

# INSPECTION REPORT

**ST. LUKE'S C.E. PRIMARY SCHOOL**  
Salford

LEA area : Salford

Unique Reference Number : 105930  
School inspection number : 190967

Headteacher : Mr L P Duffy

Reporting inspector : Mrs Sonja Oyen  
7167

Dates of inspection : 1<sup>st</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> November 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 706787

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school : Primary

Type of control : Voluntary controlled

Age range of pupils : 3 to 11

Gender of pupils : Mixed

School address : Eccles New Road  
Weaste  
Salford  
M5 2NX

Telephone number : 0161 736 3455

Fax number : 0161 736 3455

Appropriate authority : Governing body

Name of chair of governors : Rev D K Archer

Date of previous inspection : April 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mrs Sonja Oyen, RgI	Art Music Religious education	Attainment and progress Teaching Leadership and management Efficiency Equal opportunities Children under the age of five
Mr Keith Hepworth, Lay inspector	Swimming	Attendance Support, guidance and pupils' welfare Partnership with parents and the community Staffing, accommodation and learning resources
Mr David Marshall	Mathematics Science Design and technology Physical education	Attitudes, behaviour and personal development Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
Mr Henry Moreton	English Information technology Geography History	Curriculum and assessment Special educational needs

The inspection contractor was:

Schoolhaus Ltd  
Riverbank  
Station Road  
Old Ollerton  
Nr Newark  
Nottinghamshire

Tel : 01623 825542

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## MAIN FINDINGS

### What the school does well

- When compared with schools with a similarly high number of pupils eligible for free school meals, standards in English and mathematics are above the average at the end of Key Stage 1 and 2, and in science at Key Stage 1.
- Standards in reading are good at Key Stage 1. The 1999 national test results place the school in the top five per cent of similar schools.
- Good teaching in science, especially by the co-ordinator, is raising standards in investigative work.
- Pupils' skills in physical education are good. The school does well in sports.
- Children under five settle well and make good progress in getting on with others.
- St Luke's is a caring school where relationships are good and the pupils are valued as individuals.
- The school fosters honesty, fairness and respect for others. Pupils know right from wrong.
- The school makes good use of its strong links with the community to enhance the curriculum.

### Where the school has weaknesses

- I. At the end of Key Stage 2, many pupils do not reach the standard expected for their age in English, mathematics and science. Pupils' writing skills are low compared with similar schools.
- II. Standards in information technology are well below those expected nationally and the information technology curriculum does not meet fully National Curriculum requirements.
- III. Attendance is well below the national average.
- IV. Given the low class sizes, the teachers give too little attention to the needs of individuals. Their expectations of what pupils can do are not high enough and not all pupils are making the progress they could.
- V. Pupils have too few opportunities to organise their own learning and to be involved in the day-to-day running and management of the school.
- VI. At Key Stages 1 and 2 much available space is unused. The shared areas are poorly organised and offer little to

attract pupils' interest or to structure their learning.

VII.

The governing body does not meet fully its legal responsibilities.

• The school's strengths outweigh the weaknesses. The above weaknesses will form the basis of the governors' action plan which will be sent in due course to all parents or guardians of pupils at the school.

• **How the school has improved since the last inspection**

Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory. The 1996 inspection identified two key issues with a total of seven recommendations. The sudden death of a teacher and staff changes meant the school took several terms to put a programme of action in place. Improvement has been slow to start. Since 1996, standards have risen in English, mathematics and science. The work by the science co-ordinator to analyse test results and to encourage more practical work has raised standards and also offered "children more opportunities for independent work" and "more opportunities for discussion and collaborative work". This now serves as a structure for work in other areas. Subject co-ordinators are actively monitoring the provision in their subjects and are beginning to monitor the quality of teaching. Assessment procedures have been restructured and teachers are using observations and evaluations to help them plan in the short term. In too many lessons however, class teaching does not provide "learning activities which are adjusted for children's differing capabilities".

Several current inspection findings echo the issues raised in 1996. The school is only just "getting to grips" (quotation from a governor) with school improvement issues. The school has invested time and money in staff development particularly in looking at teaching styles and strategies. This has yet to have an impact on teaching throughout the school. Staff still lack confidence in deciding how to manage the resources and space available to them. The willingness and enthusiasm of staff to move the school forward indicates the school is in a sound position to continue to improve.

**Standards in subjects**

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds in 1999 based on the National Curriculum tests:

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

Standards in English, mathematics and science are lower than the national average. In English, pupils' poorer writing skills lower the overall standard. However, when compared with similar schools, standards are good and very good in mathematics. Standards are higher than they were in 1996. In 1999, for the first time, a number of pupils did well for their age in all three subjects. In science this high attainment was as good as seen in all schools nationally and a significant achievement for the school as the Year 6 class had a high number of pupils with special educational needs, including two pupils with statements.

Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 are above the average when compared with similar schools in science and well above in mathematics and reading. In the reading test in 1999, pupils' attainment overall was similar to



the top five per cent of similar schools. In writing however, attainment is below average.

Standards in information technology are well below those expected for pupils' ages. At the end of Key Stage 1 standards are low and they are poor at the end of Key Stage 2. Most pupils have only rudimentary skills in using the computer and other equipment.

At both key stages, pupils' attainment in religious education is in line with that outlined in the Salford Agreed Syllabus.

Pupils' skills and competence in physical education are good. A significant number are skilled in handling a ball and school teams do well in football and netball competitions.

The children start in the nursery with below average skills and knowledge for their age. They make good progress in personal and social development. By the end of the reception year, many pupils have attained most of the Desirable Learning Outcomes in the six areas of learning but a small number, more often boys, have still some way to go to attain the standard expected nationally in language and literacy and mathematics.

· **Quality of teaching**

<b>Teaching in:</b>	<b>Under 5</b>	<b>5 – 7 years</b>	<b>7 – 11 years</b>
English	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Mathematics	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Science		Good	Satisfactory
Information Technology		Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Religious education		Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Other subjects	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

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

· The quality of teaching is satisfactory in 95 per cent of lessons. It is good in 41 per cent and very good in three per cent. The quality of teaching at Key Stages 1 and 2 is very similar although there is occasional unsatisfactory teaching in mathematics and information technology at Key Stage 2. For children under five, the teaching is at least satisfactory and good in many lessons, especially in the nursery.

· Teacher’s high expectations of pupils and effective questioning, especially at Key Stage 1 and by the co-ordinator, have helped to raise standards especially in investigative work. Teachers’ coaching and structured teaching of skills in physical education enable the pupils to make good progress. Good specialist teaching in music is providing a good model for class teachers to follow.

· **Other aspects of the school**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Behaviour	Satisfactory; pupils generally behave well but many are easily distracted and quick to become restless. Many are slow to respond to instructions. A few pupils, more often boys, find it hard to conform.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory; below the national average. Attendance rates are lowered by an increasing number of pupils on holiday in term time and by those who leave the area without informing the school.
Ethos*	Satisfactory; the school is caring and supportive – the pupils are willing to work especially when there is something that catches their interest. The school is setting targets to raise standards.
Leadership and management	Satisfactory; the headteacher is committed to the pupils and staff; subject co-ordinators are growing into their role and beginning to have a positive effect on curriculum improvement. The governing body does not meet its responsibilities fully in carrying out procedures and in the content of its report to parents. .
Curriculum	Satisfactory; subject reviews are giving better progression in content and the development of skills as well as knowledge; the curriculum for information technology does not meet fully National Curriculum requirements. A good range of extra curricular activities extends pupils' curriculum experience. A new assessment system is being trialled but there are few records of the on-going development of pupils' skills.
Pupils with special educational needs	Curriculum provision is good. Small class sizes allow teachers to work more closely with pupils but occasionally the work is not well matched to their needs.
Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Satisfactory overall; the good provision in moral development from the nursery onwards ensures that pupils are aware of right and wrong.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Satisfactory overall; the high number of teachers keeps class sizes small; the nursery and school are shabby and in need of redecoration and refurbishment; the shared areas are not used to best effect as learning areas; computers are often idle.
Value for money	Satisfactory

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

· **THE PARENTS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

**What most parents like about the School**

- VIII. Their children are happy and like school.
- IX. The small sized classes
- X. The caring approach of the staff
- XI. The friendly atmosphere and easiness of talking to staff about problems and concerns
- XII. The amount and kind of homework given

**What some parents are not Happy about**

- XIII. The poor and sometimes aggressive
- XIV. The lack of interest by many parents in the
- XV. The little information they are given about
- XVI. The lack of clear deadlines for homework
- XVII. Not being kept up to date with their child's

Inspection findings largely endorse the views of the parents. The school is close-knit and the small classes are helping to keep pupils' attitude and behaviour acceptable. The low interest of many families is reflected in the low return of questionnaires (14 per cent). The home-school contract covers the use of homework but the school accepts that it needs to look at other ways to ensure that parents are kept more informed about homework and about what is being taught in class. A few pupils are quick to lose self-control and to take physical action but the school works hard to keep discipline and staff show much tolerance when pupils are less than courteous or unresponsive.

## · **KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION**

In order to continue to raise standards and continue the programme of school improvement the governors, headteacher and staff should :

1. take steps to raise standards in English, particularly in writing at both key stages, by
  - raising the profile of writing throughout the school
  - raising teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve so that they can plan at a more individual level and boost pupils' progress
  - agreeing how work should be set out and presented and implementing a handwriting policy
  - ensuring that teachers are aware through in-service training of ways to develop pupils' writing across the curriculum
  - ensure that teachers' marking alerts pupils to what they need to do to improve  
(paragraphs 12, 14, 21, 41, 45, 64, 105, 126, 130, 187)
  
1. raise standards in information technology by
  - ensuring that National Curriculum requirements are met fully
  - ensuring that pupils have frequent access to all computers and other information technology equipment
  - developing an assessment system to track pupils' progress in skill development
  - ensuring that teachers' planning across the curriculum includes information technology
  - upgrading and extending hardware and software as finances allow  
(paragraphs 23, 49, 52, 55, 88, 94, 126, 142, 151 - 8, 163, 171, 182)
  
1. increase the opportunities for pupils to work independently, to organise their own learning and to participate more in the day to day life of the school by
  - identifying current good practice, particularly in science, to heighten teachers' awareness of ways to plan and manage class, group and individual activities
  - developing the use of the shared areas and developing them as areas for learning
  - introducing systems to allow pupils to hold responsibility and to take the initiative  
(paragraphs 27, 32, 41, 43, 44, 60, 93, 118, 150, 170, 171)
  
1. ensure that the governing body meet fully their legal responsibilities in information issued to parents, the compilation of a charging policy and the implementation of risk assessment procedures.  
(paragraphs 67, 68, 71, 74)
  
2. continue to work to raise rates of attendance by devising additional ways to raise parents' awareness of the importance of regular attendance on their children's attainment and progress  
(paragraphs 33, 66)

## INTRODUCTION

### Characteristics of the school

3. St. Luke's Voluntary Controlled Church of England Primary School is in Weaste, part of Salford. It was founded in 1849 but the present buildings date from 1972 when the nursery was added. The school also has a community wing which is used during the day and the evenings. Immediately to the north of the school is a railway and the motorway into Manchester. The school serves an area of predominantly terraced housing and many pupils live in rented accommodation. Unemployment levels are high and 58 per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is much higher than seen nationally. Although a significant number of families move in and out of the area over any one year, other families are well established and many parents attended the school as children.
4. The number on the school roll has fallen from 181 at the time of the last inspection in 1996 to 158, reflecting the move of many families out of the area. The school has retained seven year group classes which vary in size from 20 to 24 with the reception year children in a class of 22. The thirty place nursery currently has 20 children who attend full time. All the nursery children transfer to the reception class on a full time basis in the September after their fourth birthday. The nursery children share some of the reception class activities and spend sessions in the reception class in the summer term.
5. At the time of this inspection, 40 of the 42 children in the reception class and nursery were under the age of five. Only two of the nursery children had had their fourth birthday. Children's attainment on entry to school is below that expected for their age. Many have a limited command of language and general knowledge. A significant number, more often boys, have poorly developed social skills and find it hard to control their behaviour.
6. There are currently 52 pupils (33 per cent) on the school's register of special educational need which is high compared with the national average. Two pupils have a statement of special educational need and seven other pupils receive support from outside agencies. No pupil has English as an additional language.
7. The school's eight aims place high emphasis on personal, moral and spiritual development with the prime aim being "to create a stimulating learning atmosphere where children may develop to their own individual excellence and be committed to the highest possible achievement". Other aims address aspects of self-esteem and independence, responsibility for own actions, caring attitude to and pride in the school and community, initiative and the "encouragement of fairness, generosity and warmth in all relationships".
8. The governing body's and school's priorities for this year are to raise standards in reading and writing; to develop assessment, recording and reporting systems; to develop a scheme of work for children in the Early Years; to continue the programme of improving security and redecoration; to raise the number on the school roll and to retain the school's family atmosphere.

6.

**Key indicators**

**Attainment at Key Stage 1**

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
for latest reporting year:	1999	13	11	24

6. National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	11	10	13
	Girls	10	9	10
	Total	21	19	23
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	87(80)	79(80)	92(85)
	National	82(80)	83(81)	87(85)

6. Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	11	12	10
	Girls	10	10	10
	Total	21	22	20
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	(80)	(85)	84(85)
	National	82(81)	86(85)	87(86)

### Attainment at Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
for latest reporting year:	1999	15	12	27

6. National Curriculum Test Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	8	9	9
	Girls	7	8	7
	Total	15	17	16
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	56(61)	63(56)	59(72)
	National	70(65)	62(58)	55(69)

6. Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	8	9	11
	Girls	7	8	8
	Total	15	17	19
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	56	63	70
	National	82(81)	80(85)	86(86)

### 6. Attendance

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed				%
through absence for the latest complete	Authorised	School		8.0



reporting year:	Absence	National comparative data	5.6
	Unauthorised	School	0.3
	Absence	National comparative data	0.5

6.

6. **Exclusions**

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) during The previous year:		Number
	Fixed period	4
	Permanent	0

6. **Quality of teaching**

Percentage of teaching observed which is:		%
	Very good or better	3
	Satisfactory or better	95
	Less than satisfactory	5

## **PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

### **EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL**

#### **Attainment and progress**

9. Standards in English are lower than expected for pupils' ages in English but more in line in mathematics and science. Standards have much improved since the last inspection and there is much greater uniformity of attainment in all three subjects.
10. In the 1999 Key Stage 2 tests, the percentage of pupils attaining Level 4, as expected for their age, was well below the national average in English and science and below in mathematics. In all three subjects, six out of ten pupils attained Level 4 and compared with 1998, there was a rise, as seen nationally, in mathematics. For the first time since 1995, a significant minority of pupils reached Level 5 in all three subjects. As in 1998, one in four pupils reached Level 5 in science and this was broadly in line with the national picture. This higher attainment lifts the school's overall science results to below the national average. The Level 5 attainment in English, mathematics and science was a significant achievement for the school as the Year 6 class had a high number of pupils with special educational needs including two with statements of educational need. Several of these pupils joined the school in Year 5. Revision and booster classes helped to prepare pupils for the national tests and contributed to the rise in overall standards in English and mathematics.
11. When compared with schools which also have more than 50 per cent of pupils eligible for free school meals, standards are good. Taking overall results, the school does better than others in English and science and much better in mathematics. Although a lower percentage of pupils attain Level 4 than the average in similar schools, the Level 5 attainment lifts overall scores.
12. There is a wide spread of girls' and boys' attainment. In the 1999 Key Stage 2 national tests, the girls did better than the boys in mathematics and English. One in three girls reached Level 5 in mathematics and science, which was well above the national average, and one in four in English, which was similar to the national average. Only in science did the boys do better than the girls overall although their Level 5 attainment was just below that of the girls. When comparing pupils' Key Stage 2 results with their Key Stage 1 results from 1995, most pupils have made satisfactory progress at Key Stage 2. However, such a comparison is insecure as a significant number have left or joined the school during the key stage.
13. Given the high number of current Year 6 pupils with special educational needs, only a small majority are on target to reach Level 4 in English, mathematics and science in the national tests next year, but there are also indications of possible Level 5 attainment in all three subjects.
14. Target setting related to the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies has been introduced. The school's analysis of pupils' performance in tests has led to an increased focus on raising literacy and numeracy standards, particularly at Key Stage 2. Even though standards are lower than the national average in English, but closer in mathematics, standards are higher than at the time of the last inspection and inspection evidence shows that the work done in the literacy and numeracy hours is raising standards. However, pupils' limited skills in using language expressively and cogently to explain and reason have a negative impact on attainment overall. Pupils' reading skills are better than their writing. Pupils' writing is also marred by poor standards of presentation and untidy handwriting.

15. On entry to the nursery, the attainment of most children is below that expected for their age and also below the Local Education Authority average. Many have poorly developed social skills and low awareness of reading, writing and number. A few have speech and language problems. The nursery children make satisfactory progress overall and good progress in personal and social development. This ensures that the children are “ready to learn” when they start school. On entry to the reception class, attainment is below average overall, although the girls’ attainment is often closer or even above that expected for their age. A scrutiny of the previous year’s work and evidence from the inspection indicates that although the majority of children make satisfactory progress overall, many children, more often boys, remain below the average and still have some way to go at the end of the reception year to attain all of the Desirable Learning Outcomes especially in language and literacy and mathematics. A small number of children get off to a good start in reading, writing and number and their attainment is more typical of five year olds. In physical development, many children make good progress due to the structured teaching and the frequent opportunities to use the outdoor play equipment.
16. In the 1999 end of Key Stage 1 national tests in reading the pupils’ results were broadly in line with the national average. Nine out of ten reached Level 2 as expected for their age and three out of ten reached the higher Level 3. Boys did particularly well in that their reading attainment at Level 3 was higher than the girls which reverses the national trend. The average point score in reading was in line with the top five per cent of all similar schools. In writing however, standards were not as good. Although eight out of ten pupils reached Level 2 as expected for their age, which was close to the national average, at least half only just attained Level 2. This lowers the overall results and places the school well below the national average. Compared with similar schools the results were below the national average. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils’ reading skills are broadly in line with the national average but that writing is below.
17. In mathematics, the 1999 Key Stage 1 test results were above the national average. Nine out of ten pupils attained Level 2 as expected for their age and three out of ten reached the higher Level 3. When compared with similar schools, results are well above average. Standards have improved since the 1996 inspection, particularly in the percentage of pupils who do well for their age.
18. The 1999 teacher’s assessment of the science attainment of Year 2 pupils shows that eight out of ten pupils reached the level expected for their age. This is above the average of similar schools. One in five pupils, all boys, reached the higher Level 3 which was an improvement on the 1998 results and brought the school above the average for similar schools. The emphasis on practical experience, observation and discussion has had a positive effect on pupils’ attainment.
19. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils are on line to achieve similar results this year in the end of Key Stage 1 national tests and teachers’ assessments. Given the lower than average attainment on entry to Key Stage 1, pupils make at least satisfactory progress and good progress, especially in reading and number.
20. At both key stages, standards of listening and speaking are satisfactory. When their attention is caught, pupils listen attentively and offer their own ideas and views. They make satisfactory progress in listening and speaking at both key stages although there are few occasions for role-play, drama or formal presentations. Whilst pupils converse easily, older pupils find it hard to justify their decisions and explain in detail.
21. The school’s strategy for literacy is satisfactory. The analysis of the 1998 and 1999 national test results

indicated weaknesses in reading, punctuation and handwriting and the school has prioritised the development of reading and writing skills. This, together with the literacy hour and clear targets for lessons has helped to boost progress particularly at Key Stage 1. Many parents provide welcome support at home and others come into school to hear pupils read. This contributes significantly to the good progress of Key Stage 1 pupils in reading. The teacher's effective questioning and her focus on how words were spelt and what they meant helped Year 1 pupils to make good progress in appreciating sentence structure in the story "Peace at last". By the end of Key Stage 1, many are fluent and expressive readers. However, just under half are still in the early stages of reading and writing at the end of Year 2. They cope reasonably well with reading and writing in other subjects especially when helped by an adult.

22. Pupils make satisfactory progress at Key Stage 2 in reading a range of books. Their comprehension skills develop more slowly. Year 4 and 5 pupils struggled initially with word meanings and the sense of the passage. It was only after discussion and explanation from their teachers that most pupils understood fully the implications of book titles and the use of language for effect. By the end of Key Stage 2 most pupils are accurate readers and the higher attaining pupils read with expression. Not all understand fully what they are reading. The class and group reading sessions in the literacy hour are helping to widen pupils' awareness of aspects of text and how text such as the three witches' scene from "Macbeth" can be read with expression, phrasing and drama.
23. Writing standards are lower than those in reading. At Key Stage 1, many pupils are slow to make progress in writing independently. They make better progress in spelling and by the end of Key Stage 1, most spell common words correctly, and make reasonable attempts at less familiar words. Many also use capital letters and full stops accurately in simple sentences. Higher attaining pupils produce longer stories and news accounts but these do not always use appropriate or correct punctuation. At Key Stage 2, pupils continue to make satisfactory progress in learning about punctuation, grammar and spelling rules. By the end of Key Stage 2, higher attaining pupils write at length using paragraphs and a range of punctuation. However, the quality of pupils' extended writing is not well developed and many pupils fail to apply their knowledge of paragraphs, grammar and spelling when writing in other subjects. A weakness in writing throughout the school is the low standard of word processing and desktop publishing. Pupils make relatively slow progress in learning to use the typewriter keyboard.
24. The school's strategy for numeracy is satisfactory. The school is addressing a recognised common weakness in mental computation and facility with numbers through work in the numeracy hour and this is boosting progress especially at Key Stage 1. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are secure in addition and subtraction to 20 and they understand number patterns to 20. Many use mental recall of 2,3,4,5 and 10 times tables in simple multiplication and division problems. At Key Stage 2, they make satisfactory progress in learning their multiplication tables and handling much higher numbers. A lively class session of number questions on adding odd numbers enabled all pupils to make good progress in realising number patterns and their use in adding, subtracting and multiplying numbers. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are confident in adding and subtracting numbers to one thousand. They know most of their multiplication tables to 10 and use a variety of mental and written skills when solving number problems involving division and multiplication. Standards in number are improving as short daily sessions sharpen pupils' mental arithmetic skills. This shows improvement since the 1996 inspection. In other subjects, such as science, pupils use their number skills to collect and record data.
25. Pupils' skills are unsatisfactory in using information technology across the curriculum. Although the

1996 inspection reported standards to be in line with national expectations, pupils' low attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 indicates that progress has deteriorated. Pupils have limited knowledge and skills in word processing, data handling, use of CD-ROM and control technology. Pupils have had too little access to computers and other information technology equipment to appreciate their value and use across the curriculum. Now that new equipment is available, pupils are making good progress at Key Stage 1 in using the mouse to operate programs and standards are set to rise. At Key Stage 2, pupils' low familiarity with the keyboard and functions slows their progress.

26. In religious education, standards at both key stages are in line with those outlined in the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils make satisfactory progress at both key stages in their awareness and knowledge of other faiths and religious observances.
27. In art, design and technology, geography, history and music, pupils make satisfactory progress and their attainment is as expected for their age. In all these subjects, pupils' knowledge and skills develop equally. When pupils are encouraged to discuss information, such as Year 2 pupils discussing Guy Fawkes' guilt or Year 6 pupils' deciding from examples what makes a good slipper, they make good progress and apply their knowledge to the situation. Progress is just satisfactory when the work is completing worksheets or, as in art, working to the direction of an adult in producing a particular product for display. During the inspection, pupils made good progress in music due to the good, systematic teaching of the music specialist teacher. In physical education, pupils make satisfactory progress at Key Stage 1 and good progress at Key Stage 2. The good quality of training and coaching ensures that pupils develop skill in handling and controlling balls and performing sequences of movements. They also make good progress in understanding and following the rules of the game and pupils do well in team competitions.
28. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress overall. One in three pupils is identified as having special educational needs, and most of these pupils are boys. The two pupils with statements of special educational need receive specialist support during the week and in these sessions often make good progress. When working in small groups with adults, pupils with special educational needs make at least satisfactory progress as things are explained and pupils are guided in working things out for themselves. In a science lesson, a group of Year 6 pupils made very good progress in explaining clearly what they could see and deciding how to record their observations due to the teacher's interventions, questions and statements. In many lessons, however, when pupils are working on their own, their progress slows. Many find it hard to concentrate and often their progress is highly dependent on the teacher to ensure that the work is at a realistic level of challenge and that support is at hand. In science, the focus on practical work often means that pupils benefit from comments made by others and also from the opportunity to see the items and processes being referred to.

#### **Attitudes, behaviour and personal development**

29. As noted in the last inspection report, pupils enjoy school. Parents' responses in the questionnaires and at the meeting with parents confirm this as a strength of the school. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are satisfactory overall. Relationships are good and this contributes much to the ethos of the school. Pupils' personal development, however, is unsatisfactory; pupils often rely on adults and other pupils to tell them what to do in lessons and many show little initiative and independence in organising themselves. This was also highlighted in the 1996 inspection.
30. In nearly all lessons, pupils show satisfactory attitudes towards their work. In four out of ten lessons, their response is good and there is a clear link to the quality of teaching. When the

teaching is stimulating, challenging and offers something practical or new, such as going swimming for the first time, pupils are very keen and enthusiastic. At Key Stages 1 and 2, whilst many pupils respond positively in class discussions, a significant number, more often boys, quickly lose interest. They become restless, fiddle, fidget and lose concentration. Although this sometimes affects the rest of the class and hinders the progress of all, the majority of pupils are remarkably tolerant and try their best to get on with their own work. A general problem however, is pupils' frequent slowness to respond to instructions. At both key stages, many pupils took some time to settle down to work or to clear away and had to be chivvied by their teacher. When pupils with special educational needs work with an adult's support or in a very small group, they are well motivated and complete their work well. All pupils enjoy the special learning weeks and also like to take part in extra-curricular activities and competitions.

31. The personal and social development of children under five is good. Children under five in the nursery and the reception class are generally keen to learn and are interested to see what each session brings. On starting in the nursery, many find it hard to sit still, to share and to be with others. After just a few weeks they are happy, well integrated and developing in confidence to speak to adults and to choose what they want to do. However, many are easily upset by changes in routine and are also tired by the afternoon when they find it hard to concentrate for any length of time. Reception class children also show higher attentiveness in the mornings. They enjoy stories, singing and activities and often concentrate for quite long periods. The children were taken with the idea of speech and thought bubbles and listened attentively even though workmen were fitting roller shutters to the classroom windows and the noise and activity were highly distracting. Most work happily when told what to do but often take some time to settle to the task.
32. Pupils' behaviour is satisfactory overall. As stated in the 1996 report, most pupils behave well in and out of the classroom but there are instances of poor behaviour and flouting of rules. Several pupils in each year group find it difficult to control their behaviour and occasional minor tussles break out in class and in the playground. Generally, pupils respond well to the awards given for good behaviour and they are proud when given a sticker or praise from an adult. There is some evidence to support parents' views that bullying, harassment and aggression take place. Several boys were seen kick boxing and pushing each other around as they played together in the playground. Staff accept that there are very occasional instances of aggression and pupils know that action will be taken if things get out of hand. Older pupils knew that the four exclusions in the last school year were linked to unacceptable behaviour.
33. From the many lesson observations, and discussions with pupils, it is evident that the good quality of relationships is a strength of the school. Most pupils are courteous, friendly and pleasantly inquisitive when talking with visitors and each other. This has a positive effect on pupils' attainment and progress in academic subjects and in personal development. Pupils respond well in 'circle' time and respect others' views, values and beliefs. They show concern for others. One boy remarked how welcome he was made to feel when he arrived from another school. There is a sense of loyalty to the school and affection for their teachers.
34. The majority of pupils, especially the higher attaining pupils, have developed a satisfactory capacity for personal study. They stay on task and work diligently and effectively on their own and in mixed groups. Pupils respond well to receiving commendations for achievement and effort. However, pupils' initiative and ability to organise their own work are under developed. In one lesson observed, Year 6 pupils co-operated well, sorted out roles and took the initiative when planning their own experiment in science. They were proud of doing something for themselves but this is less evident in other subjects and other classes. The great majority of pupils are honest and dependable when meeting

deadlines, such as completing homework and returning their library books, but too often in lessons, pupils are told what to do and how to do it. In some cases, everything is to hand for pupils and there is little scope for them to decide what they need and how to organise their own learning. Year 6 pupils' effectiveness in acting as door monitors shows they are able to take extra responsibility for aspects of the day-to-day running and management of the school. Pupils told inspectors that they would like to have more involvement and do more around school.

## **Attendance**

35. Pupils' attendance is unsatisfactory and well below that of similar sized schools nationally. However, the rate of attendance does exceed the 90 per cent benchmark. Attendance rates improved in the year following the 1996 inspection and brought the school into line with similar schools. This good progress has not been sustained and pupils' attendance has fallen. Occasionally families leave the area without informing the school and pupils' subsequent recorded absences inflate overall figures. Most pupils are punctual but there are a number who arrive late and a significant number who come long after registration is completed.
36. The rate of unauthorised absence is low. An increasing number of families take holidays in term time but the school has not formally adopted a policy to discourage this practice. The school works hard with the Education Welfare Officer to alert parents to the negative impact of lateness and absence on their child's progress. There are a number of families whose difficulties are reflected in the inconsistent attendance and punctuality of their children.
37. Attendance registers are properly maintained and all statutory requirements are met. Registration is completed quickly and efficiently. As pupils generally settle quickly and begin working without fuss, lessons get off to a prompt start.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED

### Teaching

38. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. It has several strengths and accounts largely for the good relationships between pupils and staff. The teachers work hard and are concerned about the pupils. This echoes the findings of the 1996 inspection. However, some of the shortcomings identified in that report relating to pupils' independent learning and the reliance on worksheets are also highlighted in this inspection. The teaching of information technology also remains a concern.
39. Teaching is satisfactory in 95 per cent of lessons. This rises to 100 per cent of lessons for children under five and pupils at Key Stage 1. During the inspection, there was unsatisfactory teaching at Key Stage 2 in several lessons accounting for 12 per cent overall. Throughout the school, teaching is good in four lessons out of ten and is roughly the same in all three key stages. At Key Stage 2 there is occasional very good teaching for Year 6 pupils.
40. For children under the age of five, the quality of teaching is consistently at least satisfactory. In the nursery, teaching is frequently good. Teaching is good in the area of personal and social development in both the nursery and the reception class. The teachers have a sound understanding of how young children learn and provide a range of activities. When the children work under the direction of an adult, the intended learning is clear, but too often the children not with an adult are merely told "Go and play" and there is no set purpose or outcome expected. In the reception class, sand, water, role-play area, art and craft tend to be seen as "fillers" or "extras" rather than as essential ways to develop language and literacy and mathematical understanding. The nursery teacher and nursery nurse work well together and monitor the children closely. They use questions and comments effectively to steer children into activities and to encourage them to talk. The reception class teacher is using enlarged texts well to show the children how authors use punctuation and to interest them in letters and words.
41. At Key Stage 1, teaching is at least satisfactory and good in one lesson in three. This is helping pupils to make progress especially in science, history and physical education.
42. At Key Stage 2, the quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. It is good in science and in physical education. The instances of unsatisfactory teaching were in mathematics and information technology only. In all cases, the teachers evaluated their lesson carefully and in mathematics, made changes to the structure of the next lesson and provided more activities to help pupils practise and apply what they knew. In the two follow-up lessons seen, the teaching was successful and pupils made good progress. The quality of teaching by the specialist music teacher from the local authority is good and provides a good model for class teachers to follow when the programme of lessons is complete.
43. Since 1996 there have been several staff changes and also a programme of professional development to address the shortcomings identified in the inspection report. Although the teachers have been given guidance on how to organise group work and how to set up systems to encourage pupils' independent learning, they are still tentative in using available space and resources. The placement of many teachers' tables at Key Stage 2 constrains the use of the shared area adjacent to the class base and places the emphasis more on whole class work. Despite the small class sizes, there are few instances of teachers working with individuals or small groups on aspects particularly planned for them. Teachers' expectations are not consistently high enough for the higher attaining pupils. Similarly, the targets in the individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs, one in three in most classes, are not being used consistently to plan appropriate



activities in lessons across the curriculum. Too often it is assumed that all have the same need. The overall quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory but in many cases, their needs are not being fully addressed in class lessons.

44. The teachers often show much patience and tolerance in managing the pupils' behaviour. During the inspection, however, there were a few instances where Key Stage 2 teachers harangued pupils unnecessarily. The pupils' restlessness and inattention was most often due to the task being too difficult, or to the slow pace of the lesson.
45. The teachers are satisfactorily following the format of the literacy and numeracy hours. In many lessons, materials are well prepared and good introductory sessions catch the pupils' interest and keep them involved. The Year 4 teacher's discussion of "The cat's way home" set the scene well and motivated the pupils to want to read the story. Year 2 pupils were keen to hold up the correct number as their teacher gave them number problems to solve. However, the initial good pace and challenge are not always sustained and in group activities there is often too much reliance on "paper-and-pencil" tasks. When the teacher gave Year 6 pupils numbers to sort out multiples of 5, 10 and 3, the pupils applied and used their number knowledge effectively. Their discussion showed a good awareness of relevant multiplication tables and also highlighted those pupils who had a good feel for number relationships.
46. This practical approach characterised much of the good teaching in science. The teachers are much more confident in their use of "hands-on" practical activities in science than in other subjects. This confidence and often enthusiasm keeps pupils interested and their response to learning and rate of progress are often good. The supposed letter from a supermarket asking for Year 2 pupils' help really set them a purpose and a clear task. The teacher's questions, especially "What do you think?" ensured that pupils observed and considered what they knew and could see. The Year 6 teacher's organisation of groups and their timed movement around the room to complete their investigation allowed pupils to work on their own successfully and also set high expectations. The teacher checked on the progress of all pupils and spent time with the higher and lower attainers. Her questions and prompts ensured all pupils made very good progress.
47. Teachers regularly mark the pupils' work but there are some inconsistencies in approach. Several teachers give good evaluative comments and set individual targets for the next piece of work. However, often the comments refer only to the spelling, handwriting or punctuation elements and less help is given on how to improve the subject content of the work. In only a few cases in work from last year were there questions or comments for the pupil to respond to. All pupils are encouraged to read at home and regular tasks such as spellings, multiplication tables and work related to topics extends work in lessons.

### **Curriculum and assessment**

48. The quality of the curriculum is satisfactory overall. There are some strengths, particularly for the provision of personal and social development of children under the age of five. Weaknesses in the planning and development of subject skills especially in information technology have contributed significantly to pupils' low attainment and unsatisfactory progress.
49. The curriculum is broad and relevant to the needs of the pupils and is effective in promoting pupils' intellectual, physical and personal development. It also successfully fosters pupils' "*confidence in their own abilities*" as given in the school prospectus.

50. The curriculum for children under the age of five is satisfactory. In the nursery and reception class, it is planned appropriately to cover the recommended six areas of learning although in practice, there is more focus on National Curriculum subjects in the reception class. High curriculum emphasis is given to the development of pupils' personal and social skills. In the nursery, the focus on "training" and helping the children to listen, to share and to take their turn ensures that children are "ready to learn" in the reception class where emphasis is also placed on the development of the children's language and literacy and mathematical skills. The daily literacy and numeracy hour take up most of the morning and other curriculum areas are less well addressed. In the nursery listening, speaking, reading, writing and number work are linked to other areas and the curriculum is broader and fosters the children's development equally well in all six areas.
51. At Key Stages 1 and 2, the curriculum includes all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education which complies with the requirements of the locally Agreed Syllabus. However, the teaching of information technology does not comply fully with National Curriculum requirements in controlling and modelling.
52. An appropriate emphasis is placed on teaching the basic skills of reading, writing and using number in daily literacy and numeracy hours in all classes. As in many schools, more than half of the total teaching time is given to English and mathematics. Teachers are following the guidance of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies in their planning. The curriculum closely reflects the school's aims and prepares pupils well for the next stage of education. Appropriate arrangements are in place for the provision of personal and social education. The Governing Body has agreed that school nurses should teach sex and health education which includes drugs awareness.
53. The curriculum makes satisfactory provision for pupils on the register of special educational needs and follow the recommendations of the Code of Practice. In the nursery and reception class, the provision is good as staff adapt activities to ensure the children have opportunities to make progress. Individual education plans for pupils at Key Stages 1 and 2 address pupils' behavioural and academic needs.
54. Subject policies outline aims and practice. The teachers use long term subject plans and national subject guidance to prepare their termly and weekly plans. Learning intentions are clearly stated but are sometimes too ambitious given the pupils' prior attainment. In information technology this is slowing progress. Although the teachers have the individual education plans of the pupils with special educational needs, they do not always use the content and targets to plan work for individuals in all subjects. Higher attaining pupils are also occasionally overlooked. The teachers' evaluation of their work informs future planning and is also monitored by subject co-ordinators.
55. The school provides a suitable range of educational visits to broaden the pupils' experiences and appreciation of the environment. Older pupils make residential visits and good use is made of visitors to enliven the curriculum as in religious education and to extend aspects of subjects such as drama. Several members of staff, parishioners and parents supervise and support additional activities which include a number of sports. The lunchtime art club is popular and more than 30 pupils attend the weekly line dancing session. Musical activities, such as recorder and choir, are less well attended. Five pupils have tuition in keyboard playing.
56. The school's admissions policy provides equality of access for all pupils. In practice, insufficient consideration is given to the composition of teaching groups in terms of gender and prior attainment. Too often, all pupils in the class carry out the same tasks which present too little challenge for the higher attaining pupils and sometimes, too much

challenge for the lower attainers. This was also noted in the 1996 inspection report.

57. Since the last inspection, satisfactory progress has been made in using assessment information to assist curriculum planning. The analysis of test results and monitoring of planning highlighted gaps in curriculum provision which have been addressed. The assessment process has been reviewed and teachers now record progress in English, mathematics and science by formal assessments on a termly or half-termly basis. Other than in reading, there is little to indicate the rate of progress in pupils' subject skill development. Although the teachers make evaluative notes on the success of their lessons, few record pupils' progress in the lesson or the implications for future planning. Subject portfolios often contain relevant samples of work to show progress but lack detail and commentary to support teachers in using them to guide their own assessment of pupils' attainment.
58. The nursery nurse and teacher work well together to evaluate the children's level of skill and knowledge on entry to the nursery. The reception class teacher shares with parents her assessment of the children's attainment on entry and completes an end of year assessment of each child's achievement. Whilst the nursery staff has a good overview of children's progress there is no shared record with the reception class of the children's on-going progress in the six areas of learning.

### **Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

59. The school makes satisfactory provision for pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development. The good provision for moral development is in line with the school's stated philosophy of trying to be "*fair, consistent, encouraging, understanding and compassionate in all our relationships*" (school prospectus). This is an area of improvement since the last inspection.
60. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. In art, design and technology, science, music and physical education pupils are encouraged to evaluate their own work and to appreciate the work of others. The interested and caring attitude of the teaching and non-teaching staff sets a good tone. Although pupils take part in an assembly and act of collective worship every day, there are few occasions when they are actively involved in their planning and presentation. Photographs and items are displayed well to attract pupils' interest but there are many missed opportunities to encourage pupils to reflect on and wonder at the beauty of nature and the creations of others. Going on a walk encouraged Nursery pupils to look at the colour of Autumn leaves and the Year 1 teacher's cutting open of fruit prompted the pupils to look carefully at the pattern of pips and stones. Whilst achievement is celebrated in photographs and displays in the school entrance, "sharing assemblies" are rather low-key and parents have no opportunity to join in the celebration of their children's achievement. Pupils visit the parish church and also benefit from visits from others of different faiths such as the Buddhist monk.
61. Pupils' moral development is promoted well. Respect between adults and pupils is mutual. The school's code of conduct is understood by everyone and many parents have signed the home-school contract which lays out the expectations for school, pupils and parents. Each year group discusses and agrees a set of rules for their class and pupils are made aware of what is acceptable behaviour and are taught to distinguish right from wrong. All the adults working in school spend time talking with the pupils and most teachers set sound standards of discipline based on praise and reward which raises pupils' self-esteem. The head teacher and deputy head teacher work hard to help pupils understand the importance of doing the right thing and taking responsibility for their own actions.
62. The provision for pupils' social development is satisfactory. The friendliness and good relationships

between staff are a good influence and staff give time to listen to pupils and to discuss their concerns. Pupils are encouraged to adopt responsible attitudes towards each other and to their own and others' property. In the nursery and reception class, the children are expected to sit quietly while the register is called and to converse and listen to each other's news. In physical education, mathematics and science, Key Stage 1 and 2 pupils are encouraged to co-operate and collaborate in small groups and pairs and to respect each other's wishes and points of view. Older pupils are given some responsibility in supervising younger pupils and in helping visitors but such opportunities are limited.

63. The school's provision for cultural development is sound overall. Pupils' knowledge and experience of their own culture and local identity is promoted across the curriculum. In English, pupils are introduced to classic literature such as Shakespeare's "Macbeth" and in history, pupils look at how the local area has changed. Pupils also study past cultures, including the Ancient Greeks, and the work of artists and craftspeople from the present and past. This is enhanced by visits and by visitors to the school. The school is planning more visits when the new tramway opens and makes more museums and sites of interest in the area even more accessible. Pupils' awareness and understanding of other faiths and cultures is less secure. In religious education, pupils study major world faiths and Year 3 pupils made good progress in widening their knowledge of the Jewish culture by looking at various artefacts and photographs from special celebrations. However, pupils have little experience in meeting and talking with people from a range of ethnic backgrounds.

#### **Support, guidance and pupils' welfare**

64. The quality of provision in support, guidance and pupils' welfare is satisfactory with strengths in procedures to monitor behaviour and discipline but some shortcomings in welfare procedures.
65. As noted in the last inspection, procedures for monitoring the academic progress of pupils are satisfactory. The nursery nurse and teacher regularly share their observations about the children and their progress with parents, and highlight any significant achievements and concerns. The headteacher and staff are very committed to the pupils. They are caring and considerate and parents rightly see the school as a "caring, family community" in an area of much social hardship and problems which occasionally spill over into school. All parents who returned the questionnaire and those who attended the meeting agreed that they would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems about their children. Many commented on the caring and concerned attitude of all the staff.
66. The staff are trialling new assessment procedures. Each pupil has a record of achievement and teachers record progress in English, mathematics and science. Samples of work are included giving a good overview of progress but these samples do not always identify clearly where the pupil has made progress or include comments from pupils about their progress. Important aspects, such as the development of skills in information technology, are not recorded. Staff know all the pupils well and offer much informal support and guidance throughout the school day. Pupils with special educational needs receive suitable support and guidance. Their academic progress and personal development is recorded well and the information used when new targets are being set in their individual education plans. The school makes effective use of outside specialists to supplement its own staff in supporting pupils with special needs.
67. The procedures for monitoring and promoting discipline and behaviour are good. In the meeting with inspectors before the inspection and in questionnaires, several parents raised concerns about standards of behaviour and the adequacy of the behaviour management strategies used by staff. Inspectors find this concern unwarranted. Staff operate a clear policy to

promote good behaviour by praising pupils and rewarding them. Pupils who behave well are given certificates and have their names entered in the 'Gold Book', which is prominently displayed in the school entrance hall. Ten strategies are identified for the positive encouragement of good behaviour and many of these were seen being used effectively during the inspection when the vast majority of pupils behaved well. The headteacher takes the lead role in maintaining discipline; he gives much time to individuals and works hard to diffuse confrontation and to help pupils realise the effect of their actions. Staff monitor the behaviour of pupils and the Governing Body discuss related issues at meetings. There is a commitment to improving behaviour throughout the school but much is understated. Parents are not invited to the regular achievement assemblies. Staff deal with incidents fairly and record them properly. Incidents of bullying or harassment are taken seriously and dealt with promptly and effectively.

68. There are satisfactory procedures for monitoring and promoting regular attendance. Teachers follow up any unexplained absences and during the inspection, the headteacher took prompt action to enable children to come to school. The headteacher and special educational needs co-ordinator work closely with the Education Welfare Officer to improve pupils' attendance and punctuality. Weekly meetings keep attendance issues in sharp focus and strategies to improve attendance and punctuality are appropriately included in the school development plan. Initiatives include prizes for good attendance and a cup for the class with the best weekly attendance. Parents are reminded in newsletters of the need to ensure that their children attend school regularly.
69. Procedures for child protection and promoting pupils' well being, health and safety have some shortcomings. The governors and staff do not ensure that agreed procedures are consistently followed and that statutory requirements are met fully.
70. The head teacher is the designated person for child protection procedures which comply with the local education authority's guidelines. All members of staff are aware of their responsibilities, understand the child protection procedures and are vigilant in their dealings with pupils. Concerns are promptly raised with the relevant authorities and the school has good liaison with local Social Services officers and other support agencies. Pupils' health and well being is promoted through the science and physical education curriculum. Pupils learn about the importance of exercise, the need for hygiene and how to care for themselves. The school actively discourages pupils from bringing sweets and crisps for their morning snack by providing toast for a small charge. Sex education is taught as part of the science curriculum and older pupils learn about the dangers of drugs misuse. Year 6 pupils take part in 'Crucial Crew' activities and younger pupils are taught road safety and stranger danger. There are good arrangements to ensure the safety of pupils taking part in off-site activities.
71. The school follows the local education authority's health and safety guidelines but these have not been amended to take account of the school context. There is a high level of first aid expertise amongst the teachers and lunchtime supervisory staff who have all undertaken training. Accident and emergency procedures are well established and comply with local procedures. Staff are aware of health and safety issues and take appropriate measures to safeguard pupils. Fire evacuation drills and fire alarm tests are carried out regularly. All statutory checks of equipment are carried out as required but the school does not undertake risk assessments of its activities and important aspects are unaddressed. The governing body does not play a full and active role in health and safety management. This was discussed with the head teacher and Chair of the Governing Body during the inspection.

### **Partnership with parents and the community**

72. The school's overall partnership with parents and the community is satisfactory and there are strengths in the links with the community. This largely echoes the findings of the last inspection.
73. The quality of information for parents about the school and its curriculum is satisfactory although there are omissions of legally required items, including pupil absence rates, from both the prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents. Parents are given little information about the curriculum in these documents. At the meeting held before the inspection with parents and on questionnaires returned, parents indicated that they would like to know more about what is being taught. Staff held meetings to tell parents about the Literacy Hour and the National Numeracy Strategy but these were not well supported. A higher number of parents attend the two annual evenings to talk to teachers about their children's progress. Regular newsletters keep parents abreast of activities and are also used to canvas their views on issues such as the home school agreement. The school accepts that there is scope to improve the information it gives parents and intends to address this issue. Parents value the contact they have with staff on a day-to-day basis and the parents of nursery children appreciate the way they can stay with their children until they have settled. Annual reports on pupils' progress are written in plain language and fully meet statutory requirements. They give a good account of what pupils have done but provide limited guidance to parents on what their children need to do to improve. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are informed appropriately about their children's progress.
74. Parental involvement in pupils' learning is satisfactory. The home reading scheme and other homework is supported by most families. This is now a condition of the home school agreement. Some parents at the meeting with inspectors expressed concern about the lack of consistency of homework in some classes but their views were not reflected in the response to the questionnaire or in discussions with parents during the inspection. There is a clear policy for homework which aims to involve parents more directly in the education of their children. Several parents and members of the church regularly help in classrooms by hearing pupils read and supporting pupils in group activities. They also help with transport for the school teams and make toast for pupils each morning. A valuable initiative is the parents' consultative group which meets the headteacher every half term to discuss issues and activities. The group raises funds for the school by holding raffles and fairs and has recently bought books and sports equipment and made a significant contribution to the cost of improving security.
75. The school enjoys good links with the community. St. Luke's has community school status and, as noted in the last inspection, its community wing provides facilities for a variety of activities including Morris dancing, karate, mother and toddler groups and an after-school club which caters for pupils from St Luke's and a nearby junior school. There are good links with the church and parents like the way their children visit the church for particular services or as part of their curriculum work. Although the school can take justifiable pride in the way it brings others into school, the potential of the local area is not fully realised in extending and enriching pupils' awareness and knowledge. During the inspection, the nursery children went to collect autumn leaves but short walks in the neighbourhood are not a regular occurrence. Visitors from a variety of cultural and sporting backgrounds enrich pupils' learning. Last year pupils worked with members of the English Shakespeare Company Workshop and then visited the theatre. Other theatre groups, colleges and members of the Northern Ballet also work with pupils during the year. During the inspection Year 5 pupils enjoyed a discussion with a visiting Buddhist monk as part of their work in religious education. Other visitors teach pupils about avoiding dangers in their area such as the nearby railway line. Pupils study the local environment and their understanding of the wider community is enhanced by visits to places of interest and activity centres. The school has strong links with Metrolink who are constructing the nearby tramway and the Manchester United Community Scheme.

## THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL

### Leadership and management

76. As reported in 1996, the quality of leadership and management in the school “*is generally satisfactory but has some weaknesses*”. The last inspection’s three key issues related to management and leadership have been addressed but with varying degrees of impact. Improvement has been satisfactory overall but there are still weaknesses in the work of the Governing Body. The school is only just “getting to grips” (governor’s comment) with school improvement issues but systems are in place to support the staff in their work to raise standards and the school capacity to improve is satisfactory.
77. The headteacher is committed to the school, staff and pupils. He is sensitive to the demands of curriculum change and has supported staff in their professional development to ensure the smooth introduction of the literacy and numeracy hours. Unlike 1996, there is now a clearly defined management and decision making structure although budgetary constraints have delayed the appointment of a permanent deputy headteacher. The school was slow to implement an action plan to address the issues raised by the 1996 inspection due to a series of events including the sudden death of a teacher and other staff changes. It is only in the last eighteen months that serious consideration has been given to ways to improve standards and raise all teachers’ expectations (Key Issue 1) and to improve the effectiveness of policies (Key Issue 2). Subject co-ordinators now have a much higher profile in curriculum and school development; they are monitoring curriculum coverage, following subject action plans and beginning to monitor the quality of teaching. This has had a positive effect in many subjects but especially in science where attention has been given to the ways in which pupils learn and how a range of teaching strategies can be used. The consistent focus on practical investigation throughout the school is a development of this and sets a good model for further curriculum development.
78. The Governing Body is supportive of the school and through its committee structure considers finances, policies and school priorities. Governors state they are more involved and “hands-on” than they were in 1996 but there are still few systems and procedures in place to help them critically evaluate the effectiveness of their decisions and the action taken by the school to bring about improvement. In many respects, they rely on the headteacher for the analysis of information and have yet to establish rigour in gaining necessary information to evaluate standards and in ensuring that all legal responsibilities are met. The most recent school prospectus and annual report to parents omit several legally required items, including pupil absence rates, provision for pupils with special educational needs and a statement on progress made following the last inspection.
79. The management of provision for children under five is satisfactory. The staff teaching children under five are already considering the implications of impending changes to the curriculum due to national initiatives. This is prompting staff development and greater collaboration over key principles of practice and provision. Aspects of this are included in the school development plan.
80. The management and administration of special educational needs is sound. The co-ordinator brings enthusiasm and commitment to the role and, given the high number of pupils with special educational needs, carries out her role well in keeping the special needs register up-to-date and in reviewing pupils’ individual education plans. The school follows the recommendations of the Code of Practice but as in 1996, insufficient consideration is given to monitoring how teachers use the content of pupils’ individual education plans to guide their planning.

81. The school development plan gives a useful outline of what the school intends to do over the period 1998-2000. It addresses all aspects of the school's work and includes costings, success criteria and reporting arrangements but targets and success criteria are too general to allow critical evaluation of how well the school is doing. This weakens the work of the Governing Body. Although the review of achievement in 1998-1999 gives a summary of what has been achieved, it does not show how this has raised standards or by how much. Target setting has been initiated and the school is beginning to analyse assessment information to identify areas of subject weakness. There are few systems however, to monitor trends in the attainment of boys and girls and to evaluate the effect of teaching and curriculum provision on their progress. The day to day management of the school is smooth and the staff work well as a team. The Year 6 teacher has substantial curriculum responsibility and her role within school management remains unclear. The headteacher manages much himself. His quiet, unassuming style and shared approach has meant some tentativeness in increasing the pace of school improvement.
82. St Luke's is a caring, family school which is valued by the parents for its small classes and community feel. It lacks the vitality of a school moving forward but is a happy school with a good ethos of care and concern for others. The school meets its aims in large part, particularly those aspects which address pupils' moral and spiritual development and the "*encouragement of fairness, generosity and warmth in all relationships.*" It still has some way to go to ensure that pupils achieve "*their own individual excellence*" and "*the highest possible achievement*".

#### **Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**

83. The match of number of teaching staff to the demands of the curriculum is good. The governors have maintained one class per year group and the school's eight teachers give a well below average pupil:teacher ratio compared with other primary schools. All are suitably qualified to teach the National Curriculum and religious education. The nursery teacher is appropriately trained to teach children under the age of five and she and the reception class teacher have recently attended courses on curriculum provision for young children. Recent appointments have given the school a good mix of teaching experience and personal enthusiasms which are often reflected in subject co-ordination. Staff expertise is effectively shared with colleagues both formally and informally.
84. The match, number and qualifications of the support staff to the demands of the curriculum are adequate. The qualified nursery nurse has worked with the nursery teacher for many years and a working partnership is well established. Staff to support pupils with special educational needs lack sufficient training and guidance to support pupils to maximum effect. Clerical staff give appropriate support and ensure that teachers spend the minimum amount of time on administrative matters. Lunchtime supervisors have the necessary experience and ability to discharge their duties. All staff have job descriptions which reflect their responsibilities.
85. There are satisfactory arrangements for the professional development of staff and teacher appraisal is ongoing. As the school subscribes to the local education authority's training programme, teachers can select suitable courses to meet the training needs identified in different subjects in the school development plan. All co-ordinators have received training following recent changes in responsibilities and all teachers have received training to support the introduction of the literacy and numeracy hours. Recent emphasis has been given to assessment, special educational needs and the development of teaching strategies. This is helping to address some of the aspects identified in this report. Newly qualified teachers receive guidance and mentoring from the headteacher



and other staff as well as full access to the programme of support and training provided by the local education authority. There are suitable procedures in place for the induction of newly appointed teachers.

86. The accommodation is adequate for the effective delivery of the curriculum. The school is an open plan design with class bases opening onto shared areas around an open courtyard. The shared areas are spacious and offer much potential as work zones, storage areas and display features. Class bases vary in size and the arrangement of furniture in the Key Stage 2 gives pupils little space to move even though class sizes are small. All parts of the school are kept clean but the school, despite attractive wall displays, is shabby and dingy and many areas are in need of refurbishment and redecoration. This was also highlighted in the last inspection. Vandalism has been much reduced by the addition of metal roller shutters on windows and doors.
87. The nursery, although purpose built, has little space especially for activities such as sand, water, art and craft. Several work surfaces are too high for many of the three year olds. There are no washing facilities to care for children who have accidents using the toilet or when playing. The carpet is worn, badly stained and is unsuitable for the children who spend a lot of time sitting and working on the floor. The school development plan rightly includes plans to improve the condition of the nursery floor and to redecorate the school.
88. Construction of an extension to the Manchester tramway system has affected the life of the school and restricted road access. In recognition of this, the contractors have re-seeded the school playing field and improved the drainage but this has meant the loss of the use of the field until next summer. The playground is large enough for the number of pupils and has an area with a fixed climbing frame and bars with an appropriate soft surface beneath. The playground is marked out for games and there are benches and quiet areas. However, the playground extends around three sides of the school and this makes it difficult to supervise pupils rigorously.
89. A separate entrance leads to the community room and kitchen. Like the main school, it is accessible to wheelchair users. This area also serves as an outdoor play area for the nursery children but is not enclosed and totally secure.
90. Overall there are sufficient resources to meet the demands of the curriculum. In mathematics, science and art, resources are varied and in good quantity. Many of the computers are outdated and the nursery has lost its computer to the main school following the theft of other equipment. The school has little software as yet on the replacement machines which have CD-ROM facilities. Similarly, there are relatively few other technological resources such as listening centres, programmable toys and cameras but sufficient to deliver the curriculum. Since the last inspection, library resources have been improving gradually but the range of fiction and non-fiction books is still limited. This was also noted in the 1996 report when the library was described as having "weak provision in a few areas". However, books are borrowed from the local education authority's resources for topic work and the local mobile library visits fortnightly.

### **The efficiency of the school**

91. The overall efficiency is satisfactory. There are weaknesses in the use of accommodation and resources.
92. The quality of financial planning and financial control is satisfactory. The headteacher deals with most of the financial management of the budget and keeps the governors' finance committee regularly updated. The Governing Body has agreed to pool the monies for special educational needs with general funds to support the retention of one teacher and one

class per year group. This is a high drain on school funds and contingency funds are very low. The planned small underspend this school year will not boost funds by much. The Governing Body has yet to evaluate the effectiveness of these decisions. Whilst pupils benefit socially from small class sizes and their behaviour is more controlled, the teachers are not making the most of the small classes to provide more individually targeted work. Too often, whole class teaching is the chosen approach and often all pupils, irrespective of attainment, cope with similar work. As classes work predominantly in their class bay, much of the available space in the central area of the school is unused. Staff do not discuss the flexibility of the space and the potential to use staffing, space and time in different ways to meet pupils' learning needs.

93. The school development plan provides costings for initiatives. The governors and headteacher have considered school priorities and the impact on the school income of changes in the number of pupils on the school roll over the next few years. This has been taken into account when agreeing how money should be used. It is clear that in many areas, such as the nursery, the school has been making do particularly when redecoration and refurbishment were identified as key development areas in the 1996 inspection. Spending on learning resources continues to be lower than seen in most schools but grants and external funding, such as that to increase the security of the school, are sought and used appropriately. Spending is efficiently recorded and is clearly linked to educational priorities. However, the governing body lacks formal systems to monitor and evaluate the effects of spending on standards of attainment in the school. A draft of the most recent auditors' report had not been seen by governors. All issues from the previous report had been addressed.
94. Teaching and support staff are appropriately deployed. The placement of the acting deputy headteacher in Year 6 gives a boost to pupils' progress and attainment.
95. Teachers generally make satisfactory use of their class bays but unsatisfactory use of shared areas. The library is used as a space to hold literacy sessions but few pupils used the area to conduct their own studies to locate information. The shared areas opposite class bays are not used to best effect. Too much space, including the outdoors, is unused for a lot of the time. There are few designated areas to support curriculum subjects or current topics. The bareness of the areas shows their use as overspill space for groups rather than their organisation and integral use as learning zones.
96. Throughout the school, learning resources are generally used well but the major weakness is the limited use of information technology resources. The infrequent use of computers over the last years has seriously hindered pupils' attainment and progress. Staff are beginning to include the use of information technology as part of their planned learning experiences but there are still too many times when the computers are unused. Time is generally used well although there are several afternoon periods in the reception class, where pupils have "free choice" or the afternoon ends with watching a video. In other classes, some lessons are overlong. In several lessons seen, the pace slowed after half an hour, the pupils lost concentration and became restless. The long period of lunch for the nursery children tires many of them who then find it hard to concentrate and settle to activities in the afternoon.
97. The school secretary provides effective financial and administrative support to the headteacher, staff and governors. Her administrative experience and knowledge of families and the area contribute highly to the smooth running of the school.
98. In judging the value for money provided by the school, the following factors are considered. The pupils are drawn from a variety of social backgrounds but the majority are from an area of high social deprivation and unemployment. On entry to the reception classes many

children's attainment is well below average. Pupils make satisfactory progress as they move through the school. In the last national tests, Year 6 pupils' results were above the average for similar schools in English, mathematics and science. Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development are satisfactory overall. The quality of education is sound and there are strengths in the way most staff handle the pupils' behaviour. Parents value the family, caring community. When these factors are set against income and expenditure, the school is judged to be providing satisfactory value for money.

## **PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS**

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

99. The 30 place nursery has 20 children who attend full time. Only two children have had their fourth birthday and many are not four until the summer term of 2000. In the reception class, there are 22 children who have all attended the nursery and started full time in school in September. Only one child was five, and many of the children also have their birthday in the summer term. On entry to the nursery, the attainment of most children is below that expected for their age and also below the Local Education Authority average. Many have poorly developed social skills and low awareness of reading, writing and number. A few have speech and language problems.
100. The nursery children make satisfactory progress overall and good progress in personal and social development. This ensures that the children are “ready to learn” when they start school. On entry to the reception class, attainment is below average overall although the girls’ attainment is often closer to, and sometimes above, that expected for their age. A scrutiny of the previous year’s work and evidence from the inspection indicates that although the majority of children make satisfactory progress overall, many children, more often boys, still have some way to go at the end of the reception year to attain all of the Desirable Learning Outcomes especially in language and literacy and mathematics. A small number of children get off to a good start in reading, writing and number and their attainment is more typical of five year olds.

#### **Personal and social development.**

101. After a first half term, the children are well settled into the nursery and reception classes. A few children were anxious after the holiday week but they soon settled back into the routines. The children are eager to come to school and they enjoy the sessions. Many have made good progress in a short time in getting on with others and being one of a group.
102. Nursery children feel safe and at ease and are beginning to play together happily and to wait for a turn at particular activities. They take care of their own personal needs and many try to button or zip up coats. Many of the new activities such as planting seeds in compost and tasting fruit catch their interest well and most concentrate for a long period. A few find it hard to sit still for very long but they respond positively to the adults’ comments and are usually easily drawn back into the group.
103. Reception year children are well behaved. They sit quietly when it is registration or story time. A few take time to settle when given work to do and flit about when allowed free choice. Most of the children are keen to try things out and they work well alongside others and sometimes co-operate with others. Relationships are good and the children are open and friendly to each other, their teachers and visitors. Most manage to put on their coats without help and to look after their own personal needs. By the end of the reception year, most have achieved the Desirable Learning Outcomes in personal and social development.
104. The quality of the teaching in personal and social development is good. The staff give high priority to this area of learning and have high expectations of the children’s behaviour and ability to follow routines. They praise and encourage and discuss how things are to be done. This has ensured a welcoming start to school. The nursery staff know the children very well and are skilled at cajoling, distracting and intervening to keep the children involved. They also remind the children that they are “*learning to be friends*” and give praise warmly when an individual shows significant improvement.

## **Language and literacy**

105. In the nursery, the children are making steady, satisfactory progress in developing attentive listening skills and confidence in speaking out before others. Nearly all answer “Good morning” to their names. They recite nursery rhymes with the help of an adult and sing songs. Whilst many chat easily with adults, several are more reticent and offer words rather than extended conversation. A few children handle books correctly and retell stories from the pictures. A small number have made good progress in recognising their name and some letters of the alphabet. They try to write their name and to copy letters they see.
106. By the age of five, and certainly by the end of the reception year, many of the higher attaining children have made good progress and attained the Desirable Learning Outcomes. They are already reading books from the school reading scheme and recognise words on sight, letters of the alphabet and many sounds such as “sh” and “oo”. Others have attained some of the outcomes but are only in the very early stages of reading and writing. They like books and enjoy the literacy hour. Many are making good progress in learning to form letters correctly and in linking sounds together to spell simple words. By the end of the year, a small minority of children are writing independently and are well on the way to Level 1 of the National Curriculum
107. The quality of teaching and provision is satisfactory with some strengths. Story telling sessions are often lively and engage the children well. Stories and nursery rhymes are used effectively to link experiences across the curriculum and the reception teacher uses Big Books well to introduce writing. Her use of pictures of characters provided a good introduction to speech bubbles and what people might say. However, many of the children find the literacy hour too long and their attention falters especially when the group activities are filling in words or colouring in worksheets. A scrutiny of last year’s work shows a very high number of worksheets had been used with little variety in the task. The staff record the children’s overall attainment at the end of the year but there is little evidence of the children’s ongoing progress or when they achieve a particular Desirable Learning Outcome.

## **Mathematical development**

108. The nursery children count with the help of an adult and some can count to four correctly on their own. They are less secure in counting one by one but in their play they sort and match items such as the crockery for the three bears. They can put things in order of size and know when something is bigger or smaller than something else.
109. In the reception class, much of the work is related to commercially produced workbooks. These books show that the children can match, sort, order things in sequence, count and record simple addition and subtraction problems. However, this does not necessarily ensure that the children have a good understanding of number. By the age of five, and at the end of the reception year, the higher attaining children have attained all of the Desirable Learning Outcomes in mathematics. Most children recognise basic shapes and count to 10 and even to 20 with the help of an adult. During the inspection, the children identified numbers to 10 and added numbers to five.
110. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Much of the work in the nursery is part of ongoing activities and good use is made of situations to encourage the children to count and to see patterns. The reception teacher is introducing the numeracy hour and makes good use of songs and puzzles in class sessions. Some of the group sessions lack variety of task and the children often wait for adult attention – opportunities are missed to provide a wider range of practical activities such as number, board and computer games to keep the

children engaged and using number. There are few systematic records of children's progress in attaining the Desirable Learning Outcomes or evidence to show how higher attaining pupils have been set appropriate challenges.

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

111. The children in the nursery make at least satisfactory progress in learning about their environment. They develop a sense of time passing through the routines of the day and the celebration of birthdays and key events. They collected autumn leaves and seeds on a walk and knew that they had come from the trees. Several children remembered the word "cones". When planting seeds and bulbs they predicted that they would grow like those in the story of "Jasper's beanstalk". As part of daily activities, the children develop skills in cutting, pasting, sticking and building. Many are neat in colouring and take time when using scissors. A significant number, more often boys, have yet to develop the co-ordination skills needed to hold and cut with scissors.
112. By the end of the reception year, the children have a sound understanding of elements of science, geography, history and religious education. They know "All about me" and "My home" and identify different parts of the body. They are aware that time passes and talk about how they have changed since they were a baby. Many can retell Bible stories. When playing in the home corner, many show a detailed understanding of how to feed and care for a baby. Appropriate skills in cutting, folding and joining are fostered and children learn to use a variety of tools safely in rolling and shaping dough and cutting out pictures. They are beginning to handle the computer mouse competently to click on icons and move pictures on the screen.
113. The quality of teaching and provision is satisfactory. In the nursery, the children have many opportunities to look closely at items, to try them and to talk about them. In the reception class, the children often have only "tastes" of experiences and there is little to attract their interest on a day-to-day basis or to engage them in investigating and exploring further things introduced in sessions. The teacher had amassed a good collection of materials and cleverly posed the children the problem of deadening the ticking of a clock. All was tidied away at the end of the session and the children had no chance to try again or to explore other thoughts they may have had. The potential of the space available to the reception class to provide and organise areas to arouse the children's curiosity or to display items of interest is not realised

### **Physical development**

114. At five, most of the children have achieved the Desirable Learning Outcomes in this area of learning. Most are well co-ordinated in their movements and often quite daring and adventurous in their play.
115. The nursery children make good progress in controlling their movements as they run, walk and move around using the wheeled toys. One lunchtime, several children spent many minutes weaving in and out of the bollards as they pushed wheelbarrows and picked up leaves. Others showed developing hand/eye co-ordination as they caught balls thrown by an adult. In lessons in the community room, the children march, jog and gallop to music. They walk along a bench unaided and jump and crawl confidently. Many are making good progress in rolling across a mat.
116. In the reception class, the children have physical education sessions as well as time in the playground and some sessions using the wheeled toys. They make satisfactory progress and move around with little difficulty. Some show no fear in hanging from the climbing bars in the playground. In dance lessons, they follow the instructions on the tape and skip and

make shapes.

117. The quality of teaching and provision is satisfactory. Although the teachers' planning for this area indicates provision for all aspects, in reality in the reception class, too little is provided to develop children's skills in handling tools and different materials. Many are "weekly" rather than the "daily" experiences available in the nursery. Little has been done to provide the children with opportunities to regularly play with sand, water and other media.

### **Creative development**

118. The children make satisfactory progress. At five, they have attained some of the Desirable Learning Outcomes. The children experience a range of activities in art, music story and imaginative play and they use a range of materials to explore colour, shape and texture.
119. Nursery children know how to make orange and have used different things including wool to make "Baa, baa, coloured sheep". They print using shapes and leaves. Reception class children have used screwed tissue to make "Elmer the elephant" and painted their own wrapping paper with stripes and spots. In their play in the house they take on the roles of family members.
120. The quality of teaching and provision is satisfactory. In the nursery, the children often work with the nursery nurse on particular tasks. There is little space for them to experiment with many materials. Similarly in the reception class, there is little opportunity for the children to paint freely and at will. Despite the available space, there is no art and craft area and the children have few sessions using paint and different media. Too often the focus is on achieving a particular product rather than developing the children's skills.

## **ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE**

### **English**

121. Standards in English are below the national average at both key stages. Standards are higher in reading than in writing.
122. The 1999 national test results for seven-year-olds in reading were above the national average. Almost nine out of ten pupils reached Level 2 as expected for their age and one in four reached the higher Level 3. Although the reading results were very high when compared with similar schools, writing was below. Whilst a small number do well and achieve Level 3, a much greater number only just attain Level 2 and it is this which lowers the overall standard. Inspection evidence confirms that pupils' attainment in speaking, listening, and reading is broadly in line with national standards, but their attainment in writing is below. This largely echoes the findings of the last inspection.
123. In the 1999 Key Stage 2 national tests, the percentage of pupils achieving Level 4 as expected for their age was well below the national average. Just over half of pupils attained Level 4 which was similar to the year before. A small number of pupils reached the higher Level 5. However, the school is doing better than many similar schools. As at Key Stage 1, attainment in writing is not as good as it is in reading. By the age of 11, pupils' reading and speaking and listening are broadly in line with national standards, while writing is well below. Inspection evidence confirms that pupils' overall attainment is lower than that expected for their age.
124. Pupils satisfactorily develop their speaking and listening skills as they move through the school. They talk with interest about the books they read and they give increasingly detailed and lengthy responses to questions. Although Year 6 pupils retold the story of Macbeth well

they were less able to explain and justify why they liked the play. Opportunities to develop their confidence in addressing a range of audiences are limited and there is little drama work in English or in other subjects. Year 2 pupils discussing Guy Fawkes guilt coped confidently and included some good explanations of their views and reasons.

125. Standards in reading are good at Key Stage 1. Most Year 2 pupils confidently tackle a variety of texts and read familiar texts with accuracy, fluency and with some understanding. The higher attaining pupils talk about the plot and the characters. Lower attaining pupils use their developing knowledge of letters and their sounds as well as other clues such as picture detail to work out the meaning of new words. Most have experience of reading different types of books, including fiction and non-fiction and know how to use the contents and index to locate information.
126. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils read aloud with accuracy. The more fluent readers include good expression and characterisation. Others however, struggle to understand what they are reading. They use their knowledge of the alphabet appropriately when looking up words in the dictionary.
127. Key Stage 1 pupils make good progress in reading. Parents' willingness to hear their children read adds considerably to progress and many pupils in Years 1 and 2 have read a high number of books at home. At both key stages, work in the literacy hour is drawing pupils' attention to punctuation, word patterns and how authors use language to create effect. At Key Stage 2, pupils make satisfactory progress although some are reading old reading scheme books when they can cope well with books of their own choice.
128. By the end of Key Stage 1, many pupils spell common words correctly, and make reasonable attempts at less familiar words. Many also use capital letters and full stops accurately. They write in simple sentences although higher attaining pupils produce longer stories and news accounts. A few pupils are already joining their letters. By the end of Key Stage 2, higher attaining pupils write at length and use more advanced forms of punctuation and paragraphs. However, the quality of pupils' extended writing is not well developed and many pupils fail to apply their knowledge of paragraphs, grammar and spelling when writing in other subjects. Pupils know the formats of letters, reports, advertisements and applications and also know how to redraft their work. Year 6 pupils used a range of descriptive words in "The eye of the Cyclops", but their work is marred by untidy handwriting. At eleven, pupils do not form letters correctly and few write. Some pupils use computers to word-process their work, achieving a satisfactory standard, but many pupils have only basic skills in using the word processing functions.
129. From a relatively low start, pupils make satisfactory progress in writing at Key Stage 1 and at Key Stage 2. Higher attaining writers do well but could make even faster progress. Too often the teacher's attention is taken up by the lower attaining pupils. At Key Stage 2, pupils often lack the vocabulary to talk about aspects of their writing. This is improving through work done in the literacy hour. Pupils also make satisfactory progress in developing their awareness of grammar, spelling and use of punctuation but less satisfactory progress in using their knowledge of aspects such as tenses and commas when they write freely.
130. The school's commitment to the National Literacy Project is having a positive impact on the quality of teaching, and is helping to raise standards. The targets in individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs often focus on language and literacy but teachers do not always take these into consideration when allocating work in group time particularly in writing. This slows their progress which is better when they receive adult support either on a one-to-one basis or as part of a group
131. Pupils' response is satisfactory overall and sometimes good at both key stages. Most pupils like reading



and enjoy the class and group reading times in the literacy hour. Year 6 lower attaining pupils were very excited about performing the witches scene from "Macbeth" and they practised hard before acting it out for the rest of the class. Most pupils try hard and are keen to do well. However, in all classes, many boys and girls quickly become fidgety and are often slow to respond to instructions and directions

132. The quality of teaching is satisfactory at both key stages. This is an improvement on the last inspection when there were unsatisfactory lessons. One lesson in three is good but many literacy hours lack pace and vitality despite the teachers' enthusiasm. At both key stages, staff plan their lessons conscientiously with particularly good detail in their weekly plans. All are using national guidance to support their planning but not all give sufficient attention to individual pupils' needs, especially those with individual education plans with a literacy focus. Clear learning intentions are set out and they are usually achieved through effective management and organisation. Teachers prepare themselves well and often motivate pupils through their enthusiasm. The Year 6 teacher's use of Shakespeare has caught the interest of the class and her well led discussion of scenes and statements led all pupils to a good understanding of the events and the reasons behind them. Teachers mark the pupils' work regularly and, at both key stages, there are some good examples of helpful and informative comments. The Year 2 teacher sets individual targets in writing but not all the teachers involve the pupils in the assessment and improvement of their own work
133. The co-ordinator conducted a thorough analysis of the pupils' work in the 1998 and 1999 national tests. The identified weaknesses, such as poor use of punctuation, are now guiding curriculum development and the monitoring of planning and provision. National curriculum requirements are met and the school has extended its range of books to support group reading in the literacy hour. The library stock is limited and the teachers make little use of this area to encourage reading groups or independent research.

## **Mathematics**

134. Pupils' attainment is broadly in line with the national average at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. A significant number of pupils show strength in numeracy and, at Key Stage 2, in using and applying mathematics. The 1999 end of Key Stage 1 test results were above the national average. Nine out of ten pupils attained Level 2 as expected for their age and three out of ten reached the higher Level 3. When compared with similar schools, results are well above average. In the Key Stage 2 tests, six out of ten pupils reached Level 4 as expected for their age and one in seven reached the higher Level 5. Although these results were below the national average, they were well above the average of similar schools. In 1998 and 1999, the school has done well when compared with similar schools. Standards have also improved since the 1996 inspection. Observation and scrutiny of pupils' work shows that both Year 2 and Year 6 pupils are on track to attain similar standards. The focus on mental number in numeracy hours is sharpening pupils' skills in handling number and also developing pupils' confidence in solving number problems.
135. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are secure in addition and subtraction to 20 and they understand number patterns to 20. They order and sequence numbers to 100 correctly and are aware of place value when adding and subtracting to 100. Pupils identify and use halves and quarters and recognise odd and even numbers. Many use mental recall of 2,3,4,5 and 10 times tables in simple multiplication and division problems. In shape, space and measures, pupils confidently recognise regular two-dimensional shapes and describe their properties including the number of sides and corners. Higher attaining pupils recognise right angles and estimate and calculate area in squares. In data handling pupils gain some experience from recording length in tables and graphs and from sorting shapes by their characteristics and illustrating their findings in diagrams.

136. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are confident in adding and subtracting numbers to one thousand. They know most of their multiplication tables to 10 and use a variety of mental and written skills when solving number problems involving division and multiplication. They understand the relationship between percentages and fractions and complete complex calculations to two decimal places. In space, shape and measure pupils confidently find the perimeters and areas of regular shapes by calculation as well as by counting squares. They recognise acute, obtuse and reflex angles and know the characteristics of three-dimensional shapes and the properties of rotational symmetry. Pupils compile and use correctly a variety of bar, line and scatter graphs.
137. The school is successful in meeting the needs of pupils with special educational needs. When pupils are given extra support away from the class, the work is closely matched to the targets in their individual education plans. One-to-one support ensures often good progress in lessons and at least satisfactory if slow progress over time.
138. Pupils make overall good progress at both key stages, but in differing aspects of mathematics. Key Stage 1 pupils make good progress in numeracy. Many of the Year 1 pupils already add numbers correctly to 20 and are appreciating the “tens” and the “units”. By Year 2, pupils have a clear understanding of number bonds and ways to add and subtract numbers. Daily quick-fire sessions of counting and looking at number patterns are having a beneficial effect on pupils’ progress and facility with number.
139. At Key Stage 2 pupils apply this knowledge in solving problems. The school has put a lot of effort into developing this aspect and it has been particularly successful at Key Stage 2 so that pupils’ skills have improved and progress is good. Daily rehearsal of mental recall of times tables linked to number problems is enhancing pupils’ readiness with number and their ability to see number relationships. In one lesson, Year 4 pupils made noticeable progress in adding on in 65s and seeing patterns in multiples.
140. In the area of shape, space and measure pupils at both key stages make satisfactory progress. They develop an understanding of the ways to calculate area and use this knowledge well in design and technology. Knowledge and skills in data handling develop steadily and the increasing use of computer software is widening pupils’ awareness of how to present findings. In science, pupils collect a range of data about themselves and illustrate their results in graphical form but there is little planned work to foster pupils’ awareness of number in other subjects.
141. Pupils have positive attitudes towards their work in mathematics at both key stages. Their behaviour in the classroom is usually good; most listen attentively, respond well to questions and are keen to show off their knowledge. Older pupils concentrate well on practical tasks. A group of Year 6 pupils worked co-operatively to sort out those numbers divisible by two numbers and there was much shared discussion and justification for their decisions. Year 1 pupils much enjoyed shaking hands with a requisite number of people or laying out straws in groups of numbers. Such activities retained the interest of all but when working on worksheets, pupils’ concentration often wanders.
142. Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory at both key stages and there are strengths in the way the teachers encourage the pupils to explain their thinking. In the two unsatisfactory lessons observed at Key Stage 2, pupils made insufficient progress due to inaccuracies in the teacher’s information and also because of a lack of varied practical work to support pupils who were unsure of a new number concept. Both teachers evaluated what had happened and restructured subsequent lessons. The change in emphasis and use of practical activities led to pupils making at least satisfactory progress.

143. Most teachers use questions well to focus pupils' attention on different aspects of a task. However, in many lessons there is an over-reliance on work sheets and workbooks which limit the range and scope of pupils' activities, thinking and progress. Once pupils are at work, the teachers give pupils individual help and use a variety of teaching styles to stimulate and enhance learning. On occasion, groups are called together to discuss a point. The teachers prepare thoroughly and lesson plans usually identify clearly what pupils are to learn. Not all lessons however, end with an effective review of whether this has been achieved.
144. The curriculum meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. The school is following the national framework for teaching mathematics and staff are becoming increasingly confident in teaching the numeracy hour. Many good practical number activities have been devised or purchased but staff are less skilled in producing their own work sheets. Pupils' attainment is recorded and the co-ordinator's analysis of the school's results in the 1999 national tests has highlighted the need to place more emphasis on mental arithmetic and decimals and fractions. This is reflected in teacher's medium term planning. A good staff development programme has enabled all to keep up-to-date with the National Numeracy Strategy. A start has been made on increasing the computer software to support pupils' learning, including CD ROM number programs.

### **Science**

145. Standards are broadly in line with the national average. The majority of pupils attain the level expected for their age. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment is below but close to the national average. The 1999 teacher's assessment of the attainment of Year 2 pupils shows that eight out of ten pupils reach the level expected for their age. This is above the average of similar schools. One in four pupils reached the higher Level 3 which was an improvement on the 1998 results and brought the school closer to the national average and above the average for similar schools.
146. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment is below the national average. However, standards are improving, especially in experimental and investigative science. As in 1996, only six out of ten Year 6 pupils reached Level 4 in the 1999 national tests, which was well below the national average. However, one in four pupils reached the higher Level 5, which was similar to the national average and well above the average for similar schools. This raises the overall attainment in science and indicates improvement since 1996.
147. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils at Key Stages 1 and 2 are on line to achieve similar results this year.
148. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils can suggest how to find things out and how to carry out simple investigations. In one lesson, Year 2 pupils predicted what would happen when they tested the strength of plastic and paper bags. They then conducted simple tests with weights, observed carefully and recorded their findings. Pupils know about the properties of common materials and name the major parts of the human body and flowering plants. They know that some materials attract magnets and others do not, and are able to describe why some materials are warmer than others and how they discovered the difference.
149. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have a good understanding of fair testing when devising experiments. They make a series of observations to test their predictions and record the data in a variety of ways, including graphs and diagrams. Year 6 pupils made sensible predictions as to how and why bread goes mouldy. They drew on their awareness that some changes are irreversible. Pupils have a good knowledge of the human circulatory

system and know the principles of healthy eating. They have a good understanding of how the properties of different materials make them suitable for different uses, such as waterproofing, insulators and conductors.

150. Pupils make satisfactory progress at both key stages. During the inspection, good progress was observed in the majority of lessons at both key stages, particularly in the pupils' knowledge and understanding of life processes and in materials and their properties. Pupils develop the skill of making predictions and by Year 4 pupils are able to differentiate between questions they can and can not investigate for themselves. All pupils, particularly those with special educational needs, make good progress when they are allowed to try things out for themselves. In practical investigations in Years 1 and 2, pupils discover that toys move more easily over surfaces such as a hard, polished floor than they do over carpet or sand. Higher attaining pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 begin to repeat observations or measurements in order to make a test even fairer and to ensure more accurate predictions. Pupils develop a good understanding of the human body due to the revisiting of topics in different year groups. By Year 5, higher attaining pupils use their knowledge of body parts to make predictions about people's weight, height and strength.
151. Pupils have good attitudes to science. They enjoy lessons particularly when trying things out. Year 1 pupils were very excited at sorting and classifying fruit; they were very involved and keen to have a turn at telling others what they knew. Pupils listen carefully to instructions and usually give sensible answers during discussions. Year 3 pupils concentrated well when trying to decide what would make a fair test and Year 4 pupils really tried hard to get things right when talking about investigations.
152. The quality of teaching is good at Key Stage 1. It is satisfactory overall at Key Stage 2 but there is good teaching by the co-ordinator which boosts the progress of Year 6 pupils. Teachers generally have good subject knowledge and follow closely the scheme of work. In the more effective lessons there are high expectations of pupils' behaviour, achievement and effort. The use of a supposed letter from a local supermarket asking for help in testing carrier bags not only captured Year 2 pupils' interest but also gave purpose and meaning to their task. Detailed planning of group activities and good questioning techniques ensured that Year 6 pupils were challenged to predict, to justify their views and to identify the factors to consider in setting up their own investigation as to why bread goes mouldy. At the lower end of Key Stage 2, higher attaining pupils are not always challenged to develop their own ideas. Similarly, the frequent use of work sheets in all classes too often constrains pupils' work.
153. A good policy and detailed scheme of work based on the Local Education Authority model emphasise the use of investigative work. Staff are taking this on board and the co-ordinator, who has attended appropriate courses and led staff in-service sessions, is working with others to develop the quality of practical sessions. Her recent monitoring of curriculum planning and use of resources has led to a significant improvement in the quality of investigative science across the school. Cross-curricular links are being developed in geography and history, but very little use is made of information technology. The teachers' use of the scheme of work has led to an improvement in pupils' attainment and significant improvement since the last inspection.

## **OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES**

### **Information technology**

154. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment is below that expected nationally for their age and it is well below at the end of Key Stage 2. There is a marked difference in attainment

between pupils. Those who have access to computers at home show knowledge and skills far higher than those who do not. Most pupils make unsatisfactory progress in all aspects of the subject due to weaknesses in teaching and provision of information technology across the curriculum. The limited range and theft of computers has been a mitigating factor but the 1996 inspection found there were sufficient resources and that pupils were making satisfactory progress.

155. At the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils are not very familiar with computers. They show little competence in using the keyboard to write simple sentences or in using the mouse to click on icons. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have little awareness of the use of information technology in everyday devices. They have only limited skill in using word processing functions to draft, revise and publish their work in different subjects. Many know how to save and print their files but struggle to locate letters on the keyboard. Few Year 6 pupils are competent in using CD-ROM to retrieve information or in using databases.
156. Progress is satisfactory at Key Stage 1 but unsatisfactory at Key Stage 2. During the inspection however, new equipment was in use in several classes and pupils made good progress in working their way through new programs. Many pupils' low level of skill in using the keyboard holds up their progress in using word processing facilities but progress is set to increase as pupils become increasingly familiar with the layout of the keyboard and the menu on screen. Progress is inconsistent however and much reflects the opportunities available in and out of lessons for pupils to use the computers and other equipment. Many Year 4 pupils are more skilled and knowledgeable than Year 6 pupils.
157. Pupils' attitudes to information technology are good. Pupils like working with computers and are pleased to be chosen. Year 2 pupils were very interested in new software that allowed them to "zap" items on screen if they could identify an odd or even numeral. Pupils work well together and the pairing of a more skilled pupil with one less so works well as pupils demonstrate and offer advice to each other. They treat the equipment with care. In class lessons, pupils often find it hard to listen to teachers for long periods as they are anxious to have a go for themselves.
158. The quality of teaching is satisfactory at Key Stage 1 but unsatisfactory at Key Stage 2. Although several lessons were observed when a teacher assisted pupils as they used the computer, in many lessons the computers were switched off or not used. In some cases this was due to the lack of suitable software to complement the lesson content. A scrutiny of teachers' planning shows that too little thought has been given to the potential of available tape recorders, cameras, programmable toys and computers as learning experiences for pupils and this hinders pupils' progress. Staff confidence in using computers is generally low. At Key Stage 2, pupils are being taught how to use computer functions. In successful lessons, such as that where the Year 4 teacher showed pupils how to access information from a database, the teaching was clear and structured. Other lessons for Year 5 and 6 foundered, as pupils' knowledge was too low to appreciate the lesson content. Too much time was lost in managing the constant interruptions from pupils and trying to regain their attention.
159. The development of information technology is a priority for the school with the upgrading of equipment and training for staff. As yet there is no overall curriculum map to show how pupils' skills are to be developed across the curriculum and assessment is inconsistent and unsatisfactory. Teachers and pupils are keeping a record of who has used the computer but there is little systematic recording of pupils' progress in knowledge and skills.
160. The school has sufficient computers but many are outdated and poor quality. Replacements for equipment stolen are not compatible with other items and there is very limited software.

National Curriculum requirements are not being met in controlling and modelling. Teachers are keen to develop the use of information technology but it has a low profile in the school. Many computers are badly sited and chairs are at inappropriate heights for the pupils so that it is difficult for them to see the screen or use the keyboard easily.

### **Religious education**

161. Pupils make satisfactory progress at Key Stages 1 and 2 and their attainment is in line with that outlined in the Salford Agreed Syllabus. This sustains the standards noted in the 1996 inspection but the criticisms made then of some “unsatisfactory attainment at Key Stage 2” still hold true in part.
162. At Key Stage 1, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in learning about stories from the Bible. Year 2 pupils know that Christians worship in a church and that when a child is baptised it is given a Christian name. By the end of the key stage, pupils know that to be a Christian is to follow Christ’s ways such as helping others.
163. Key Stage 2 pupils build on this knowledge and develop a wider appreciation of the different books of the Bible and their significance for Jews and Christians. By Year 6, pupils know that different religions, including Buddhism and Islam, share some similarities as well as differences in beliefs and rituals. They know that principles such as “forgiveness” lie behind many of the stories told by Christ. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress especially when there is discussion of views and opinions. Most pupils are secure in their knowledge of stories and religions but are less secure in looking at the relationship between religious principles and daily life. This imbalance in attainment, also noted in the 1996 inspection, is not a major weakness and is lessening as pupils progress through the content of the Salford Agreed Syllabus.
164. Pupils’ attitudes are satisfactory. Older pupils admit to being bored when there is too much reading and writing. They much prefer discussion and “doing things”. Year 1 pupils were intrigued when they heard about Goliath’s three metre height and Year 3 pupils enjoyed tasting bagels and looking at Jewish artefacts.
165. The quality of teaching at Key Stages 1 and 2 is satisfactory. The teachers are using the syllabus content and ideas well to structure their own work. The Year 2 teacher drew well on the pupils’ recollections of their visit to the church to discuss the font and its purpose. Her use of photographs and items from a christening, including a certificate and a shawl, helped pupils to understand the process and its significance. A scrutiny of last year’s work shows that a high number of similar and unchallenging worksheets were used and in too many instances, these were merely simply colouring exercises. Very little use is made of information technology to support pupils’ learning.
166. The co-ordinator has identified monitoring of classroom practice as a key priority for this year which sees the first coverage of a new element from the Salford Agreed Syllabus. The requirements of the Agreed Syllabus are met and the subject contributes well to pupils’ spiritual and moral development.

### **Art**

167. No Key Stage 1 and 2 lessons in art were seen. Most lessons take place on Friday afternoons. In several classes, art is linked to design and technology which ensures that pupils have a range of “making” experiences. It does not, however, allow much opportunity for pupils to explore and investigate techniques and materials and to express their own ideas. A scrutiny of work on display from this term and last year shows that all pupils, including

those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress and their attainment is generally as expected for their age. This sustains the “sound standards” reported in the 1996 inspection.

168. Key Stage 1 pupils learn how to mix colours, use and combine different materials and to use different techniques such as printing with leaves and fruit. They study the work of artists including Helen Bradley and L.S. Lowry and then produce their own portraits and scenes in a similar style.
169. At Key Stage 2, pupils develop their drawing skills and increase their awareness of techniques and styles used by others. In looking at the black and white illustrations from the book “The Iron Man”, Year 4 pupils have learnt how to smudge, shade and blur with pencil. Year 3 pupils have moulded their own clay pots and tried to recreate Wedgwood blue and white patterns in their decoration. Pupils explore aspects of other cultures such as Rangoli patterns and North American Indian totem poles. Pupils’ drawing skills develop slowly. Observational drawings of training shoes and patterns in textiles often lack fine detail, tone and perspective.
170. Over both key stages, pupils experience a range of subjects and processes but there is little opportunity for them to revisit techniques or to apply them in their own way. Pupils have very little experience of using computers to draw and create images.
171. Pupils enjoy art. Year 3 pupils liked seeing Lowry’s paintings and younger pupils were keen to point out their work on display. Key Stage 2 pupils were also keen to take part in the lunchtime art club.
172. Insufficient teaching was seen to judge overall quality. Teachers’ planning is satisfactory. Much of the work on display, especially in the school hall, shows that different techniques and media have been used, such as the collage and printing in Year 2 pupils’ “Rainbow fish”. However, the use of templates and adult drawn outlines places the emphasis too firmly on the “polished product” rather than on the opportunity for pupils’ self expression and own interpretation of what they see and feel.
173. The co-ordinator is waiting for the publication of national guidance before revising the curriculum. She has compiled a useful collection of photographs of pupils’ work but there is no commentary to indicate to others how pupils’ skills develop or how the work complements topics in other subjects. The school development plan appropriately identifies the need to increase the amount of three-dimensional work and to make more use of resources. At both key stages, there is no permanent art and craft area despite the available space in the shared areas. Photographs record displays of pupils’ work but there is little other use of information technology. Although pupils’ work is neatly displayed, opportunities are missed to use the very good collection of pictures of well known artists’ work to extend pupils’ knowledge and understanding and to encourage their appraisal of others’ art.

### **Design and technology**

174. As in the 1996 inspection, pupils’ attainment in design and technology is as expected for their age. They make sound progress at Key Stages 1 and 2 in learning how to design, make and evaluate a product. Pupils with special educational needs generally do as well as others.
175. Key Stage 1 pupils use both pictures and words when designing puppets to represent characters from

stories. They learn to manipulate simple tools such as scissors, knives and needles. They develop basic cutting and joining skills and apply their knowledge and understanding of size, shape and colour to design and make a number of different products including fruit salad. Year 2 pupils have designed and sewn their own samplers using a running and cross stitch.

176. At Key Stage 2, pupils build appropriately on these skills and develop an appreciation of finishing touches. Year 3 pupils use temporary and permanent joins and finish their work well using paint or paper. Year 6 pupils' made very good progress in deciding what makes a good slipper. They looked carefully at a range of slippers and took possible "user" preferences into account when designing their own version. A good feature of this work was the precise disassembling of a slipper to see the layers and effects of sewing into padding.
177. Pupils' attitudes are always good. They behave well when interested and enjoy lessons. They show great interest in the activities and often take part in animated discussions when sharing their ideas and opinions. Year 6 pupils worked extremely hard to determine what made a "good slipper".
178. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall but with strengths particularly in Year 6. The teachers plan their lessons very carefully and use well the recently revised scheme of work. The clear focus on what pupils will learn ensures that skills are being taught systematically. Pupils are encouraged to look at other products before they begin their own work and to evaluate what they have done before deciding the next steps. In a Year 6 lesson, the teacher's probing questions not only helped pupils to organise their thoughts but also increased their enthusiasm and work rate so that they made very good progress.
179. Resources for design and technology are adequate, well stored and accessible to pupils and teachers alike. Design and technology overlaps with art and pupils gain experience in creating batik, pottery, embroidery, string and wire sculptures, knitting and papier-mâché products.

## **Geography**

180. Only one lesson was observed at each key stage during the inspection. Judgements are also based on talking to the subject co-ordinator, looking at teachers' planning and from scrutinising pupils' work and displays in the classrooms. At both key stages, pupils' attainment is in line with that expected for their age.
181. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in acquiring knowledge about places and peoples and skills in making and using maps and plans. At Key Stage 1, pupils learn about the location and features of local buildings. They become increasingly aware that the world extends beyond their own locality. They know that we live on an island. They carry out fieldwork in the immediate locality and show concern in how they can make it safer. They map their own routes to school. At Key Stage 2, pupils consider how the environment can be improved and carry out an investigation on how planning impacts on the locality. They compare their own area with other places in the country such as Skegness, Sheffield and Inverness. By the end of the key stage pupils can compare and contrast differing regions such as deserts, polar regions and monsoon areas.
182. Pupils' attitudes are satisfactory. Pupils display an interest in geography. They are interested in the world around them, and particularly enjoy discussions.
183. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teachers have secure knowledge and introduce new terms such



as 'deforestation'. They plan their lessons well over the medium and longer term, but short term planning does not always take sufficient account of the needs of individuals, including those with special educational needs. Often, all are expected to do much the same work. When pupils find the work challenging or too easy, their concentration goes and teachers then have to work hard to regain their interest. Teachers' expectations of how pupils can record their work are not high enough, and opportunities are missed to develop pupils' literacy skills.

184. As noted in the last inspection, good use is made of the local area to develop pupils' interest. Pupils also visit Croxteth Hall Country Park and Worsley Woods. The 1996 inspection commented favourably on the use of information technology but the school now has limited software.

## **History**

185. Pupils' attainment is in line with that expected for their age. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in gaining historical knowledge and skills.
186. Key Stage 1 pupils develop a sense of chronology and understand that people and things change over time. They compare old and new and learn about famous people from the past. They begin to use appropriate terms to talk about when, how and why things happened and use different kinds of historical evidence including photographs and artefacts. Year 2 pupils looked at copies of documents from the seventeenth century as they investigated why Guy Fawkes and friends were unhappy with their lot. They wrote a letter to the King as if it was just before the Gunpowder Plot of 1605, held a mock trial of Guy Fawkes and used the computer to compose their own version of the 1605 London News.
187. At Key Stage 2, pupils build on their knowledge of historical events over a longer time scale and find out about periods of history such as the Victorian age. Pupils acquire a sound level of factual information about the daily lives of people in the past from study in class and from visits to places such as Lark Hill Place Museum and Dunham Massey. Year 3 pupils have looked at the life in Victorian times and the changes and effects on people's lives from the building of the canals. Pupils use primary and secondary sources and consider what they tell about the past. Year 6 pupils looked closely at evidence used by archaeologists to determine what conditions were like in Sparta when the Greeks used the Trojan Horse to sack the city of Troy.
188. Most pupils enjoy history and make good use of opportunities to examine old objects and look at pictures and books. Year 3 pupils were excited about going to the museum and most Year 2 pupils worked well in groups to come to their own conclusions about Guy Fawkes. Pupils' work in their books is often poorly presented.
189. The quality of teaching is satisfactory at both key stages. The teachers plan activities to help pupils look at evidence and usually ensure that good resources are ready. Visits enliven pupils' historical learning and effective use is made of role play and discussion to help pupils weigh up the evidence available. Classroom displays, such as that on Ancient Greeks in the Year 6 class, often include questions and encourage pupils to use the information available. Sometimes the work set for the higher attaining pupils is not challenging enough. Although the teachers mark pupils' work, too often they praise indifferent quality and do not give enough explicit guidance as to how pupils can improve their work.
190. When the school was last inspected, it was reported that the teaching of history did not reflect the

demands of the National curriculum and that too much direct instruction by teachers prevented the pupils from developing the skills of independent investigation. Satisfactory progress has been made since then and work in history now reflects national guidance and gives due attention to the development of historical enquiry as well as facts. The co-ordinator monitors teachers' planning but does not evaluate the quality of teaching or pupils' learning in history.

## **Music**

191. Pupils make satisfactory progress and their attainment is generally in line with that expected for their age, as reported in the last inspection. Pupils with special educational needs do as well as others especially in composing and performing. During the inspection, Key Stage 1 class teachers taught music to their own classes and a specialist music teacher from the local education authority taught Years 4 and 6, which were the lessons seen at Key Stage 2. In the other classes, there was no music on the timetable for the week.
192. Pupils make satisfactory progress in listening to and appreciating the sounds of different instruments and types of music heard in some assemblies and lessons. When listening to an instrumental piece, Year 2 pupils recognised the playing of a harp and guitar and suggested that the music might be from China because of the gong sound. They develop an understanding of tempo, dynamics and duration as they learn songs and compose their own musical phrases. Year 1 pupils learn to use symbols to record the instruments used and Key Stage 2 pupils know the names and values of some musical notes. The small number of pupils who learn to play the recorder and keyboards make faster progress in reading music. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils recognise a range of musical types and can play simple tunes. Progress is being boosted by work with a music specialist but a significant minority of pupils are often slow to appreciate and retain musical phrases and knowledge. Many Year 6 pupils struggled to play a simple four note refrain from Queen's "We will rock you" even when they had seen and heard others play it several times.
193. Key Stage 1 pupils sing enthusiastically and often rock or sway with the music. They enjoy singing and adding actions. The girls are more attentive than the boys especially at Key Stage 2 although all enjoy being involved in playing music. Year 4 pupils relished the "Ow-oo-ee" at the end of their new song and Year 6 pupils stamped, clapped and sang with gusto to the song by Queen.
194. The quality of teaching at Key Stage 1 is satisfactory and that by the music specialist at Key Stage 2 is good. Her teaching is providing useful staff development for less confident teachers and a good model of how to structure a series of lessons and combine listening, appraising, performing and composing in each. Key Stage 1 teachers use tapes and radio broadcasts to structure their lessons. However, as noted in the 1996 inspection, there is more focus on singing than other aspects of music especially at Key Stage 1. This is reinforced by weekly sessions of singing and hymn practice. Although the co-ordinator uses her piano playing skills well in these sessions, there are few other times when music is played or shared and opportunities are missed, particularly in assemblies and class times to listen to music from a range of cultures and times.

## **192. Physical education**

195. Pupils' general attainment is as expected for their age but many pupils' attainment is higher than expected at Key Stage 2 in particular aspects, such as ball skills. This was seen as an area of weakness in the last inspection. Pupils benefit from a good range of physical education activities both during and out of school time. Older pupils compete in a number of inter-school matches and competitions and last year the school was very successful in football, netball, cricket and swimming.

196. Pupils make satisfactory progress at Key Stage 1 and good progress at Key Stage 2. From a young age, many pupils show agility and skill in kicking balls and using the playground climbing bars and play equipment. Pupils learn how to catch and pass a ball underarm accurately and safely. Year 1 pupils show developing skill in controlling a ball by rolling, bouncing and kicking it to a partner. Pupils also become more adept at planning and controlling their movements in dance and in using gymnastics apparatus. Year 2 pupils know the effect that exercise has on their bodies and realise that to be more successful they must practice their skills regularly. In one lesson, they made good progress in performing rolls and holding shapes. By Year 4, pupils maintain their balance well and perform a sequence of movements in gymnastics and in line dancing after school. In team sports pupils are aware of the need to follow rules and agree tactics. They criticise their own performance and set themselves achievable targets. Many have good stamina and sustain their performance over a long period. They act safely with due care for themselves and others. Pupils clearly understand the effects of strenuous exercise and how it improves their health, flexibility and muscular strength. All pupils know the importance of warming-up before energetic physical activities.
197. Pupils have good attitudes to physical education and games. Many take pride in their performance in games and gymnastics. They enjoy activity and respond well. Behaviour is generally good and most pupils are keen to do well. They work well together to consider their own and others' performance. Year 4 pupils worked hard to perfect their balances and sequences of movements and their good progress owed much to their willingness to listen to others' comments.
198. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2. Teaching quality has improved since the last inspection. Lesson plans are satisfactory in detail and content. Teachers' knowledge and expertise are good and staff keep up-to-date with the latest developments. Good use is made of demonstrations to draw out pupils' ideas and understanding. Some opportunities to develop numeracy skills were noted as pupils were asked to develop their routines in dance and gymnastics with care and precision.
199. The physical education curriculum makes a considerable contribution to pupils' social development. Working in pairs and as a group in gymnastics, as well as team games, is an integral part of the curriculum. Several instances were seen where teachers asked higher attaining pupils to help others.
200. The curriculum co-ordinator has improved the quality and accessibility of resources to keep up with new demands. Resources overall are satisfactory and the range of small equipment is good. The scheme of work is detailed and highlights assessment opportunities to ensure that all aspects of the National Curriculum for physical education are taught and a steady progression of skills and ability is developed.

198. **Swimming**

201. The inspection of this school included a focussed view of swimming which is reported below.
202. By the end of Key Stage 2, all pupils swim 25 metres. Pupils begin swimming lessons in Year 3. Classes of pupils from Years 3 to 6 take it in turns to go swimming throughout the year. Those pupils who take longer to achieve targets receive tuition from a senior swimming instructor assisted by a class teacher. Pupils' enjoy swimming. They look forward to their weekly trips to the advanced and learner pools four miles from the school. The quality of swimming teaching from two instructors is good. The 30-minute sessions are used well to challenge pupils and to assess their performance. The clear instructions, encouragement and high expectations ensured that Year 3 pupils made

good progress in their first swimming lesson. They graduated from tentatively holding onto the side, to walking across the pool, to trying to swim using floats.

203. The local education authority has its own syllabus for swimming with higher targets than those required by the National Curriculum. The school allocates an appropriate amount of time and asks for a voluntary contribution from parents towards transport costs.

## **PART C: INSPECTION DATA**

### **SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

204. The inspection was carried out by a team of four inspectors, including a lay inspector. During the four days in school, the team observed 66 lessons or parts of lessons accounting for over 45 hours. With additional time given to the inspection of swimming, the inspection lasted 15 inspector days.
205. The inspectors heard 22 pupils read and talked to many pupils about their work this year and in previous years. A range of assemblies, registrations and classroom routines were observed as well as playtimes and lunchtime activities. Pupils were observed entering and leaving school. The current work of several pupils from each year group was examined along with work from 1998/9, photographic evidence of work in previous terms, work on display around the school both at the time of the inspection and in the previous summer term when the lead inspector visited the school, class books, school reports, assessment records and teachers' planning files. The inspectors interviewed all subject co-ordinators, the special educational needs co-ordinator and the Early Years co-ordinator. Meetings were also held with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, full governing body, the Chair of the governing body, and one member of the local education authority support service.
206. School documentation was scrutinised including the previous inspection report and action plans, the current school development plan, the special needs register, individual education plans, attendance records, curriculum planning from this and previous terms, examination results, minutes from meetings of the governing body as well as budgetary information.
207. Parents' views were received at a meeting prior to the inspection attended by seven parents. The inspectors also considered the information from 27 questionnaires returned and the additional comments on three of them.

## 208. DATA AND INDICATORS

### 206. Pupil data

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
Y1 – Y6	158	2	52	95
Nursery	20	0	0	0
Unit/School				

### 206. Teachers and classes

#### 206. Qualified teachers (Y1 – Y6)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	19.75

#### 206. Education support staff (Y1 – Y6)

Total number of education support staff:	2
Total aggregate hours worked each week:	20

#### 206. Qualified teachers (Nursery school, classes or unit)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	20.0

#### 206. Education support staff (Nursery school, classes or unit)

Total number of education support staff:	1
Total aggregate hours worked each week:	32.5
Average class size:	22.6

**206. Financial data**

Financial year:	1999
	£
Total Income	340138.00
Total Expenditure	350403.00
Expenditure per pupil	1844.23
Balance brought forward from previous year	15444
Balance carried forward to next year	5179

## 206. PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out:	178
Number of questionnaires returned:	25

Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	32.0	60.0	8.0		
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	64.0	36.0			
The school handles complaints from parents well	12.5	58.3	16.7	12.5	
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	20.0	56.0	12.0	12.0	
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	12.0	64.0	20.0	4.0	
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	36.0	52.0	8.0	4.0	
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	16.0	64.0	12.0	8.0	
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	40.0	56.0		4.0	
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	28.0	56.0	8.0		8.0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	25.0	45.8	16.7	4.2	8.3
My child(ren) like(s) school	72.0	28.0			