

# INSPECTION REPORT

**OUR LADY'S  
CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Prescot

LEA area: Knowsley

Unique reference number: 104459

Headteacher: Mrs B D Martin

Reporting inspector: Mr I Hocking  
1272

Dates of inspection: 22<sup>nd</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup> May 2000

Inspection number: 188931

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

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## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Type of school: Infant and Junior School

School category: Voluntary aided

Age range of pupils: 3 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Ward Street  
Prescot  
Merseyside

Postcode: L34 6JJ

Telephone number: 0151 426 5005

Fax number: 0151 493 1588

Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Dr M F O'Ryan

Date of previous inspection: June 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Ian Hocking	Registered inspector	Mathematics	What sort of school is it?
		Physical Education	How well are pupils taught?
		Under fives	How well is the school led and managed?
Jennifer Farmer	Lay inspector	Equal opportunities	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
			How well does the school care for its pupils?
			How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Peter Hill	Team inspector	Special educational needs	
		Science	
		Information and communication technology	
		Art	
		Design and technology	
Melvyn Hemmings	Team inspector	English	The school's results and pupils' achievements
		Geography	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
		History	
		Music	

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 London WC2B 6SE

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

The school is situated close to the centre of Prescot. Its intake is drawn from a mixture of private and local authority housing. Currently, there are 193 pupils (103 boys, 90 girls) aged 4-11 on roll, plus a further 41 pupils who attend the nursery on a part-time basis. The number on roll is similar to that of an average size of primary but its rising number of pupils has created considerable pressure on classroom space. On entry to the school, the majority of pupils have levels of skill that are in line with those anticipated for their age. The proportion of pupils (13.73%) registered to receive school meals free of charge is broadly in line with the national average. The school has identified 10.1% of pupils as having special educational needs, which is below the national average. All pupils come from homes where English is the first language.

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

Our Lady's RC Primary is a very good school. As a result of very good leadership, management and teaching it achieves above average standards within a very caring, Catholic ethos. The head teacher, senior management team and governors are highly committed to pupils' academic and personal development. The school is valued by parents and has strong links with the local community. It provides good value for money.

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

- Leadership of the school is very good.
- The school achieves above average standards in English, mathematics and science.
- Teaching is very good and pupils make good gains in their knowledge, skills and understanding in the vast majority of lessons.
- It promotes pupils' very good behaviour and positive attitudes to school.
- It has built a good partnership with parents.
- It has very good links with the local community, partner schools, and an institute of higher education.
- It makes very good provision for pupils' personal development.

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

- Pupils' access to information and communication technology (ICT) is unsatisfactory. At present there is an uneven distribution and opportunity for pupils to use computers.
- Pupils' attainment in ICT for those under the age of 9, is below national expectation.
- Provision for a centralised library.
- Opportunities for pupils to gain a greater awareness of living in a multi-cultural society.

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

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

The school has made good progress since it was last inspected in June 1996. It has successfully addressed all the key issues, although further work is required with regard to the issue of pupils' use of ICT. The most significant areas where improvement has occurred include: teaching, especially planning and assessment; the role of subject co-ordinators; raised standards in pupils' work; and accommodation.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	A	A	A*	A*
mathematics	B	A	B	C
science	C	B	B	B

Key	
Very high	A*
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

The above table shows that standards reached in the 1999 test results in English were very high, placing the school's results in the top 5% nationally. Standards over the last 3 years in English, mathematics and science have been consistently above the national average. The school has set realistic targets for improving results in English, mathematics and science, particularly with regard to increasing the number of pupils who ought to achieve higher levels in national tests. This target, which arose from the previous inspection, has been met. Standards of pupils' work seen during the inspection broadly confirm the 1999 national test results for 7-year-olds and 11-year-olds. Pupils achieve well in English, mathematics and science. Standards in ICT are average for pupils aged eleven but below average for those aged seven.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good: Pupils have very positive attitudes. They enjoy coming to school and are enthusiastic learners.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good: Pupils behave very well in the vast majority of lessons. The older pupils show exemplary behaviour in many lessons and set a mature example for younger pupils.
Personal development and relationships	Very good: Pupils are kind, considerate and very caring towards each other. They listen well when their peers are speaking and show respect for adults.
Attendance	Good: Attendance is above the national average.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Very good	Good	Very good

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

The teaching of English is good for pupils aged 5 to 7 and is very good in the vast majority of lessons for pupils aged under 5 and for those aged 7 to 11. Teaching of mathematics is very good particularly for pupils aged under 8; for pupils in Years 5 and 6 it is excellent. Teaching of literacy and numeracy skills is very good in the vast majority of lessons. The needs of all pupils are well met by very good planning which results in a close match of task to ability. This results in pupils of all levels of ability making very good gains in their learning, in the vast majority of lessons. Teaching of ICT is unsatisfactory except for those pupils aged under five and for those at the latter half of Key Stage 2. Overall, teaching is excellent in 8% of lessons, very good in 42%, good in 27%, and satisfactory in the remainder of lessons.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good: The school places a strong emphasis on literacy and numeracy. Very good links with the local community, higher education and partner schools provide a very effective contribution to pupils' education. Four classes have insufficient access to ICT. Provision for the children aged under five is a strength of the school.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good: Pupils are given work that is appropriately matched to their individual needs. Those with statemented needs are supported very well in lessons.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good: Provision for pupils' spiritual, social and moral development is very good. Satisfactory provision is made for cultural development. Insufficient attention is given to developing pupils' awareness of living in a multi-cultural society.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good: This is a very caring school in which all staff support, promote and check on pupils' personal and academic development.

The school enjoys a good partnership with parents.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good: The head teacher provides clear educational direction and promotes high educational standards within a distinctively Catholic ethos. Subject leadership is very effective in English, mathematics and science.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very good: Governors are fully involved in shaping the work of the school and in checking on its progress.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good: The school has very effective systems for checking and improving pupils' standards of attainment, teaching and curriculum provision.
The strategic use of resources	Good: The school's educational priorities are supported by appropriate allocation of funds.



Staffing and resources are adequate. Resources are bought with due consideration to value for money. Accommodation is unsatisfactory due to pressure on the available classroom spaces and the resulting absence of a centralised library.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<p>Parents express positive views about virtually every aspect of the school. In particular, at least 90% of parents who returned questionnaires agree or strongly agree with the following statements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• My child likes school.</li> <li>• My child is making good progress.</li> <li>• Behaviour in the school is good.</li> <li>• The teaching is good.</li> <li>• I would feel comfortable about approaching school.</li> <li>• The school expects my child to work hard.</li> <li>• The school works closely with parents.</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed.</li> <li>• The school is helping my child become mature.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• About a quarter of questionnaires indicate that parents would like the school to improve its range of extra-curricular activities.</li> </ul>

Inspectors agree with the positive views expressed by parents. Inspectors judge that the school makes satisfactory provision for extra-curricular activities, all of which are well supported by pupils.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1 The results of the 1999 National Curriculum tests for 11-year-olds were very high in English and above the national average in mathematics and science. Over the last three years standards have been improving and have remained above the national average. In comparison with similar schools pupils' performance was very high in English, average in mathematics and above average in science. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher levels was very high in English, close to the national average in mathematics and just below average in science, which shows that the school has significantly improved the achievement of the higher-attaining pupils since the last inspection. The attainment of pupils currently in Year 6 is well above average in English and above average in mathematics and science, which means that the school is on line to meet the suitably challenging targets that it has set for the current year.

2 The results of the 1999 National Curriculum tests for 7-year-olds were well above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. Teacher assessments for science indicate that pupils' performance was also well above average. Over the last three years standards have been improving and have remained well above the national average. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher levels was well above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. The attainment of pupils currently in Year 2 is well above average in English and mathematics and above average in science, which means that the school is on line to meet the suitably challenging targets that it has set for the current year.

3 In information and communication technology, pupils are attaining below the national expectation by the end of Key Stage 1 but are in line with the national expectation by the end of Key Stage 2. This is a result of the uneven provision within the school that means that pupils in Key Stage 1 and in the lower half of Key Stage 2 do not have enough time on computers to suitably develop their skills in the subject.

4 In Key Stage 1, pupils achieve appropriate standards in art, design and technology and physical education. There is insufficient evidence on which to make a secure judgement on standards in history, geography and music. In Key Stage 2, pupils achieve suitable standards in art, design and technology, history and physical education but there is insufficient evidence on which to judge standards in geography and music.

5 In all subjects the common strengths of pupils are that they are very good communicators and have good presentational skills. Pupils demonstrate initiative and independence when engaged in investigative work in each year group. They are very willing to take full part in group and class discussions and show a good knowledge and understanding of subject-related vocabulary. This was especially the case in class debates during geography and history lessons for pupils in Years 5 and 6. They show very good collaboration skills when required to do so. A common weakness in all subjects is the limited application of information communication technology by pupils to enhance their work in Key Stage 1 and in the lower half of Key Stage 2.

6 There is very effective use made of pupils' literacy skills across all subjects. In many mathematics lessons the pupils have appropriate opportunities to develop these skills when reading questions and then discussing and explaining their strategies for finding solutions before writing their answers. Similar evidence is seen in science lessons when pupils often hypothesise and discuss their results before writing detailed reports of their investigations. In geography and history, the pupils

record their ideas in a variety of ways including formal letter writing, as was seen in the work of pupils in Years 5 and 6.

7 Numeracy skills are applied well across the curriculum, especially in science where there is significant evidence of pupils using data collection and graphical representation to record their findings. In geography and physical education lessons the positional and directional language of mathematics is reinforced.

8 When children start school their personal and academic standards are in line with that expected for their age. During their time in the nursery and reception classes they make very good progress and many are able to exceed the expected learning goals for five-year-olds in the six areas of learning by the time they enter Year 1. This is a direct result of the very good quality teaching that children receive in these classes.

9 By the time that they are eleven pupils have made very good progress in their learning in English and pupils of differing attainment achieve to their full potential in all aspects of the subject. This is especially the case in reading in which the guided and shared reading sessions are having a very positive effect on the achievement of all pupils. They can discuss what they have read and predict what will happen next. Most pupils are able to use a range of strategies to determine unfamiliar words, including the use of phonics. Most pupils enjoy books and many can express opinions about their reading and are able to use books, effectively, for information. In Key Stage 2, the majority of pupils can read a range of texts accurately and can recount stories and express preferences. Pupils in Year 6 can speak knowledgeably about their favourite authors and higher-attaining pupils are able to read demanding texts and evaluate them with reference to stories by different authors. However, the poor library provision means that pupils are not able to appropriately develop their library and individual research skills to the level of which they are capable. Pupils can write in a variety of forms, across the curriculum, and standards of handwriting and spelling are very good. The pupils make good progress in their language skills and, as a result, oracy standards are well above average with pupils being able to express their ideas clearly in class discussions.

10 Pupils make good progress in their learning in mathematics and by the time that they are eleven most pupils achieve numeracy skills that are above average, particularly in written calculation and mental recall. Their ability to explain strategies used in mental calculation is developing in an appropriate manner as a result of the National Numeracy Strategy and is at an average level.

11 In science, when pupils start Year 1, they engage in a good range of practical tasks that help to develop their knowledge and understanding. By the time they are 7 the pupils have made good progress in the development of their skills of recording their findings in a variety of ways. As they pass through Key Stage 2 pupils make good progress in the skills of carrying out investigations and by the age of eleven they are able to plan and carry out a fair test to a good standard.

12 In information and communication technology pupils in Key Stage 1 and the lower half of Key Stage 2 are underachieving because of the uneven provision for this subject. In Years 5 and 6 the provision is good and, as a result, pupils are able to achieve appropriate standards.

13 Pupils with special educational needs in both key stages make good progress towards the targets on their individual education plans, due to the good support that they receive in classrooms and they achieve well. There are no significant variations in the attainment of pupils of different gender or background.

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

14 Attendance is good and above the national average. The vast majority of pupils have a very good attitude to their work, which has a positive impact on their learning. Pupils are keen to attend school; they appear happy, confident and take a pride in their school, their achievements and work. They show respect for feelings, values and beliefs. This is well demonstrated by the way they show

appropriate appreciation for each other's efforts, are willing to share resources and materials and to listen to each other in lessons. A very good example of this was seen in a Year 6 class when pupils debated the pros and cons of building a hotel in the middle of a forest.

15 Behaviour is very good. In classrooms and around the school, behaviour is satisfactory and more often than not is very good. In some lessons observed, the behaviour was excellent. The majority of pupils know how to behave and know what is expected of them. When given opportunities to work in groups and pairs pupils do so constructively and co-operatively. A very good example of this was seen in the Year 6 physical education lesson where pupils worked very well as a team. Many pupils show an obvious enjoyment in their learning and are reluctant to stop when they have to. By Key Stage 2 pupils are beginning to take ownership of the rules and sanctions that contribute to the quality of life within the school and demonstrate that they understand the impact that their actions have on others. Bullying is not a problem in the school though the staff are continually vigilant and deal with the very occasional incident quickly and effectively. The very good relationships seen throughout the school make a significant contribution to the overall ethos of the school and the management of behaviour. Relationships between pupils and between pupils and staff are consistently very good and in some cases excellent. There is a mutual respect between pupils and staff. Parents also recognise and value the good behaviour within the school. There have been no exclusions.

16 Personal development is very good. Pupils willingly take on responsibility; they get involved in the daily routines of the school, and they notice what needs to be done and get on and do it without fuss. For example, pupils are seen helping younger pupils during a wet playtime; they take registers to the office and hold doors open for their colleagues and for staff. There are many examples of pupils helping each other in lessons. In a Year 5 IT lesson pupils co-operated and helped each other with unfamiliar tasks. Pupils become more confident as they get older and, when given the opportunity, take more responsibility for organising their own work. Particularly good examples of this can be seen in the Literacy Hour when pupils work without the direct intervention of the teacher. When younger pupils are given opportunity to plan and organise their own work they do so well.

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

17 Overall, the quality of teaching is very good. In all lessons, teaching is at least satisfactory. In 27 percent of these lessons, teaching is good. In 42 percent of lessons, teaching is very good, and in 8 percent, it is excellent. Teaching of the pupils aged under five is very good in 60 percent of lessons and good in the remainder. Teaching in the lessons for those aged five to seven is good. In 36 percent of lessons teaching is satisfactory; in 21 percent, it is good and in 43 percent, it is very good. Teaching for pupils aged seven to eleven is very good overall. In 25 percent of lessons there is satisfactory teaching; in 25 percent, teaching is good; in 33 percent, it is very good and in 17 percent, it is excellent. There has been a significant improvement in teaching since the last inspection. The amount of unsatisfactory teaching has been eliminated and the amount of good teaching has increased substantially.

18 The teaching of pupils aged under five is at least good in all the areas of learning in which teaching was observed. In Years 1 and 2, teaching is satisfactory in art, good in English, science and physical education with very good teaching in mathematics. Teaching in Years 3 to 6 is very good in English, mathematics and physical education; it is good in science and history, and satisfactory in art.

19 Teaching is unsatisfactory in information and communication technology (ICT) mainly because insufficient opportunities are presented to pupils in Years 1, 2, 3 and 4, to use computers. Teachers' insecure subject knowledge contributes to a lack of confidence in the teaching of ICT. As a result, pupils are not learning the relevant skills and gaining the knowledge and understanding required by the National Curriculum. In both key stages, insufficient lessons were observed to enable secure judgements to be made about the teaching of design and technology, geography and music. Similarly, no judgment is made about the teaching of history in Key Stage 1.

20 Teaching of the pupils aged under five is shared between the two teachers, nursery nurse and the general teaching assistant, whose very good support contributes significantly to pupils' learning. Planning is shared and teaching is very well prepared, making good use of resources. A notable feature of this successful teaching is the high emphasis that is justifiably given to the development of pupils' literacy skills, especially in the development of their vocabulary. Regular assessment of pupils' progress enables staff to gain a clear knowledge of pupils' developing skills, knowledge and understanding. Both the nursery and reception classrooms provide a stimulating environment that engages pupils' interest and motivates them to learn. Teachers present particularly well-chosen tasks based upon a central theme. Very good teaching enables pupils to make very good progress in their learning. Pupil behaviour is managed very effectively. Pupils are encouraged to concentrate and listen. Excellent relationships between the staff and pupils contribute to very effective class control.

21 The most consistently successful teaching for pupils aged 5 to 11 took place in Years 1, 5 and 6. In these lessons, the excellent quality of relationships between teachers and pupils enabled lessons to proceed briskly, with pupils totally absorbed in their learning. Enthusiastic teaching, allied to good subject knowledge prompted very good learning. For example in a Year 5 lesson, pupils made excellent use of ICT to assist their learning of data-handling. The teacher had carefully selected appropriate software to augment a particularly well-planned and executed lesson. One of the three excellent lessons in Year 6 involved pupils collaborating to solve the problem of crossing an obstacle course. The teacher's high expectation of the pupils was fundamental to the success of the lesson.

22 In Key Stages 1 and 2, the basic skills of literacy and numeracy are taught well. The teachers' successful delivery of the National Literacy and Numeracy strategies is enabling pupils to make good gains in the various aspects of literacy and numeracy. Very good systems of assessing and recording pupil progress are used effectively to plan future work. This enables teachers to present work at levels that are appropriately matched to pupils' prior attainment and therefore enables them to build on what they already can do, know and understand. Teachers throughout the school have a very caring attitude to pupils and have appropriately high expectations of their work.

23 Teaching is good for pupils with special educational needs (SEN). All teachers have a good level of awareness of the needs of these pupils and lesson planning considers this. Teachers and support staff respond sensitively and appropriately to the academic needs of pupils with SEN.

24 Homework is set appropriately in line with the school policy.

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

25 The curricular and other opportunities offered to the children aged under five in the nursery and reception classes are good and include all the areas of learning and experience expected for this age group. There is strong emphasis placed on literacy and numeracy and also on children's personal, social and emotional education. This emphasis and the significant amount of very good teaching that children receive results in them making very good progress in their academic skills and allows them to show increased confidence as they settle into school routines. Children are very well prepared for the programmes of study of the National Curriculum as they enter Year 1.

26 The curriculum that the school provides for pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 is good. It is broad and balanced and meets the statutory requirements to teach the subjects of the National Curriculum. However, there are some aspects of information and communication technology (ICT) that are underdeveloped in Key Stage 1 and in the lower half of Key Stage 2. The school is implementing the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies in a successful way that is effectively helping to raise pupils' attainment in English and mathematics. There has been suitable additional time devoted to literacy and numeracy, which has meant there is less time available for other subjects. However, the school has worked hard and has been successful in maintaining pupils' access to all areas of the

curriculum and there is good coverage of most Programmes of Study. The demands of the Liverpool Archdiocesan Syllabus for religious education are planned for in each class. The school effectively supports the pupils' physical and personal development. There is good provision for pupils to experience personal and social education, including health education and attention to drug misuse.

27 This has included a full day's training for pupils in Year 6 to raise their awareness of the dangers of drugs. The school provides for sex education in a sensitive and supportive manner within the religious education curriculum and also as and when questions arise. This provision is to be reviewed with an intention for it to become more formalised within the health education programme.

28 The school is successful in ensuring that all pupils have equal access to the curriculum. There is good quality provision for pupils with special educational needs, with effective procedures in place for the identification and assessment of these pupils. All pupils with special educational needs have access to the full curriculum. The class teachers are involved in drawing up the individual education plans and the targets in them are effectively used in planning lessons. The co-ordinator for special educational needs is well organised and maintains a comprehensive register for identified pupils. The Code of Practice is fully implemented.

29 The last inspection report indicated that the school's curriculum planning procedures were an area of weakness and a key issue for action was to develop whole-school planning to ensure an even coverage of the National Curriculum. The school has been very successful in addressing this key issue and now has a good structure of long, medium and short-term planning in place to ensure continuity and progression of learning in all subjects. The long-term planning provides a broad overview of the aspects of the National Curriculum Programmes of Study delivered by each year group over the year. The medium-term consists of half-termly planning sheets that outlines the learning objectives to be taught. Short-term planning is taken from the half-term plans and details the key learning objectives and skills to be taught. At the end of each half-term the teachers analyse planning to identify what needs to be covered next, and copies of this are passed on to the receiving teacher at the end of the year to effectively support continuity and progression in pupils' learning. The high quality of this planning has a positive effect on standards attained by pupils throughout the school.

30 There is satisfactory provision for extra-curricular activities that include aerobics and football. Citizenship is offered as an after-school club in Year 4 and this is followed by the Mayor's award in Year 5, with almost all pupils availing themselves of these opportunities. This effectively prepares the pupils for the world outside school and supports them in becoming responsible citizens. The school gives pupils opportunity to take part in a variety of educational visits that enrich the curriculum by providing further significant learning experiences for pupils, such as trips to the Martin Mere Wildfowl Centre, a farm and a local supermarket. The school also makes good use of the local environment to enhance the pupils' work in history and geography. This was evident in a geography activity when pupils in Year 1 were discussing their findings after completing a traffic survey on St. Helens Road in terms of how to make it safer for them to use. There is also very good use made of Prescott Museum to significantly enhance pupils' work in history.

31 The school has made strong links with the community that make a very good contribution to pupils' learning. During preparation for their first communion, pupils are linked with an elderly person as a prayer partner and this effectively develops their knowledge and understanding of the important step that they are about to take. At harvest time the pupils are involved in making up food parcels for distribution to deserving members of the community and this helps them form an understanding of the needs of others. There are also very good links with the local secondary school and a higher education institution that ensure that pupils are very well prepared for the next stage of their education.

32 The school makes very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

33 The provision for pupils' spiritual development through the curriculum and acts of collective worship is very good, which represents an improvement since the last inspection. The school promotes this through the excellent opportunities for reflection given in assemblies and at other times of the day

in classrooms. All teachers value pupils' ideas and efforts and this is shown by the range of attractive displays of work around the school and in the classrooms. The act of collective worship, delivered by the headteacher, makes a very significant contribution to pupils' spiritual development, providing outstanding opportunities for pupils to listen to music, sing hymns and to pray and quietly reflect. In lessons, pupils learn to appreciate the wonders of the natural world and human achievement, as was seen in the excitement of children in the Reception class when they were making a wormery.

34 The school's provision for moral development is very good and it is a very orderly community in which the vast majority of pupils clearly know right from wrong. Moral themes feature in many aspects of the curriculum and are an integral part of the school ethos. Pupils are encouraged to develop good moral values through the behaviour policy and through the very good examples set by teachers. The staff effectively promotes a sense of fairness among pupils and is successful in teaching them to be tolerant of each other.

35 The provision for the social development of pupils is very good. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their actions and to work and play together with respect and tolerance. From the start of their time in school, pupils are provided with good social development opportunities, with the staff providing very good role models. They effectively teach the values of honesty, fairness and respect. The suitable range of extra-curricular activities effectively supports pupils' social development. They are keen to help with the day-to-day running of the school and willingly take on responsibility such as running the tuck shop and helping younger pupils at lunch times. Pupils listen to and respect the opinions of others. An excellent example of this was when pupils in Year 6 used role-play to debate the argument for and against building a hotel in a forest area. Pupils also undertake the Citizenship Award and Mayor's award, which promotes pupils' self-confidence as well as their knowledge and understanding of the world beyond the school.

36 The provision for the cultural development of pupils is satisfactory. Pupils learn to appreciate aspects of their own culture through meeting visitors, including poets, authors, theatre groups and musicians, such as a band from the local secondary school. They also have opportunity to visit places such as Prescott museum, the local library and secondary school, where pupils listened to a Russian Folk Orchestra. In their art lessons, pupils are able to learn about famous artists and the styles in which they paint. The last inspection report indicated that the pupils' awareness of the diverse nature of our society was underdeveloped.

37 Although pupils sample foods from other cultures, learn about life in other countries and ethnic traditions in lessons, they are still not given enough opportunities to effectively develop their knowledge and understanding of the diversity of cultures within our own society. This remains an area for improvement.

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

38 Procedures for child protection and ensuring pupils' welfare are good. The head teacher has received the appropriate training in child protection procedures and is known by other agencies as the designated person for the school. She attends case conferences as and when necessary and ensures all staff are aware of current practices and procedures. There are good procedures for dealing with accidents and emergencies. Emergency evacuations from the building and risk assessment are all well established in the school. Since the last inspection the school has developed a good Health & Safety Policy. However, school has yet to embrace procedures for the Care & Restraint legislation. The school encourages pupils to adopt a safe and healthy life style. For example, aerobics is a very popular after-school activity offered to pupils and they learn about personal safety and hygiene as part of their personal and social education. A satisfactory range of visitors, such as school nurse, police and fire service representatives are invited into school to support pupils' health and welfare. Mid-day

supervision is satisfactory. Staff are vigilant and some interact well with pupils. The mid-day supervisors have not yet received any formal training but are due to attend a course in the near future.

39 Pupils with special educational needs are given good support, enabling them to participate in all activities.

40 Attendance is good and there are good procedures for promoting and monitoring authorised and unauthorised absence and punctuality. The school works in partnership with the EWO, parents and pupils and any areas for concern are followed up. The vast majority of parents support the school by ensuring that their child attends regularly and on time.

41 Procedures for promoting and monitoring good behaviour are very good. The well-known system of rewards and sanctions is consistently applied throughout the school. Staff set high expectations in terms of the behaviour they expect, and they put a strong emphasis on self-discipline.

42 There are very good systems for assessing and monitoring individual pupils' attainment and the progress that they make as they pass through the school. This shows significant improvement since the last inspection. A whole-school system of assessment and record keeping has been put in place so that all pupils have individual profile sheets and assessment files that are used by teachers to determine pupils' levels of attainment and set targets for improvement. The senior management team analyses the optional and statutory tests to identify areas of weakness and then set manageable targets for improvement for groups and individual pupils. This system is to be further refined so that all members of staff will be able to take an active role in the process. The weekly planning sheets for English and mathematics include sections in which the teachers evaluate pupils' performance so that they can plan future learning experiences accordingly. Assessment information for pupils with special educational needs is also used effectively to plan future work. Baseline assessment is in place and the information from these assessments is used effectively to plan subsequent learning experiences. The school has a very good collection of pupils' work to serve as exemplars of the required standards in English and recognises the need to develop such collections for mathematics and science to ensure consistency between classes of the standards expected by teachers of pupils. The school has effective systems in place to monitor the achievements of different groups of pupils and as a result is able to effectively meet the needs of pupils of all abilities.

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

43 The school has developed a good and effective partnership with parents. Parents give good support through fund raising activities, accompanying school trips and in attending activities put on by the school. For example 98-99% of parents attend the parent/teacher sessions and class assemblies and concerts are extremely popular. Only a few parents help out in classes but those who do, provide good quality support, which is valued by the school.

44 Information to parents is good. There are regular letters that are friendly in tone, informative and timely. In addition, the school places information in the Parish Magazine, on posters and staff willingly make themselves available to speak with parents on an informal basis as often as possible. There are informal coffee mornings and afternoons in the school where parents can look at work and talk with staff. Information on curriculum and areas of study is sent out each half-term and parents have had the opportunity to attend presentations on both the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Before children start the school there are home visits and parents are given a 'Welcome Pack' which contains a home-link booklet for parents to write in and communicate with parents.

45 Pupils' annual reports have improved since the last inspection. It is clear that staff know pupils well; they identify strengths and weaknesses and give areas for development. Information to parents of pupils with special educational needs is good and statutory requirements for the review of statements of special educational need are fully met.



46 The majority of parents make a good contribution to their child's education and the life of the school. They support homework projects, ensure pupils attend regularly and on time and are equipped for lessons. However, only 58% of the home/school agreements have been signed and returned to the school.

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

47 Leadership of the school is very good. The head teacher provides clear educational direction and promotes high educational standards within a distinctively Catholic ethos. She has a thorough knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses and has the confidence of pupils, colleagues, governors and parents.

48 The good support provided by the senior management team contributes successfully to the smooth day-to-day running of the school and to its long-term development. The deputy head teacher provides very good pastoral support for colleagues and pupils. She successfully manages a full-time teaching commitment alongside very good leadership of English and good leadership of physical education.

49 The very good leadership and management of the school has been pivotal to the good progress that has been made since the last inspection, especially in improving standards in English, mathematics and science and in raising the quality of teaching generally. Almost all of the key issues identified in the last inspection have been fully addressed. Very effective leadership by the co-ordinators of English and mathematics has been instrumental to the successful implementation of the National Strategies for literacy and numeracy.

50 The governing body is very effective in fulfilling all of its statutory responsibilities. Governors have an appropriate structure of committees and keep each other fully informed of decisions taken. They are also kept well informed by the head teacher and several of them visit the school on a frequent basis. Therefore, through both formal and informal means governors have gained a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school.

51 The school makes good strategic use of its available resources. Governors have targeted money towards those areas identified for improvement within the very good quality school development plan. It makes clear the priority areas for improvement, personnel responsible and the resource costs. Governors are fully involved in the annual process of evaluating the progress made in each of the targets identified in the school development plan and in establishing new targets. Decisions taken in setting the budgets are appropriately taken in relation to the educational priorities; for example, in creating classes of pupils of a similar age. The school budget is closely monitored and the quality of the school's accountancy procedures was commended in the most recent audit report.

52 The school has very good procedures for monitoring, evaluating and developing teaching and for improving standards. In particular, the teaching of literacy and numeracy has been suitably monitored by the subject co-ordinators and this has led to the school improving its teaching in these subjects. This is already having a positive impact on standards, in particular in raising levels of attainment amongst the most able pupils. Similarly, the school makes good use of assessment data to improve standards of attainment.

53 Systems for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are very good. Staff present excellent role models for pupils and foster the very good relationships that are apparent in the school.

54 The management of special educational needs (SEN) is good. The co-ordinator for SEN has a sound working knowledge of the Code of Practice and ensures the SEN register is kept updated. The head teacher involves parents and outside agencies appropriately to support pupils' learning.

55 Staff levels are adequate and all are suitably deployed to promote pupils' learning. There is an appropriate balance of experienced teachers and those who are new to the profession. Discussions held termly between the head teacher and staff provide an appropriate opportunity for discussing future areas of development and for monitoring the work of co-ordinators. The school is highly committed to the continuing professional development of staff, as evidenced by its quest to achieve "Investors in People" status. The school has rightly identified the need to provide further training for the staff in order to raise their expertise in ICT. Over recent years, the school has continued to provide very good training for student teachers and in return has benefited from the excellent partnership established with a higher education establishment. General teaching assistants contribute significantly to the learning and progress made by the younger pupils and for those with statements of special educational needs. The school administration officer carries out her duties efficiently and effectively and presents a welcoming image of the school.

56 Resources are adequate in most areas of provision, apart from in design and technology where they are presently inadequate and in information and communication technology where additional software is required. Resources are bought by applying the principles of best value and staff make effective use of all the resources. However, the present arrangements of allocating the ICT resources principally to Years 5 and 6 result in pupils in other classes having insufficient access.

57 Governors have done all in their power to improve upon the situation created by pressure on the available space, including presenting a bid for additional classrooms. Nonetheless, in the meantime, difficulties are presented to teachers by the limitations of the building, especially in lessons involving practical work, such as investigative science in Years 3, 5 and 6. The very good organisational skills of teachers and the sensible behaviour of pupils, which are apparent in all lessons, help to mitigate the space problems. The constraints on classroom space have led to the distribution of the library stock to classes. This arrangement does not enable pupils to acquire the knowledge and skills of referencing within a centralised library. Teachers create stimulating learning areas and celebrate pupils' work through very attractive and effective displays. The building is kept remarkably clean by the caretaker and her staff, and is treated carefully by the pupils.

58 Given the relatively high income it receives and taking into account the very good teaching provided and above average standards attained by pupils, the school is providing good value for money.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In order to improve educational provision, the governors, head teacher and staff should:

1. Raise standards in information and communication technology (ICT) by;
  - a) increasing pupils' access to ICT especially for pupils in Key Stage 1 and in Years 3 and 4; (paragraphs 116, 118, 124)
  - b) enhancing software to support pupils' learning in other subjects, especially in mathematics and science; (paragraphs 91, 98)
  - c) developing teachers' subject knowledge; (paragraphs 118, 55)
  - d) monitoring the planning and teaching of ICT in all classes. (paragraph 121)
2. Provide a centralised library to enable pupils to develop skills of referencing and individual research. (paragraph 77)

Another area the governors may wish to include in their action plan:

The need to raise pupils' awareness of life in a multi-cultural society. (paragraph 37)

The school has already identified item 1. above as an area for improvement.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	48
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	19

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
8%	42%	27%	23%	0%	0%	0%

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	21	193
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	27

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	29

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	7
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	4

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.7
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		1999	13	13

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	12	12	13
	Girls	13	13	13
	Total	25	23	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	96 (96)	88 (93)	100 (100)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87(84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	12	13	12
	Girls	13	13	13
	Total	25	26	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	96 (97)	100 (100)	96 (100)
	National	82 (65)	86 (65)	87 (72)

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		1999	9	11

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	7	9
	Girls	11	9	11
	Total	19	16	20
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	95 (73)	80 (68)	100 (77)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	7	9
	Girls	11	9	11
	Total	19	16	20
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	95 (86)	80 (86)	100 (82)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (72)

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

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	164
Any other minority ethnic group	0

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

### ***Exclusions in the last school year***

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

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

### ***Teachers and classes***

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	27.6
Average class size	21

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	62.5

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	32.5

Number of pupils per FTE adult	10.5
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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	1999
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	£
Total income	354446
Total expenditure	347418
Expenditure per pupil	1738
Balance brought forward from previous year	19961
Balance carried forward to next year	26989

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	211
Number of questionnaires returned	49

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	76	20	0	4	0
My child is making good progress in school.	61	29	8	2	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	71	29	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	33	47	8	4	8
The teaching is good.	61	31	0	6	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	49	39	8	4	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	65	29	6	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	55	43	0	2	0
The school works closely with parents.	51	39	6	0	4
The school is well led and managed.	55	41	0	0	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	61	39	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	22	31	22	4	20

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

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

59 Pupils aged under five are prepared very well for entry into Key Stage 1. The school provides a very caring and stimulating environment for pupils. A range of first-hand experiences and well-chosen activities are offered within a broad and balanced curriculum that covers the required areas of learning and provides a smooth transition to the National Curriculum in Key Stage 1.

60 Most pupils have attained the expected levels of attainment upon entry to the nursery class in the key areas of language and mathematics and in all other areas of development. By the time pupils are ready to transfer to Key Stage 1, almost all have reached the standards expected for five-year-olds in language and literacy, mathematics and other areas of learning and many exceed these standards.

61 Pupils aged under five make very good progress in **language and literacy development** and the vast majority exceed the expected levels by the time they enter Key Stage 1. They listen to stories attentively, both in large and small groups. As a result of very good teaching in the nursery and reception classes, in which strong emphasis is given to improving pupils' language skills, pupils improve significantly on their initial vocabulary; for example, in a science lesson they learned the words "fair test, ramp, further". They develop increasing confidence to express their thoughts orally. In almost all cases, pupils' speaking and listening skills exceed the expected level. Reading and writing skills are established quickly and many pupils are beginning to read accurately from their reading books. The use of ICT is a motivating factor, which contributes to pupils' success in reading. Pupils develop a familiarity with and love of books for example; pupils in reception were able to predict the ending of the story of "The Runaway Chapatti" The teacher's provision of chapatti bread enabled pupils to gain first-hand experience and brought additional relevance to the text. This was enhanced by one of the follow-on tasks in which pupils were asked to model chapatti bread from play dough. The teacher asked the pupils to include "features" of a face in order to replicate the illustration on the book. Pupils know that the writer of a book is referred to as 'the author' and they are able to recognise pattern and rhyme in text. Pupils are able to use pictures to convey their understanding of the life cycle of a frog. A few higher attainers are able to spell accurately simple words and write short sentences such as, "I had a lot of fun on my holiday". Others, who are not yet at this stage of independence, copy under the teacher's writing.

62 As a result of very good teaching, pupils are making very good progress in **mathematical development** and almost all are on course to exceed expectations. Nursery pupils know the names of 2D shapes; for example, triangle, square and circle. Some very good teaching in the nursery class resulted in pupils being able to make reasonable estimates of distance, using arbitrary measures. Most pupils in reception are able to recognise numerals up to nine and can count reliably to 20. By the age of five, pupils are able to mentally double 3 and 4 and apply this skill in the context of money. They have a good knowledge of coin denominations and know there is no 8p or 11p coin. They can name 3D shapes such as a cone, cylinder, sphere and cube.

63 As a result of very good teaching, pupils are making good progress and most attain expected levels in their **knowledge and understanding of the world**. For example, following some very good teaching, pupils were able to successfully operate a "mouse" when using computers and even the youngest pupils in nursery were soon able to programme a moveable floor robot. In another lesson in the nursery, very good teaching resulted in pupils making rapid gains in their understanding of what constitutes a "fair test" in the context of testing how far cars travel down a ramp.

64 Good teaching enables pupils to make good progress in **physical development**, especially in the skills of fine motor control. They make good progress in developing their skills with writing tools,



especially pencil control, and in painting, as seen in their observational drawings of spring flowers. Pupils in the nursery can select and join materials to make vehicles, such as a fire engine. Pupils are able to exercise control of technological equipment, such as a computer “mouse”. Nursery and reception pupils listen well, follow instructions promptly, and behave safely within physical education lessons. Very good teaching encourages pupils to move imaginatively; for example, in mimicking a chicken walk. Nursery pupils can confidently walk along and jump from a bench. By the end of their time in reception, pupils’ attainment meets the expected level. They can walk, jump, hop and balance with appropriate control. Most can throw and catch a beanbag and ball.

65 Little observation was made of teaching within the **creative and aesthetic area of learning**. However, from the available evidence it is clear that pupils are given suitable opportunities to develop these skills to the expected level, especially within painting and drawing activities, such as still life pictures, involving use of chalk and pastels. In one brief observation of music making in the nursery, the pupils were able to identify several instruments and as a result of good resourcing enjoyed making their own contributions to the cacophony of sounds!

66 Pupils make very good progress and almost all exceed the expected levels in their **personal and social development**. Teaching is very good; pupils are encouraged to communicate with others, in a variety of contexts including whole class sessions, and in more intimate groupings, such as when playing a number game. Relationships amongst the pupils and between pupils and the adults are excellent pupils show increasing confidence when answering questions. In playing, pupils co-operate well with their peers, taking turns as necessary; for example when using large play equipment outside. They follow instructions and readily comply with class rules. When working alone, or in large groups, they behave well and sustain concentration. Almost all pupils manage independently to change their clothing before and after physical education lessons. Pupils carefully use school resources such as books and materials. During acts of prayer, pupils are reverent and participate appropriately.

67 The very good quality teaching that the pupils receive encourages them to develop academically, spiritually, personally and socially. The quality of teaching is at least good in all lessons and in most lessons, very good. Teaching of language and mathematics are particularly strong and result in pupils making very good progress in these areas of learning Teaching is purposeful and has clear learning outcomes. Lessons are very well planned for the needs of individual children and often imaginative. Resources, both human and material are used to maximum effect. Thorough initial assessments are made and the information gained is frequently updated to ensure that future learning is progressive. A key characteristic of the teaching of the pupils aged under five is the collaborative working of the two teachers allied to the very good support of the nursery nurse and the general teaching assistant (GTA). Their impressive teamwork ensures a consistent approach to the teaching and welfare of the pupils. Very warm relationships are evident. There is a happy atmosphere, which helps pupils to develop in all areas of learning. The quality of liaison between home and school is good and encourages the valuable support of parents. Pupils benefit greatly, especially in language development, from the small groupings made possible by the expertise of the nursery nurse and the GTA.

68 All resources are very well organised and accessible to children. Classrooms are also well organised and are enhanced by very impressive displays.

69 Co-ordination of the provision for under-fives is good. The experience, expertise and enthusiasm of the team contribute to the smooth running of the nursery and reception classes. At the last inspection, provision for children aged under five, in the nursery, was identified as a strength of the school. Despite a wholesale turnover of staff, provision for the under- fives remains a strength.

## ENGLISH

70 The results of the 1999 National Curriculum tests for 11-year-olds were very high in comparison with the national average and with similar schools. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher levels was also very high in comparison with the national average, which shows that the school

has improved the achievement of the higher-attaining pupils since the last inspection. Over the last three years standards have stayed well above the national average and have been improving. The attainment of pupils currently in Year 6 is well above the national expectations, which means that the school is on line to meet the suitably challenging targets that it has set for the current year.

71 The results of the 1999 National Curriculum tests for 7-year-olds were well above the national average in reading and writing. Over the last three years standards have stayed well above the national average and have been improving. In comparison with similar schools pupils' performance was also well above average in reading and writing. The attainment of the majority of pupils currently in Year 2 is well above the national expectations in reading and writing.

72 The quality of teaching is good in Key Stage 1 and very good in Key Stage 2. It varies from satisfactory to very good with the best teaching being at the start of Key Stage 1 and the middle and end of Key Stage 2. The teachers plan thoroughly in order to follow the structure of the Literacy Hour. In all aspects of the subject the teachers place a great deal of emphasis on the teaching of basic skills and they have high expectations of pupils' performance and of what they can achieve. Most teachers make very effective use of the introductions and the plenary sessions to develop pupils' speaking skills, which are very good through the school. There are many opportunities provided for pupils to be involved in class and group discussions, which successfully develop their ability to communicate their ideas in a clear and confident manner. An excellent example of this was when pupils in Year 6 used role-play to debate the argument for and against building a hotel in a forest area. Another very good example was in a lesson in Year 5, on the conventions of formal letter writing, in which the pupils very effectively discussed both sides of an argument. In these lessons the expertise of the teachers gave the pupils the opportunity and confidence to take full part in a class discussion that very effectively developed their communication skills. The pupils respond positively and are keen to show initiative and take responsibility during these activities. They are very well behaved, have good powers of concentration and a high work rate. The listening skills of most pupils are very good, which helps them to make relevant answers to the teachers' questions and to gain a good understanding of the work that they are to do.

73 The teaching of reading is of a high standard with the guided and shared reading sessions being used very effectively to develop pupils' skills in this aspect of the subject so that they can achieve to their full potential. This was evident in a guided reading session in Year 1 in which the teacher was very effectively cultivating the pupils' abilities to identify and explain the main features of a book. The standards in reading are very high with pupils showing very good ability to read accurately and confidently from texts suitable for their age. By the time that they are seven, pupils are able to use a good range of strategies to determine unfamiliar words, including the use of phonics. In Key Stage 2, most pupils demonstrate a very good ability to recount stories, express preferences in reading matter and to talk in an informed way about their favourite authors. The pupils in a Year 4 lesson, in which they were learning about the moral issues faced by characters in a book, showed that they can read expressively and with understanding. Pupils in Year 6 can speak knowledgeably about their favourite authors and the higher-attaining pupils are able to read demanding texts and evaluate them with reference to stories by different authors. However, the poor library provision means that pupils are unable to develop, to an appropriate level, their library and individual research skills. The school is currently seeking ways of providing a central library area to improve this aspect of pupils' learning in the subject.

74 There are many opportunities for pupils to write in a variety of forms across the curriculum and standards are very good in both key stages. In Key Stage 1, most pupils are able to use an interesting range of vocabulary and show an awareness of the reader in their writing. Many pupils are able to write a sequence of sentences and punctuate them accurately, with simple words spelled correctly. Pupils in Year 2 showed a good ability to identify and use a variety of words to write a range of questions. In Key Stage 2, pupils show very good skills in writing extended narratives and using increasingly complex sentence structures and more difficult punctuation skills. Most pupils' writing is grammatically correct. Pupils draft and edit their work very successfully and they are able to use dictionaries and other reference materials to good effect to help them in their learning. The pupils in

Year 5 showed a good knowledge and understanding of the conventions of formal letter writing. In a very good lesson in Year 6, on identifying the features of 'cinquain' poetry, the pupils showed a very good ability to be able to write their own poems and contrast them with other types of poetry. Pupils' handwriting and presentational skills are very good with a legible joined script started in Key Stage 1 and suitably developed and refined through Key Stage 2. By the time that they are eleven, most pupils show a clear, legible and neat cursive style of writing. There is suitable use made of information and communication technology by pupils, especially in Years 5 and 6, to word-process their stories and poems.

75 There is very effective use made of pupils' literacy skills across all subjects. In many mathematics lessons the pupils have appropriate opportunities to develop these skills when reading questions and then discussing and explaining their strategies for finding solutions before writing their answers. Similar evidence is seen in science lessons when pupils often hypothesise and discuss their results before writing detailed reports of their investigations. In geography and history lessons, pupils were seen to confidently write formal letters to express their opinions on the ideas they were exploring. Within these activities, the pupils with special educational needs are fully involved and they make good progress in their learning in all aspects of their work in English.

76 The long and medium-term planning for English follows the framework of the National Literacy Strategy and is effective in ensuring progression and continuity of pupils' learning through the school. Since the last inspection, the school has improved its procedures for assessing and monitoring individual pupils' attainment and progress, and these systems are now very good. A whole-school system of assessment and record keeping has been put in place so that all pupils have individual profile sheets and assessment files that are used by teachers to determine pupils' levels of attainment and set targets for improvement. The senior management team analyses the optional and statutory tests in English to identify areas of weakness and then set manageable targets for improvement for groups and individual pupils. As a result of this analysis, additional time has been allocated outside the Literacy Hour to further develop pupils' skills in extended story writing. The weekly planning sheets include sections in which the teachers evaluate pupils' performance. This enables them to plan future learning experiences accordingly. The school has a very good collection of pupils' work to serve as exemplars of the required standards in English to ensure consistency between classes of the standards expected by teachers of pupils. The school has effective systems in place to monitor the achievements of different groups of pupils and, as a result, is able to effectively meet the needs of pupils of all abilities. These improvements have enabled teachers to more effectively challenge the higher-attaining pupils. As a result, the percentage of pupils achieving higher levels has risen significantly since the last inspection.

77 The leadership of the subject is very good. The co-ordinator is able to effectively monitor the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school. The accommodation, in terms of the library provision, is poor and hinders pupils' acquisition of library referencing and independent research skills. There is an adequate range of resources for English with good quality books being provided for the Literacy Hour lessons.

## **MATHEMATICS**

78 The school's 1999 test results for 11-year-olds are above average both when compared to all schools nationally and when compared to schools of a similar nature. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher level (National Curriculum Level 5) is close to the average when compared nationally and against similar schools. In recent years, the school's results have remained above the national average and scrutiny of work from Year 6 pupils confirm that standards are above average.

79 The school's 1999 test results for 7-year-olds are well above average both when compared to all schools nationally and when compared to similar schools. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher level (National Curriculum Level 3) is well above the national average and that of similar

schools. Over the last three years, standards have remained well above the national average and have been improving. Scrutiny of work from Year 2 pupils confirms the standards of last year's test results.

80 Significant improvements have been made since the previous inspection, particularly with regard to the issue of underachievement of high ability pupils. The school has successfully addressed this issue through introducing an effective whole school system of record keeping and assessment. The school's successful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy (NNS) has also helped to raise standards for pupils of all levels of ability.

81 Teaching in both Key Stage 1 and 2 is very good and results in pupils making very good gains in their acquisition of knowledge, skills and understanding. The positive approach adopted by teachers, together with lessons that are planned very carefully, contribute significantly to the interest and enthusiasm that pupils show towards mathematics. Throughout the school, pupils' behaviour and concentration are very good, and are exemplary in Years 5 and 6.

82 During Key Stage 1, pupils are successfully introduced to basic number facts and operations, such as addition and subtraction, and to the concept of multiplication and division. In a Year 1 lesson, pupils made rapid gains in their mental manipulation of money. The task was enhanced by the teacher providing the pupils with real money, thus bringing additional relevance and purpose to their work. As a result, pupils showed competence in mentally adding coins to 10p. Some higher-attainers in Year 1 are able to mentally double nine and add amounts to 20p. Pupils in Year 2 are developing their skills with greater amounts of money, i.e. up to £1. As a result of very good teaching in a Year 2 lesson, again augmented by pupils' use of real coins, very good learning took place.

83 In all lessons in Key Stage 1, the teacher's enthusiasm, well prepared and appropriately chosen activities, contribute to the enjoyment and very good behaviour of pupils.

84 By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have successfully learned to mentally manipulate numbers to at least 20. They understand the concept of reflective symmetry in shapes and can divide shapes into halves and quarters.

85 Pupils in Key Stage 2 further develop their mental and written computational skills and increase their mathematical vocabulary. In a Year 3 lesson, satisfactory teaching led to pupils making sound gains in the skill of adding pairs of two digit numbers. The teacher's clear guidance enabled pupils to identify key words within written problems involving money. Pupils were able to make appropriate use of calculators to self-check their work. As a result of good teaching, pupils in a Year 4 lesson made good gains in their ability to identify key words; for example "total", within more complex sentences involving addition and subtraction of up to three sets of two digit numbers. A notable feature of this lesson was the sensitive and effective support given to the lower-attaining pupils. In a Year 5 lesson in which the quality of teaching was excellent, pupils made very good gains in their understanding of frequency tables and developed very good skills in constructing graphs to illustrate the outcomes of tossing two dice. The teacher placed great emphasis upon pupils' acquisition of associated vocabulary such as "frequency, tally, and axis" etc. Excellent use was made of ICT to enhance pupils' learning. The selected website provided highly appropriate material to reinforce the concepts and skills introduced in the teacher's exposition. The teacher's high expectation of pupils' mature behaviour and capacity to work collaboratively, were well justified and rewarded by pupils' response. Similarly, excellent teaching was seen in Year 6 resulting in very good learning and an exemplary response from pupils. The most notable amongst many high quality features of this teaching was the teacher's logically structured exposition, very effective use of resources, and searching questioning. The combination of these factors enabled pupils to secure and deepen their understanding of ratio.

86 By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have acquired above average skills of mental manipulation of numbers; for example, almost all can calculate the difference between 7.33 and 7.4. They have a good understanding of the interrelationship between decimals, fractions and percentages, and can readily apply their skills with the four rules of number. Pupils have gained a clear understanding of probability

and of data handling. In shape and space work, pupils can: classify rotational symmetry; identify and name the special angles and triangles; and calculate, by use of formulae, the area of complex shapes. In all lessons seen in Year 5 and 6, the excellent relationships and high quality dialogue between teachers and pupils were instrumental to the high quality of work produced by pupils.

87 Throughout the school, pupils with special needs and those who are highly able are well provided for. This is mainly due to the accurate assessments made by teachers that provide them with the requisite information upon which future work is planned according to need. Additionally, those pupils who have statements of special educational need are well supported by the very effective additional help of general teaching assistants.

88 The introduction of the NNS has been very successful and is already beginning to raise pupils' competence to recall and manipulate number and to explain their strategies. Written computations are accurately completed and particularly well presented, manifesting the pride that pupils take in their work. Pupils are able to use and apply their numeracy skills in other subjects, particularly in science; for example in conversion graphs.

89 In many lessons, collaborative working contributes significantly to the very good provision made for pupils' social development as well as reinforcing mathematical learning. Similarly, the emphasis placed upon pupils giving oral explanations contributes to the development of pupils' speaking and listening skills.

90 Very good subject leadership has resulted in the very successful introduction of the NNS. The enthusiasm, expertise and commitment of the co-ordinator have enabled her to fulfil her role admirably. The role has been enhanced since the last inspection to include monitoring of colleagues' teaching and plans and pupils' work, all of which have contributed to raise standards.

91 At present, there is some excellent use of ICT to support mathematics in Year 5 and 6, but elsewhere in Key Stage 1 and 2 pupils do not have sufficient access to ICT. Furthermore, there is a need to acquire more software and to enhance teachers' expertise in ICT. Both areas for development have been identified by the co-ordinator.

## **SCIENCE**

92 Pupils' levels of attainment by the ages of seven and eleven are above average. This represents an improvement from the last inspection when standards were in line with the national average for pupils at the end of both key stages. There has been an improvement in the numbers of pupils attaining National Curriculum Level 3 and Level 5, and these are now in line with those of similar schools for Level 3 and, with 20% of pupils attaining Level 5, almost in line for pupils at the end of Key Stage 2.

93 In both key stages the work that pupils do is based, quite extensively, on investigation and experimentation. As a result, pupils have a good understanding of the need to conduct experiments carefully and with due regard for the need to employ the principles of fair testing. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are able to observe very carefully and to form hypotheses based on a good knowledge and understanding of the topic they are studying.

94 Throughout both key stages, pupils' presentation and written work is of a high standard with good handwriting and clear and well-drawn diagrams. Higher-attaining pupils, in both key stages, present work of a very high standard and well above average. Throughout the school science books are very well cared for and a credit to the pupils.

95 Teaching is good in both key stages. Lessons are well planned to ensure that knowledge and understanding is gained through investigation and experimentation and the attainment targets of the

National Curriculum are well covered. This represents a significant improvement from the last inspection report when the coverage of the National Curriculum was found to be uneven. In lessons observed, teachers use good subject knowledge to present the work in an interesting and exciting fashion. Very good links are made with other areas of the curriculum, as, for example, in a Year 6 lesson where an understanding of food technology was linked to scientific knowledge and understanding of micro-organisms, i.e. yeast. Teachers use a good range of classroom management and teaching strategies, controlling and motivating pupils very well.

96 As a result of these well organised and interesting lessons, pupils' learning is good. Throughout both key stages they are interested, concentrating for long periods; they behave very well, and are able to organise themselves. Pupils of all ages listen to each other very well and are able to express themselves confidently and to put forward ideas and hypotheses.

97 The co-ordination of science is good and there has been an improvement in this area since the last inspection. The policy and scheme of work have been reviewed and updated and the co-ordinator has introduced a planning format, which has ensured more even coverage of the topics to be studied. The co-ordinator effectively monitors pupils' work and reviews colleagues' plans on a regular basis. As a result, she has a clear view of standards and pupils' progress, as well as being able to gain a view of how well the science National Curriculum is being covered.

98 Resources for the teaching of science are good overall. They are very well stored and ordered, enabling teachers to access them easily. In Years 5 and 6 pupils use ICT as an integral part of science learning. This is considerably enhanced by the good level of hardware available to the pupils in these classes. However, the use of ICT in science is inhibited, even in these classes, by a shortage of suitable software. In other areas of the school it is very difficult for teachers to ensure that ICT is used in science lessons because of the high ratio of pupils to each computer. Despite teachers' intentions, it is only possible for pupils to use computers for short periods of time and it is therefore difficult for pupils to develop the necessary skills.

99 The small size of some classrooms makes it very difficult to teach some of the aspects of experimental and investigative work. The current Year 6 classroom is especially small and it is difficult for pupils to move around the room and to have the space to get their own equipment and set up investigations. This difficulty is mainly overcome and safe working maintained through very good teaching and exceptional organisation, but, despite this, the accommodation still places pupils at a disadvantage, especially in developing independent learning and research skills.

## **ART**

100 During the inspection week only a small number of art lessons in both key stages were observed. However, there is a considerable amount of good quality art-work on display in all areas of the school, including all classrooms. From this, and from talking to teachers and pupils about art and their work, it is evident that the subject has a strong and secure place in the school curriculum and that standards, by the end of both key stages, are at least in line with national expectations.

101 By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have studied the work of, amongst others, Monet, Klee, and Cezanne, and have experienced a range of media including paints, using wax resists, clay and collage work. The majority of displayed work of Key Stage 1 pupils is of a standard which is above national expectation.

102 In Key Stage 2, pupils have extended their knowledge of artists and have studied Kandinski, Lowry and Constable. The range of two and three-dimensional work has been extended and there is clear development of pupils' ability to observe and to sketch. Attainment for the majority of pupils by the end of Key Stage 2 is at least in line with national expectations and for many above.

103 Teaching is satisfactory in both Key Stages 1 and 2. In the lessons seen, teaching was well planned and resourced, with good teacher knowledge of the topics. Teachers use a good range of strategies in their lessons and ensure that lessons are conducted at a good pace and that appropriately high standards are set for pupils. Teachers put a considerable effort into displaying their pupils' work and this strongly enhances the subject as well as setting standards and celebrating pupils' achievements. This is a very strong aspect of the school's artwork. A number of teachers introduce computer artwork into their lessons.

104 The co-ordinator has only recently taken over the responsibility for art. Since the last inspection there has been a considerable improvement in the overall organisation. At time of the last inspection there was no policy for art or scheme of work and the coverage of the national curriculum was uneven. A policy and scheme have been introduced, the curriculum has been reviewed, and the co-ordinator has opportunities to view all her colleagues planning and so gain a clear view of what is being covered by each class. The school is aware of a need to further develop three-dimensional work and increase the use of ICT and art in some classes. In a Year 6 lesson pupils were studying aboriginal art, but overall there is a shortage of a multi-cultural perspective in the work on display and that pupils do.

105 Resources are satisfactory overall and good for working in two dimensions. There is an adequate range of teacher resources and reference materials, with the exception of examples of multi-cultural art. The small size of some classrooms inhibits the range and size of the artwork that can be undertaken. This is especially evident in the Year 5 and Year 6 classrooms where space is very limiting.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

106 Design and technology (DT) and art are grouped together in the school curriculum and during the inspection week most classes were time-tabled for art lessons. As a result, it was not possible to observe design and technology lessons and to make a judgement about the quality of teaching and pupils' response for this subject. Most of the pupils' work displayed is art but there are some examples of DT in some classrooms. However, from discussions with the co-ordinator and with teachers and pupils, it is clear that the subject has a secure place in the curriculum and that pupils get appropriate experience in DT.

107 In most classes DT is linked with the work of other subjects, as in Year 6 where science investigations into microorganisms were conducted through yeast development. Here the teacher made appropriate links with food technology and bread production. Pupils made bread, developing skills in handling ingredients with an understanding, gained through the science lesson, of how the yeast would cause the bread to rise. Similarly, and also in Year 6, pupils used scientific knowledge and understanding of levers and mechanisms when they designed and made a model theatre, and their knowledge of electrical circuits when designing and making a quiz game.

108 The area is efficiently co-ordinated and organised and a clear policy in place. The school has adopted the QCA scheme of work to guide teachers in their lesson planning and to ensure that the school meets the requirements of the National Curriculum for DT.

109 Resources are poor. The school is short of resources, and especially tools, for design and making activities and as a result there are only limited opportunities for pupils to work with more resistant materials.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

110 Due to timetabling arrangements there was opportunity to observe only two lessons and as a result there is insufficient evidence on which to make a secure judgement on standards attained or the quality of teaching in the subject.

111 The teaching in the two lessons, for pupils in Year 6 and Year 1, was of a high quality. In both lessons the teachers were very well prepared, showed good subject knowledge and used questioning skilfully to develop pupils' understanding of the ideas being taught. Very good use was made of pupils' literacy skills in both lessons. The Year 1 lesson made good use of the local environment to develop the pupils' understanding of how to make St.Helens Road a safer place for road users and pedestrians. This is a good example of how, since the last inspection, the school has improved its use of the local area to support pupils' work in the subject.

112 The main areas for development are to improve the use of information and communication technology in the subject and to finalise the scheme of work.

## **HISTORY**

113 By the time that they are eleven the pupils achieve suitable standards in the subject and have made good progress in their learning. During their time in Key Stage 1 pupils are helped to develop their understanding of time by listening to stories about the past and of famous people. Previous learning is consolidated by the use of books, photographs and historical artefacts. This was evident in a lesson for pupils in Year 2 in which they were using a variety of information books to find out about castles. They learn how to use evidence to find out about the past and how things change over a period of time. There is not enough evidence on which to make a secure judgement on teaching in Key Stage 1 but in Key Stage 2 the quality of teaching is good, especially in the middle and end of the key stage. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and are able to organise and manage their classes well. Good emphasis is placed on the significance of historical artefacts and the need to study them in order to find out about the past. This was seen in a good lesson in Year 5 in which pupils were able to study a variety of artefacts to find out about life for children in Victorian times. Pupils in Year 3 were able to study a variety of Viking artefacts to help them learn about this period of history. These resources are provided by the Prescott Museum, with which the school has very good links. In a good lesson for pupils in Year 4, about the life of Boudicca, the teacher used questioning very effectively to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of the different ways people interpret and represent history. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and they also make good progress in their learning about history. Pupils show good skills in using research and investigation to support their work in history and are able to apply previous learning by contributing useful information to class discussions, as seen in the Year 5 lesson on life in Victorian times. The pupils in Year 6 show a good understanding of the changes that have occurred in Britain since the Second World War. In terms of using their literacy skills, pupils are provided with suitable opportunities to engage in open-ended research and produce sustained independent writing. Through the school, the teachers make limited use of information and communication technology to enhance pupils' work in the subject.

114 Pupils are well behaved, polite and courteous. They show interest and enjoyment in their work and are very willing to listen to the views and ideas of others. Pupils handle historical artefacts and resources with care and take great pride in their work.

115 There is good leadership of the subject by a co-ordinator whose good subject knowledge helps her to effectively monitor the quality of education through the school. There has been improved use of the local area, since the last inspection, especially in the links with the Prescott Museum, which is having a positive effect on standards attained in the subject. As well as using its historical artefacts, the school has recently been involved with the museum in a project called 'Shopaholics' that has effectively developed the pupils' knowledge and understanding about shopping past and present in Prescott.



## INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

116 The school has made considerable advances in the provision of computers and networking since the last inspection. The overall number of computers gives the school a computer-to-pupil ratio which is now in line with the average ratio found in schools across the country. The computers in Year 5 and 6 classrooms are networked and the rest of the school is wired to extend the network in the near future. The ICT provision in these two classrooms has had a very positive effect on pupils' standards of attainment. However, focusing resources in older pupils' classrooms does mean that although other classes have a computer in each room, the pupils in Key Stage 1, and classes 3 and 4 of Key Stage 2, have a computer-to-pupil ratio which is far less favourable and unsatisfactory.

117 As a result, the level of pupils' attainment by the end of Key Stage 2 is in line with the national standards, but is below the expected level by the end of Key Stage 1 and at the beginning of Key Stage 2.

118 Especially towards the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils are very confident in the use of word processors and are able to mix text and graphics from a variety of sources. A number of pupils have levels of skill and understanding of the software which are well above the nationally expected levels and they are very competent in using the package. Teachers plan for the use of ICT in some lessons, and, especially in Years 5 and 6, where there is good access to computers, this is very effective. Here teachers plan very well for a variety of aspects of using ICT as an integral part of the curriculum and of subjects. ICT is taught well as a part of English, mathematics and science, as well as other subjects. However, in most classes it is difficult for teachers to provide pupils with enough opportunities to develop the required skills in the use of ICT to meet the requirements of the national curriculum. The further enhancement of teacher skills in the use of ICT is an aspect in which the school made considerable strides. However, there remain some areas for further development before all staff will be completely confident in ensuring that pupils have experience in using ICT in the areas outlined in the National Curriculum.

119 Data handling is carried out very effectively in a variety of subjects including mathematics and science. Here pupils use spreadsheets to record and present data, often in graphical form.

120 During the inspection there were many occasions throughout the day when pupils did not use computers. This was partly as a result of the school's implementation of national strategies for numeracy and literacy and increased pressure on timetable time.

121 The co-ordination of information and communication technology is very good. The co-ordinator has developed guidance for colleagues; a new ICT policy has been written and the school has adopted the QCA scheme of work for ICT. Systems for the assessment of pupils' work and levels of attainment are in place and information from this is being used by teachers in their lesson planning. The co-ordinator regularly reviews all colleagues' plans for the use of ICT and also monitors pupils' work. Each half-term there is a staff meeting to monitor pupils' work and staff planning sheets, and to review standards and progress. The school recognises the need to extend the current monitoring practice to include observation of the teaching of ICT throughout the school.

122 The co-ordinator has attended courses to improve her own knowledge and understanding and has led INSET courses for colleagues in the school. As a result, overall teachers' confidence in the use of IT whilst in need of boosting, is improving.

123 The school has made considerable strides in the development of ICT provision. The school is part of the National Grid for Learning (NGFL) and is linked to the internet. All computers are up-to-date machines and are linked to a range of devices including colour and laser printers, scanners and a digital camera; data sensing equipment is available and a floor turtle is used for work on control. Year 5 and 6 pupils make good use of the internet for researching topics and finding information. The school

has an effective structure for ensuring that pupils' access to the internet is agreed with parents and that pupils use the access responsibly.

124 Although there is some way to go with the development of ICT across the school, and an improvement is needed in pupils' standards and access to the use of ICT, the school has made considerable progress since the last inspection. Although not all issues previously reported have been met in full, most have.

## **MUSIC**

125 Due to timetabling arrangements there was opportunity to observe only three lessons and as a result there is insufficient evidence on which to make a secure judgement on standards attained or the quality of teaching in the subject.

126 In the lesson for pupils in Year 2 the teacher showed secure subject knowledge by the way she was able to use correct musical vocabulary to explain to the pupils what they were to do. As a result, the pupils were able to keep rhythm using musical instruments and by clapping. In the other two lessons, taken by peripatetic teachers, on developing singing technique, the pupils were able to develop their breathing to be able to hold onto a note when singing a variety of songs. In these lessons and the school assemblies, the pupils in both key stages sang clearly, tunefully and with enthusiasm and most of them responded well to music. The last inspection report indicated that the pupils had little opportunity to develop the skills of composing and that this aspect was under-represented. The school has not improved the provision for pupils to develop their skills of composition and this area is still underdeveloped. Currently, there is no instrumental tuition available but from September 2000 teachers from the Knowsley Performing Arts Team will be delivering lessons in guitar and keyboard for pupils in Year 3.

127 The provision for music is enhanced by the work of two peripatetic teachers from the Knowsley Performing Arts Team who come into school on a regular basis to develop the pupils' singing ability. Pupils are given opportunity to take part in a range of musical performances in the school such as at Harvest festival, Easter Mass and Leavers' Mass. There is adequate resource provision in terms of untuned instruments. However, the is a lack of tuned instruments inhibits pupils' opportunities to develop their skills in this aspect of the subject.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

128 On the evidence of the two lessons observed in each of Key Stage 1 and 2 pupils' attainment meets the nationally expected levels.

129 Pupils in Key Stage 1 know that exercise has an effect on their bodies. By using their feet, they are able to control and pass a ball with an appropriate level of control. A few high-attaining pupils in Year 1 showed particular adroitness in these basic skills of football. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils, working in pairs, are able to throw quoits and balls accurately and catch them reasonably successfully.

130 Pupils in Key Stage 2 have a good knowledge of health-related fitness. In Year 5, pupils are able to show good levels of skill in balancing both on the floor and when using apparatus. They work imaginatively when traversing apparatus and show good application of skills within a sequence of gymnastic moves. Some high-attaining pupils are able to take weight on hands when performing inverted balances.

131 By the end of Key Stage 2, all pupils have learned to swim to at least the standard required by the National Curriculum and almost half exceed this standard. Pupils are able to work collaboratively to overcome the physical challenge of an obstacle course. Whilst working under the constraints of time pupils are able to apply a variety of physical movements within the context of effective teamwork.

132 Teaching in Key Stage 1 is good overall. In a Year 1 lesson very good teaching enabled pupils to make very good gains in their control and passing skills with a football. Pupils' very good behaviour and co-operation resulted from firm class control, based upon consistent application of rules, and warm relationships with the teacher. The teacher set a brisk pace that kept pupils' interest. By increasing the level of challenge within appropriately chosen tasks, she was able to develop pupils' skills. In a Year 2 lesson, sound teaching resulted in pupils making satisfactory gains in their throwing and catching skills.

133 Teaching in Key Stage 2 is very good overall. Pupils in a Year 5 lesson demonstrated very good gymnastic skills, with many showing confidence and skill on apparatus. The teachers' good subject knowledge enabled her to make clear and effective teaching points. She made timely and appropriate interventions in order to draw pupils' attention to the performance of others; thus developing their observational and evaluative skills. In a Year 6 lesson, excellent teaching enabled pupils to collaborate to solve the problems of crossing an obstacle course. This task was highly successful in extending pupils physically, individually and socially. The most notable feature of teaching in this lesson was the teacher's justifiably high expectations for the pupils. On the evidence of both lessons in this key stage, it is evident that there are excellent relationships and mutual respect between teachers and pupils. This underpins the excellent and unobtrusive control teachers have of their classes. Both lessons provided excellent contributions to pupils' social development. Pupils demonstrate mature behaviour and attitudes and work readily and sensibly in mixed gender groups.

134 Subject leadership is good. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and has attended several relevant courses. She has raised colleagues' expertise and confidence by giving demonstration lessons in gymnastics. She acknowledges the need to develop a simple system for recording pupils' progress in the subject.

135 Accommodation is adequate but the teaching of games skills in the hall would be enhanced by the marking of lines on the floor. Extra-curricular provision of aerobics and football is well attended and contributes to pupils' personal and physical development. On the evidence of the two lessons observed in each of Key Stage 1 and 2 pupils' attainment meets the nationally expected levels.