Good progress is made throughout the key stage. In Year 1, the pupils develop their early mapping skills by drawing the route of their walk to the mining museum. They understand that cars and animals are not drawn on to maps because they move around. They develop an understanding of aerial views by looking down on the playmats and looking at the aerial photograph of the school grounds.
155. The pupils with special educational needs and those pupils with English as an additional language make good progress in relation to their prior attainment, due to the significant amount of "hands on " practical activities and investigations.
156. The pupils enjoy their lessons and are keen to explain what they know. They sustain a high level of concentration and good behaviour was observed during the inspection. They handle the artefacts with care and wait patiently for their turn to hold a particular piece.
157. Overall, teaching is good. The provision of educational visits and practical, investigative activities make lessons meaningful and relevant and enrich the curriculum. Although the school has had the opportunity to slim down the curriculum in response to national guidance, the staff have ensured that the pupils have regular access and that history and geography have a vital part to play in the school's curriculum. Planning is thorough and lessons interest and motivate pupils. Long-term planning is effective in ensuring that there is continuity and progression as pupils move through the key stage. There is an appropriate balance between the development of research and enquiry skills and the acquisition of knowledge. Resources are adequate for both subjects and good use is made of the local authority's loan service.

157.

Music

158. The school provides a balanced programme of work with pupils gaining experience in performing, composing, listening and appraising, maintaining the position identified in the last inspection. Pupils work at levels at least appropriate for their age and their standard of singing is good. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress.
159. Pupils build up a good repertoire of songs they know by heart throughout the key stage. Pupils in Year 1 develop the confidence to sing solo in a secure and supportive environment, when singing replies such as "My name is Mary and I go to Light Oaks School." They improve their ability to pitch their voice and can whisper, shout and sing "Hello!" Pupils in Year 2 extend their repertoire when singing hymns and modern songs, for example, "You've Got a Friend," to a guitar accompaniment. They listen as each class sings and are able to offer suggestions for improvement. Pupils in Year 1 listen to a Brahms Lullaby and to Handel's Music for Royal Fireworks to help with their own compositions using a variety of percussion instruments. Older pupils make good progress in performing their own composition on drums, chime bars and glockenspiels, following the rhythm patterns of Indian music. Singing in assembly is tuneful and a musical highlight of the year is participation in the Christmas production. Three pupils receive violin tuition from a specialist teacher provided by the local authority, but there are no opportunities for pupils to join in other extra-curricular musical activities such as recorders or choir.

160. The pupils enjoyment of music is obvious. They are enthusiastic and join in well with singing, in lessons and in assemblies. They concentrate fully when listening to music and try hard to play their instruments softly when composing a lullaby. Behaviour is good, though younger pupils become a little restless towards the end of a long period of listening.
161. Teaching is good not only in specific music lessons, but also in dance and assemblies. All the lessons seen were at least satisfactory and 75 per cent were good. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Lessons are generally carefully planned with a good balance between practising skills, listening and performing. Teachers use their own musical ability well and their enthusiasm encourages their pupils. There is a good pace to the best lessons and teachers give careful explanations. In the less successful lesson, time was not used so effectively and pupils were unclear about their task.
162. There is a clear policy and scheme of work for music which clearly identifies all elements of the National Curriculum. From the beginning of the current term, statements of attainment have been included to help teachers to assess pupils' progress during the course of the year, an appropriate system of record-keeping has been introduced and the co-ordinator will monitor the work of a year group each term. The subject is appropriately timetabled to make maximum use of the musical expertise of the staff. Resources are good, readily available and used effectively.
163. Sufficient opportunities are now provided for the pupils' spiritual and cultural development through music and this an improvement since the last inspection.

163.

Physical education

163.

164. Pupils work at levels appropriate to their ages in all aspects of the subject and achieve a good standard in dance, indicating a similar picture to the last inspection. Planning indicates that an appropriate range of the subject is taught.
165. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. Pupils in Year 2 understand the need to warm up before vigorous exercise and get out the apparatus safely. They can move swiftly and lightly on and off the apparatus using their hands and feet to jump, climb and balance and can contrast this with strong movements, striding and pulling themselves along the beams and benches. In dance, the majority of pupils in Year 1 can demonstrate quick, flicking movements with hands and arms and use their whole body to create spiky or curved shapes. They make good progress in responding well to a variety of percussion sounds, demonstrating a range of firework movements. Pupils in Year 2 make good progress inspired by the good choice of music and by visualising the movements of animals through the leaves in an autumn wood, as they interpret the teacher's evocative telling of the story.
166. Pupils enjoy physical education. They respond quickly to instructions and move and stop on command. They follow rules sensibly and persist when trying to improve on their long jumps. A visiting pupil from a nearby special educational needs school is made to feel welcome and included in the lesson. Behaviour is good.
167. The quality of teaching is good. This is an improvement since the last inspection, when it was judged to be satisfactory and is part of the general improvement in teaching in school. Of the three lessons observed, all were at least good and one was very good. All the lessons are well - planned and paced and include a warm-up session, vigorous activity and time to cool down.

All teachers are appropriately dressed and insist on similar standards from their pupils. Instructions are clear and good use is made of pupils to demonstrate good practice. Teachers have a firm, calm approach; clear rules are set for the movement of apparatus and safety is given a high priority. In the example of very good teaching, the lesson commenced as soon as the pupils entered the hall with the teacher beating the tambourine and singing instructions. There was a very good balance between discussion, movement and evaluation and there were good links with literacy.

168. The policy for physical education has recently been revised and is in draft form. The school is awaiting the publication of new guidelines before revising its scheme of work and methods of assessment. The curriculum is enhanced by the development of the school grounds and by a planned programme of additional lunch-time activities. Resources are sufficient for the curriculum and are stored appropriately and readily available. The previous inspection report noted that some lessons were too long. Inspection evidence indicates that this is no longer the case.

168.

168. **PART C: INSPECTION DATA**

168. **SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

169. The inspection was undertaken by a team of four inspectors, who spent a total of 16 inspector days in the school.

170. During the inspection:

- the team observed 78 lessons;
- they listened to 25 pupils from across all year groups reading their books and many other pupils reading their work;
- samples of pupils' work were inspected in every class;
- samples of work and documentation for all pupils on the school's register of special educational needs were inspected;
- playtimes and dinnertimes were observed;
- discussions were held with pupils, members of staff, parents and governors;
- a parents' meeting was held and was attended by 19 parents;
- sixty three parents responded to a questionnaire summarising their views of the school;
- the school's development plan, school policies and other documents were examined;
- the school's attendance registers were checked;
- the financial documents were analysed.

• **DATA AND INDICATORS**

• **Pupil data**

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
YR - Y2	232	0	39	17
Nursery Class	26	0	0	0

• **Teachers and classes**

• **Qualified teachers (YR - Y2)**

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	10
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	23.2

•

Education support staff (YR - Y2)

Total number of education support staff:	9
Total aggregate hours worked each week:	167.5

- **Qualified teachers (Nursery class)**

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	34

- **Education support staff (Nursery class)**

Total number of education support staff:	2
Total aggregate hours worked each week:	65

- **Average class size**

Average class size:	25.8
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- **Financial data**

Financial year:	1998 - 1999
	£
Total income	431,520.00
Total expenditure	433,571.0
Expenditure per pupil	1,852.87
Balance brought forward from previous year	45,931.00
Balance carried forward to next year	43,880.00

• **PARENTAL SURVEY**

Number of questionnaires sent out: 232
 Number of questionnaires returned: 72

Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	42	53	4	1	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	49	43	6	3	0
The school handles complaints from parents well	21	45	31	2	2
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	26	61	7	6	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	21	70	3	4	1
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	29	63	7	0	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	26	52	15	6	2
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	30	52	11	8	0
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	35	55	10	0	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	29	57	13	0	0
My child(ren) like(s) school	62	37	0	0	0