

INSPECTION REPORT

SUTTON MANOR COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Sutton Manor, St Helens

LEA area: St Helens

Unique reference number: 104764

Headteacher: Miss D M Allen

Reporting inspector: Mr D S Roberts
1743

Dates of inspection: 29th January –1st February 2001

Inspection number: 192012

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Forest Road
Sutton Manor
St Helens
Merseyside

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Councillor T Hargreaves

Date of previous inspection: 20th January 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
1743	Mr D S Roberts	Registered inspector	Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology English as an additional language	What sort of school is it? What should the school do to improve further? School's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
19669	Mrs F Kennedy	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values, personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
17913	Mrs B Frost	Team inspector	Mathematics Music Physical education Equal opportunities	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
17767	Mrs S Power	Team inspector	Science Geography History Special educational needs	
23453	Mrs C Cressey	Team inspector	English Religious education Foundation Stage	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This is an average size primary school for boys and girls from three to eleven years old. It serves the former mining communities of Sutton Manor and Four Acres. The declining population in the area is reflected in the fall in the number of pupils on roll since the full inspection in 1997, when 286 pupils attended. The school currently provides full-time education for 220 pupils, and part-time education for a further 21 children in the nursery. Over 47 per cent of pupils are entitled to receive free school meals, which is well above the national average. The pupils' attainment on entry to the nursery is generally well below that found nationally. Currently, 35 per cent of the pupils are on the register for special educational needs, which is well above the national average. There are 45 pupils at stages 3 to 5, most of whom have moderate learning difficulties. A small number of pupils have severe learning difficulties, and some have emotional and behavioural problems, dyslexia, physical and speech and communication difficulties. Nearly one per cent of pupils are from ethnic minority families and speak English as an additional language. This is a little lower than in most schools.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very good school, which has made excellent progress since the full inspection in 1997. It provides a good level of care and support for its pupils and makes very good provision for their personal development. The teaching is predominantly good and often of high quality, promoting good progress by pupils in acquiring key skills for future learning. Highly effective procedures have been developed in most aspects and subjects, although there is scope for making further improvements to the generally effective arrangements for assessing pupils' progress. The headteacher provides outstanding leadership and works closely with the governing body to provide clear vision and a sense of purpose. They are strongly supported by a committed, hard working staff. The school makes highly effective use of its above average income and provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- Children at the Foundation Stage are given a very good start to their education in the nursery and reception class.
- Throughout the school, pupils achieve good standards in relation to their prior attainment in the key skills of English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology.
- Teaching is predominantly good and often of high quality.
- The school is highly successful in promoting pupils' personal development.
- Very good provision is made for promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The headteacher provides outstanding leadership.

What could be improved

- Some aspects of the arrangements for assessing pupils' progress could be improved further.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE THE LAST INSPECTION

The school has made excellent progress since the full Section 10 inspection in 1997, which made it subject to special measures. It has built significantly on the already improving picture apparent at the time of the Section 3 inspection in 1998.

During the four years up to Year 2000, the rate of improvement in standards achieved at the end of Key Stage 2 was better than the national trend. Compared to figures published in the 1997 inspection report, the proportion of pupils reaching national standards at the end of Key Stage 2 has increased from 33 per cent to 76 per cent in English, from 51 per cent to 73 per cent in mathematics, and from 65 per cent to 97 per cent in science. In addition, there has been a significant increase in the proportion of pupils exceeding national standards in all three core subjects by the time they reach the end of Key Stage 2. The quality of teaching has improved considerably. The proportion of lessons judged to be at least

satisfactory has increased from 43 per cent, in the 1997 inspection, to 99 per cent, and the proportion judged to be very good or better from one per cent to 43 per cent. Exceptional progress has been made in information and communication technology (ICT), where standards previously described as unsatisfactory are now often above the national expectation. In addition, considerable progress has been made in improving standards and quality in subjects other than English, mathematics, science and ICT.

All of the key issues listed in the Section 3 inspection report in 1998 have been successfully addressed. Significant improvements have been made to the provision for pupils with special educational needs. The arrangements for assessing pupils' progress have been strengthened and are now generally good, although there is scope for further improvement to some aspects of the procedures.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	All schools			similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
English	E	E	C	A	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
mathematics	E	E	C	A	
science	E	E	B	A	

The table shows that in the Year 2000 the school's test results for English and mathematics were in line with the average for all schools, but well above average compared to schools with similar characteristics. In science, results were above the average for all schools and well above the average for similar schools.

Inspection findings indicate that children make good progress in the nursery and reception class. By the time they reach the end of the Foundation Stage, many achieve the early learning goals in most areas of learning, although the proportion doing so is below that found nationally in communication, language and literacy and mathematics. By the end of Key Stage 1, standards are broadly in line with those found nationally, which indicates a better picture than the national test results in English and mathematics. The difference in performance is due to the varying ability of different year groups and the positive impact of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy. Standards in information and communication technology and in all other subjects are broadly in line with the national expectations.

Standards at the end of Key Stage 2, are in line with the national average and consistent with national test results in mathematics and science. In English, standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are below average, although a majority of pupils are on course to achieve the national standard. Standards in information and communication technology are at least in line with, and often above, national expectations. In all other subjects, pupils achieve standards which are consistent with national expectations, and some of the work in art and design, and design and technology, is of high quality.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Throughout the school, pupils show good attitudes towards their school work. They listen attentively and show interest in their work. They are eager to learn and generally give of their best at all times.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is of a good standard in classrooms and about the school.
Personal development and relationships	Very good throughout the school. Pupils are enthusiastic to accept responsibility and show respect for each other's feelings, values and beliefs.
Attendance	Satisfactory.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

During the inspection, 99 per cent of lessons were at least satisfactory. In 84% of lessons, the teaching was good or better, 43% was very good or better and six per cent was excellent. Throughout the school, there is a close match between the quality of teaching and learning.

Teaching at the Foundation Stage is very good. It provides a very good start for children's education. At Key Stages 1 and 2, teaching of English is good and often of high quality. Teaching of mathematics is generally good at Key Stage 1 and regularly of high quality at Key Stage 2. Science teaching is generally good at both key stages, and ICT teaching is good at Key Stage 1 and very good at Key Stage 2. Throughout the school, pupils make good progress in extending their literacy, numeracy, and ICT skills. In other subjects, teaching is generally good and sometimes of high quality. The valuable and effective work of support staff has a very positive impact on pupils' progress.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a very good curriculum for pupils at the Foundation Stage. At both key stages, the school provides a good, relevant curriculum which has many very strong features. Development of literacy, numeracy and ICT skills is very strongly emphasised and very good provision is made for extra-curricular activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good provision throughout the school. Work is pitched at an appropriate level, based on the targets set in individual education plans. Good support provided by classroom assistants and other support staff.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The school makes good provision for pupils for whom English is an additional language. Class teachers provide work which is appropriately challenging. External support is available when necessary.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	All dimensions are promoted very successfully through assemblies and across the curriculum. Work is supported by very effective use of display. Good adult role models and many opportunities to participate in extra-curricular activities contribute significantly towards pupils' personal development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development, and providing strong educational guidance and support. Effective procedures for promoting good behaviour, and very good arrangements for promoting attendance. Arrangements for child protection are highly effective. Generally effective procedures for assessment. However, there is some scope for teachers' marking to be more consistent in identifying areas for pupils to improve; and for improving the procedures for monitoring pupils' progress in the non-core subjects.

A very strong partnership has been developed with parents, most of whom would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or problems.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Headteacher and senior management provide excellent leadership and are well supported by highly effective co-ordinators for subjects and aspects of the curriculum.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governing body co-operates very effectively with the headteacher to provide clear vision. Governors successfully ensure that all statutory requirements are met.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good use is made of national and local comparative information to evaluate performance and set appropriate targets for improvement.
The strategic use of resources	Highly effective school development planning enables money to be spent wisely on educational priorities. All resources are managed efficiently.

The overall quality of leadership and management is excellent. The governors successfully apply best value principles. The school is very well staffed and resourced.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The children like school. • The children make good progress. • Behaviour is good. • They get the right amount of homework. • The teaching is good. • Parents are well informed about their child's progress. • They would feel comfortable in approaching the school with questions or problems. • The school expects their child to work hard and achieve their best. • The school is well led and managed • The school is helping their child to become mature and responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A relatively small minority would like a greater range of learning activities outside the classroom. • Some feel that the pupils do not receive the right amount of homework.

The inspectors agree with parents' positive views about the school. They found the use of homework to be a good feature, and the range of extra-curricular opportunities offered to pupils to be very good.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

- 1 The attainment levels of children on entry to the nursery are generally well below those found nationally. They make good progress at the Foundation Stage, in the nursery and reception class, although the proportion of children achieving appropriate standards for their age by the time they enter Key Stage 1 remains below that found nationally in communication, language and literacy and mathematics.
- 2 Comparative information, based on the Year 2000 National Curriculum test results, indicates that the performance of pupils reaching the end of Key Stage 1 in reading and writing was well below the average for all schools, but in line with the average for pupils in schools with similar characteristics. In mathematics, pupils' performance was well below those in all and similar schools.
- 3 Comparative information for pupils reaching the end of Key Stage 2 in the 2000 national tests, indicates that the pupils' performance in English and mathematics was in line with the average for all schools, but well above average in comparison with pupils in similar schools. In science, the pupils' performance was above the average for all schools, and well above that of similar schools. Test results also indicate that a significant minority of pupils exceed the national standard in all three core subjects.
- 4 Key Stage 2 national test results for the four years up to Year 2000, indicate a rate of improvement in the core subjects which is above the national trend. During the three years up to Year 2000, the boys' performance in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, in relation to their age group nationally, was better than that of girls. The school has identified gender variations and is monitoring carefully to ensure that no group is disadvantaged in any way by the school's provision.
- 5 Inspection findings for the end of Key Stage 1 indicate that standards are broadly in line with those found nationally in speaking and listening, reading, writing, mathematics and science. This is a better picture than that presented by national test results, and reflects the ability levels of pupils in the current Year 2, as well as the continuing positive impact of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy. Pupils' achievements in relation to prior attainment are good in all aspects of English, mathematics and science.
- 6 Inspection findings for the end of Key Stage 2 indicate that standards are broadly in line with the national average in mathematics and science. This is consistent with the Year 2000 national test results. In English, the standards achieved by pupils in the current Year 6 is below that found nationally. However, this is not typical of the general standard throughout Key Stage 2, which is about average and consistent with the most recent national test results for Key Stage 2.
- 7 In English, pupils at both key stages make good progress in relation to their prior attainment, and a clear majority reach standards which are at least appropriate for their age in speaking and listening, reading and writing. In classrooms and assemblies, pupils have opportunities to express ideas and opinions and know that their answers will be listened to and valued. This helps them to make consistent progress in developing their communication skills. Pupils are encouraged to read for a variety of purposes, and the wide range of high quality and challenging books helps them to

make good progress. Older pupils make regular use of dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses, encyclopedias, CD-ROMs and the Internet. This helps them to develop good independent research skills. Pupils at both key stages make good progress in extending their writing skills. By the age of seven, the majority of pupils spell common words correctly and make good attempts at more complex words. They benefit from opportunities to write for a variety of purposes. At Key Stage 2, pupils progressively extend their ability to write for different purposes and audiences using a range of styles. The writing of older pupils is well organised, and the ability of higher attaining pupils to use bullet points, lists and paragraphs to add interest to their writing is a strong feature in their learning. Pupils make good use of information and communication technology to enhance their work and increase their language skills. They also extend these skills during work in other subjects. In design and technology, for example, the requirement for pupils to complete written evaluations at the end of various projects, are challenging activities which enable pupils to extend their vocabulary and writing skills.

- 8 In mathematics, pupils at all levels of attainment, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in developing their numeracy skills. By the age of seven, most pupils can read, write and order numbers to a hundred and beyond. Many are quick to recall basic number facts. Their progress is helped by the strong emphasis placed by their teachers on mental activities during the numeracy hour. At Key Stage 2, pupils develop growing skills in organising their work effectively, and this helps older pupils to solve quite complex problems. By the end of the key stage, pupils have a good knowledge of more advanced mathematical concepts such as the relationships between fractions, decimals and percentages. At both key stages, pupils benefit greatly from frequent opportunities to practise and develop their numeracy skills in other areas of the curriculum.
- 9 In science, standards at the end of both key stages are broadly in line with those found nationally. Most pupils, at all levels of attainment, make good progress in extending their scientific knowledge in all areas of science. They have a very good knowledge of the principles of scientific enquiry, although some are less good at applying these principles in their investigations. Most pupils have good scientific vocabulary and are able to apply the correct terms in appropriate circumstances.
- 10 Standards in information and communication technology are at least in line with the levels set by the National Curriculum at both key stages, and often above the national expectations at Key Stage 2. At Key Stage 2, the very good use made of the computer suite to facilitate whole-group teaching and effective demonstration, contributes greatly towards the good achievement by pupils at all levels of ability in relation to their prior attainment. By the end of Key Stage 2, the ability of pupils to structure, refine and present information in different ways and to create quite complex sequences of instruction to control events on screen, are particularly strong features in their learning.
- 11 Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs make very good progress towards the targets set in their individual education plans. Appropriate provision is made for all pupils, meeting their particular needs in terms of gender, race, background and ability. In all of these categories, pupils make generally good progress during their time in the school.

- 12 In all other subjects, standards are at least in line with the expectations set by the National Curriculum, and there are examples of work of particularly high quality in art and design, and design and technology.
- 13 Pupils at both key stages make generally good progress in extending their literacy and numeracy skills. The successful implementation of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy at both key stages is having a positive impact on pupils' achievement.
- 14 The governors have set appropriately challenging targets for improvements in English and mathematics for future years, which take account of the varying ability levels of different cohorts of pupils. The school is on course to achieve the targets set for 2001.
- 15 The overall improvement in standards since the full Section 10 inspection in 1997 is excellent. The proportion of pupils reaching Level 4, the national standard by the end of Key Stage 2, has increased from 33 per cent to 76 per cent in English, from 51 per cent to 73 per cent in mathematics, and from 65 per cent to 97 per cent in science. In information and communication technology, standards which were previously described as unsatisfactory now meet or exceed national expectations. The 1997 inspection referred to underachievement by many pupils in most other subjects. The school has successfully addressed all of these weaknesses, and pupils now make at least satisfactory progress in all subjects.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

- 16 Throughout the school, pupils show good attitudes towards their work, and this has a positive effect on their learning.
- 17 Behaviour in the school has improved since the full inspection in 1997. It is now consistently good in classrooms, corridors, the playground and the dining room. The pupils move around the school in an orderly manner, showing consideration for one another and respecting school rules and conventions. It has not been necessary to exclude any pupil in the past year.
- 18 The pupils are polite to their teachers and to all the adults who work with them. They enjoy talking to visitors and are pleased and proud to explain the work they are doing and to point out interesting features of the work which is on display. Parents and carers report that they are very pleased with the attitudes and values that the school fosters. They appreciate the happy atmosphere which prevails inside school and are almost totally in agreement that their children like school.
- 19 The enthusiasm shown by pupils for all school activities is a strong feature of the school. They enjoy their work and their play times and they are keen to participate in the many extra curricular activities which the school provides. Their attitudes and behaviour are contributing positively to their learning and to the educational standards which they achieve. In lessons, the vast majority are attentive and eager to learn. They contribute confidently to class discussion and listen carefully to what others have to say. When engaged in practical work, for example in science and design and technology lessons, the pupils share the resources sensibly and are mindful of their own and other peoples' safety. They participate enthusiastically in physical education (PE) lessons, are careful in the way they use the apparatus and helpful in putting it away at the end of the lesson. The safety aspect of lessons such as design and technology and PE has improved significantly since the full inspection in 1997.

- 20 The pupils behave very well in assembly. They enter and leave the hall quietly and listen attentively to the person who is leading the assembly. During the inspection, they very much enjoyed the assembly led by a visitor from a local church, joining in the singing tunefully and with real enthusiasm. In an assembly based on the theme of making the right decisions, the pupils were very attentive. They enjoyed listening to the story and made the most of the time given for quiet reflection as to how they might relate the moral of the story to their own lives.
- 21 Relationships at all levels are very good. The pupils are well mannered, friendly and helpful. A very strong and commendable feature of the school is the way in which the pupils work co-operatively with a partner, for example in information and communication technology lessons, and as part of a group, for example in literacy and numeracy lessons. They show maturity in the way in which they discuss their work and share ideas. The support they give to one another in this way contributes significantly to their learning.
- 22 Throughout the school, the pupils readily respond to the many opportunities given to them to exercise initiative and take responsibility. In class, they help by giving out and collecting in books and other equipment. They collect the registers from the school office and return them to the office after registration. The Year 6 pupils take appropriate additional responsibility; for example, they operate the overhead projector for assembly and help teachers with lesson preparation during the lunch break. House captains and prefects make a very valuable contribution to the school community. Their duties include encouraging and rewarding good behaviour and assisting with the supervision of pupils at lunchtime.
- 23 Attendance in the school is satisfactory, although slightly below the national average. There has been good improvement since the full inspection in 1997 when attendance was judged to be unsatisfactory. Good levels of punctuality have been maintained since the 1997 inspection. The great majority of the pupils arrive punctually in the mornings and lessons start promptly. Registration procedures comply with statutory requirements and registers show a clear distinction between authorised and unauthorised absence. Illness and holidays are the main reasons for absence, but the rate of unauthorised absence remains above the national average.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

- 24 The quality of teaching and learning is generally good and often very good. During the inspection, the teaching in 99 per cent of lessons was judged to be at least satisfactory. Over 84 per cent of the lessons observed were judged to be at least good, 43 per cent very good or better and six per cent excellent. Throughout the school, there is a close match between the quality of teaching and pupils' learning.
- 25 The quality of teaching for children at the Foundation Stage, in the nursery and reception class, is generally of very good quality. Nearly 60 per cent of lessons observed were judged to be of high quality. All staff have a secure understanding of how children learn and recognise the importance of play and first hand experiences. This has a very positive effect on the good progress children make towards the early learning goals and provides a very good start to their education. The effective contribution of support staff is a strong feature in all of the classes for the under fives. The teaching is of good quality in all areas of learning and is consistently of high quality in the area of communication, language and literacy.

- 26 Teaching in both nursery and reception class gives high priority to promoting the children's personal and social development. This helps them to settle quickly and make good progress in all areas of learning. Throughout the early years, good teaching is particularly effective in developing the children's speaking and listening skills. This enables children to contribute more confidently and take greater advantage of the range of learning opportunities provided for them.
- 27 During the Foundation Stage, very good teaching enables the majority of children to achieve well in relation to prior attainment in all areas of the curriculum. Most make good progress in developing their early literacy and numeracy skills and in extending their knowledge and understanding of the world. Many show a growing independence when working at computer work stations and confidence in using the keyboard and mouse to work through relevant computer programmes. Good class management and lesson organisation contribute positively towards the children's good progress in the physical and creative areas of learning. The consistent emphasis placed on extending children's literacy and numeracy skills during work in all areas of learning is a strong feature in the work. Planning and assessment of work are completed very efficiently in all classes, and the teaching of children with special educational needs is of good quality throughout the Foundation Stage.
- 28 At Key Stage 1, the quality of teaching is generally good and sometimes of high quality. Over 74 per cent of lessons observed were judged to be good or better, and 21 per cent were very good. The quality of teaching at Key Stage 2 is mostly good and very often of high quality. Over 90 per cent of lessons were at least good, 52 per cent were very good or better and 13 per cent were excellent.
- 29 The teaching of English and mathematics is nearly always of at least good quality at both key stages. The successful implementation of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy is an important factor in the good progress made by pupils at both key stages in developing their literacy and numeracy skills.
- 30 The teaching of English is generally good and often very good. Over 50 per cent of lessons observed were of high quality. At both key stages, teachers have a secure knowledge of the subject and a good understanding of how pupils learn. Lessons are well planned and follow closely the structure of the National Literacy Strategy. This enables pupils to build progressively on their skills as they move through the school. Teaching is carefully structured to meet the needs of pupils at all levels of attainment. Teachers share the learning objectives of lessons with the pupils, ensuring that they are very clear about what it is they are expected to learn. Speaking and listening is given a very high profile, and staff ensure that pupils are listened to carefully and encouraged to express their views. This is reflected in pupils' growing confidence in expressing themselves. Imaginative and challenging opportunities are provided for pupils to write at length, and the development of correct spelling and punctuation is strongly emphasised. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is consistently good. This is an important factor in the very good progress which most pupils make towards the targets set in their individual education plans. The teaching also makes good provision for the minority of pupils for whom English is an additional language, who

make good progress in extending their language skills. In all aspects of English, the arrangements for assessing pupils' progress are generally good. Pupils' work is marked regularly and there are some very good examples of how teachers' comments help pupils to improve their work. However this is not a consistent feature, and some marking places insufficient emphasis on identifying specific areas for improvement.

- 31 The teaching of mathematics is generally good at both key stages, and there is some high quality teaching at Key Stage 2. Overall, the teaching demonstrates a good understanding of the expectations of the National Numeracy Strategy. The content of work is usually well matched to the pupils' levels of attainment. This enables pupils at all levels of attainment to make good progress in most aspects of mathematics. The highly effective teaching of mental work is a particularly good feature. This aspect of mathematics is usually interesting, challenging and moves at a good pace. The pupils respond with interest and enthusiasm and make particularly good progress. Good quality questioning is a common feature in most lessons, and this is very effective in probing pupils' understanding and consolidating their learning. Pupils with special educational needs benefit greatly from the sensitive and caring manner in which they are supported. This approach enables them to achieve very good standards in relation to their prior attainment. Increasing emphasis is being placed on setting individual targets for pupils in mathematics. However, not all targets are sufficiently precise to allow accurate measurement of progress.
- 32 Throughout the school, the teaching of science is almost always of at least good quality. A third of lessons observed during the inspection were very good. The teaching is very successful in engaging the interest of pupils. Many opportunities are provided for pupils to engage in practical investigation, and this enables them to make good progress in extending their scientific skills and understanding and makes a good contribution to their social and moral development. In most classes, high quality questioning is very successful in probing pupils' understanding and consolidating their learning. Teaching is effectively guided by a well thought out scheme of work, which enables lessons to challenge pupils at all levels of attainment. The system of assessment enables teachers to monitor pupils' progress efficiently. However, there is scope for teachers' marking of pupils' work to be more precise in identifying key areas for improvement.
- 33 In information and communication technology (ICT), teaching is good at Key Stage 1 and very good at Key Stage 2. This enables pupils to gain confidence and appropriate skills in the early stages, and make rapid progress at Key Stage 2. The high quality of ICT teaching at Key Stage 2 is a strength of the school. All of the lessons observed were in the very good to excellent category. Teachers are secure in their subject knowledge, the planning is well conceived and expectations of the pupils are high. This enables pupils to make confident use of the good facilities available in ICT.
- 34 In religious education, the teaching is of generally good quality and enables the school to meet the requirements of the St Helens Agreed Syllabus.
- 35 Throughout the curriculum, teachers make appropriate provision for pupils at all levels of attainment and respond effectively to the differing needs of boys and girls and pupils from racial minority groups. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good throughout the school. The very effective co-operation between teachers and support staff is a strong feature which helps to promote very good progress by pupils in this category. Their work is supported by good quality individual education plans. This enables the pupils to work systematically towards the realistic and manageable targets set for them.

- 36 In other subjects, tasks are pitched at an appropriate level to challenge pupils, and opportunities are generally taken effectively to extend literacy and numeracy skills. However, in geography and history insufficient opportunities are provided for pupils to respond independently through written work about the topics they have studied. In art and design, design and technology and music, the teaching promotes successfully the pupils' creative development. At both key stages, the teaching of physical education is generally of good quality, enabling pupils to make steady progress in their physical development.
- 37 The school has made excellent progress in improving the quality of teaching since the full inspection in 1997. The proportion of lessons judged to be satisfactory or better has increased from 43 per cent to 99 per cent, and the proportion judged to be very good or better from one per cent to 43 per cent. The improvement in the quality of teaching is a major factor in raising standards and quality across the curriculum. Very hard work by all staff and the successful implementation of initiatives, such as the national strategies for literacy and numeracy, have contributed greatly towards better quality teaching throughout the school.

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

- 38 The school provides a good quality, well planned curriculum which has many very strong features and is appropriately broad, balanced and relevant. It successfully meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and the expectations set out in the locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education. The curriculum at the Foundation Stage, is based appropriately on the nationally agreed programme for the children's learning. In the nursery, the curriculum is practical and stimulating and is very well matched to the children's varying needs. In the reception class, the content of the work is planned carefully to support the children's progress towards the early learning goals for each area of the curriculum. Throughout the school, much hard work and professional dedication by the staff have achieved a high level of success in implementing the national strategies for literacy and numeracy. The range and depth of the curriculum is reflected in the high quality of display, both in the classrooms and in more public areas of the school. Such displays are vibrant and purposeful and mirror the school's stated aim to provide its pupils with a meaningful and worthwhile curriculum.
- 39 Through the use of carefully chosen resources and a detailed programme of staff training, effective strategies are in place to teach the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. In addition, a well organised system is in place for the effective deployment of all teachers, including the headteacher and classroom assistants. This makes optimum use of staff expertise and has the effect of providing the pupils with a favourable adult to pupil ratio, which gives those at different levels of attainment much carefully targeted support for their learning, especially in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. For example, in a science lesson in Year 5, held in the afternoon, the pupils investigated the effect of the size of a parachute canopy on its rate of fall. Since the nursery children only attend in the morning, the nursery teacher's expertise in ICT is used to advantage with other classes during the afternoon sessions. She took a small group of pupils to work in the ICT suite and provided them with the necessary skills to graph their results using a basic spreadsheet so that they could interpret their findings in a clear and well organised way.
- 40 The teachers give generously of their own free time to provide the pupils with a varied programme of extra-curricular activities. These are open to boys and girls and are well attended. They include a variety of aesthetic, creative, cultural, intellectual and

sporting activities which enhance and enrich the statutory curriculum. In addition, the school has recently introduced a programme of residential visits for the older pupils. For example, last year a group of Year 5 and 6 pupils spent four days visiting London and spent time experiencing the learning opportunities within the Millennium Dome.

- 41 The school's provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development has improved considerably since the full inspection in 1997. The unsatisfactory features identified have all been addressed and provision is now of very good quality. The school's values and principles are very apparent and have a very positive effect on the quality of the teaching and learning.
- 42 Provision for spiritual development is very good. Assemblies provide pupils with very good opportunities for reflection and prayer. Music in particular provides a reverent atmosphere for worship and the sharing of special moments. Well-chosen texts in English help pupils to come to terms with family crises such as death, separation and divorce. Successes in both academic and personal achievements are recognised and valued by all.
- 43 Provision for moral development is very good. Pupils are encouraged to think about the choices they have to make and the implications for themselves and others. The sensitive issues of family violence, drugs and bullying are handled imaginatively through drama and support from local agencies. The system of team captains, prefects and monitors shares very effectively the responsibility for appropriate behaviour with the pupils, and they respond to this with maturity and dependability. In assemblies, issues such as kindness, friendship and caring are taught well through Bible stories and fables.
- 44 Provision for social development is very good. The pupils are aware of their responsibilities to the school and their local community. Pupils have very good opportunities to develop responsibility, self-confidence and independence through well-planned lessons and the routines and structures in place, such as the team system. The very good relationships apparent in lessons ensure that pupils feel comfortable in discussing sensitive issues which concern them. The organisation of lessons provides many opportunities for pupils to work together and to compete fairly. A sense of citizenship is developed as pupils take part in local sport and music festivals and health initiatives such as the 'Crucial Crew' scheme on the role of the emergency services. Older pupils organise their own fundraising events to collect money for world tragedies.
- 45 Provision for cultural development is very good. Pupils have opportunities to learn and appreciate the richness of their own and other people's cultures, through literature, music, art, geography and history. The school is very aware of its mining heritage. Local citizens, artists and craftsmen are invited into school to bring the village's culture alive for the pupils and stimulate their interest in traditions, skills and events. Through religious education lessons pupils study the major world religions and all pupils are made aware of important festivals such as Christmas, Divali, Eid and the Chinese New Year.

- 46 The provision for pupils with special educational needs is much improved since the last inspection. The school now makes good provision for the pupils and complies fully with the Code of Practice. There are good procedures for early identification of pupils who need extra support, and individual education plans are completed for all pupils who need them. The targets identified in the individual education plans are specific and measurable to meet the identified needs. The progress made by the pupils against the targets set for them is reviewed at regular intervals and parents are kept informed at all stages. The pupils with special educational needs are given high quality classroom support in most lessons. The number of support teachers and staff, and the way they are deployed, is effective in ensuring that pupils with special educational needs are able to take a full part in all lessons.
- 47 The school makes good provision for pupils for whom English is an additional language and when necessary enlists relevant support and expertise from the local authority. The creation of opportunities for pupils in this category to demonstrate their knowledge and skills in their own language and culture, when contributing to lessons, is a strong feature in the school's work.
- 48 Throughout the school, the governors' policy for equality of opportunity is implemented effectively. All pupils, irrespective of gender, race or religion, have equal access to the curriculum. The good quality and range of learning resources reflects the school's commitment to equality of opportunity. Through their use and careful planning, the pupils are helped to develop positive attitudes towards other cultures and religions. This often occurs through relevant texts selected, for example, for the literacy hour, and also through the content of the work in subjects such as art, music, geography and history. Teachers take care to involve all pupils, during lessons, through well targeted questioning and through close interaction with pupils during group activities. Provision for pupils of different levels of ability is a strong feature. Teachers plan work which is appropriately challenging, and close co-operation between teachers, support staff and voluntary helpers, provides pupils with a good level of support during learning activities.
- 49 The school is particularly successful in promoting the pupils' personal and social development. In all classes, an effective health education programme is taught. This includes appropriate attention to drug misuse and sex education. The pupils are given essential facts and the necessary skills and knowledge to enable them to make informed choices now and in the future.
- 50 The pupils' learning is also supported effectively through good links with the local community. For example, a number of staff from the glass maker, Pilkingtons, are involved in a recently established paired reading scheme in the school. The school also makes good provision for extending the pupils' learning through well organised outside visits and through specially invited visitors to the school. For example, Chinese parents recently came in to talk to the pupils about the Chinese New Year.
- 51 Strong links are well established with the local high school to which the vast majority of the pupils transfer at the end of Key Stage 2. A smooth system is in place for the transfer of relevant records and attainment data. Good induction procedures help the pupils to feel confident about the transfer. Part of this process involves pupils and their parents visiting the school prior to the transfer. Procedures are also in place for both staff and some pupils to visit Sutton Manor as part of the process. For example, some of the secondary aged pupils recently came to work with Year 6 pupils as part of a "Youth Action" scheme related to safety in the community.

- 52 The quality of curriculum provision has improved considerably since the full inspection in 1997 when many features were described as unsatisfactory. The good quality curriculum now in place ensures that pupils in Year 6 are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

- 53 The school has made excellent improvement in this aspect of its work since the full inspection in 1997 when provision was unsatisfactory. Procedures for child protection and for ensuring the pupils' welfare, health and safety are now very good.
- 54 The designated teacher responsible for child protection ensures that all staff, teaching and non-teaching, receive appropriate training and have access to the local education authority's guidelines. The headteacher, the deputy head and members of the governing body make regular inspections of the school building and grounds and see to it that matters of concern are dealt with swiftly. Day-to-day procedures are now more rigorous and teachers make sure that equipment is handled safely and sensibly in all lessons, including design and technology and PE, the two areas of risk highlighted in the 1977 inspection report. The level of supervision during morning and afternoon breaks is now good. Improvements have been made to the school playground and there are now quiet areas where pupils can sit and talk to their friends. Lunchtime arrangements have been improved by the introduction of activities such as basketball in the playground, use of the library for quiet reading and organised games in the school hall.
- 55 Good progress has been made in improving assessment arrangements and in addressing the key issues identified by the Section 3 inspection in 1998. Information from national test results and the school's own tests is now used very effectively to identify strengths and weaknesses and set targets for improvement in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. In mathematics, the setting of individual targets, following careful assessment of pupils' work, is proving particularly successful.
- 56 The school has quite rightly concentrated on strengthening assessment procedures in the core subjects in recent years. Arrangements for monitoring pupils' progress in other subjects, such as history and geography, are not so effective and need attention as the school implements new National Curriculum requirements in these areas of the curriculum introduced in September 2000.
- 57 Arrangements for monitoring and supporting the pupils' personal development are very good. Since the full inspection in 1997 the school has developed a more systematic approach to personal, social and health education, based on the local education authority's agreed framework for this area of the curriculum. Teachers' planning is very detailed, mainly following the "Health for Life" programme of study. All the pupils have a timetabled lesson each week and there are useful talks by visiting speakers on a wide range of topics linked to the pupils' health and personal safety. During the inspection, the Year 5 pupils were engaged in interesting work on water safety, following a talk the previous week by an officer of H.M. Coastguard. In addition to a discrete lesson every week, there are well planned cross-curricular links with English, science, religious education and geography. School assemblies play an important part in developing the pupils' personal development, with visiting speakers from local churches and

thoughtfully planned themes covering issues such as bullying, keeping the school rules and making the right decisions.

- 58 Since the full inspection in 1997 the school has increased the opportunities which are available for pupils to exercise initiative and take responsibility. Throughout the school the pupils contribute to the smooth running of school routines by carrying out tasks such as collecting attendance registers from the office and returning them after registration. The Year 6 pupils take responsibility as team captains and prefects, with duties which include encouraging good behaviour and helping to supervise the pupils at lunch time. By helping in ways such as these the pupils are contributing to the strong sense of community which prevails within the school, with everyone working together for a common purpose.
- 59 The school gives high priority to monitoring and promoting good behaviour. At the beginning of every school year the pupils draw up a set of rules for their class. Each pupil has his or her own "Good Behaviour" book which explains the code of conduct, arrangements for play time and lunch time, how to deal with bullies and how to keep safe. The pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their own behaviour and so they include their own ideas in their behaviour books, for example ways in which they, as individuals, can be caring, helpful and kind. The school has a very positive approach to behaviour management. Good behaviour and hard work are rewarded consistently with verbal praise, stickers, certificates and team points. Sanctions for dealing with persistent misbehaviour or serious misconduct are entirely appropriate. All parents and carers are given a copy of the policy statement on bullying which explains, very clearly, the many forms bullying can take and the part parents can play in helping the school prevent it.
- 60 Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are very good. The school has worked hard since the full inspection in 1997 and the attendance rate has risen from the reported 87.5% to 93.2% for the school year 1999/2000. An attendance cup for the class with the highest weekly attendance has proved a good incentive. Parents are kept fully informed in relation to the importance of regular attendance and punctuality through the prospectus and the home-school agreement. Monitoring arrangements are very thorough and concerns about poor attendance are followed up promptly, in close consultation with the local education authority's home-school liaison officer.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

- 61 The school has developed a very good partnership with parents. Parents and carers have very positive views about the school and appreciate the attitudes and values which the school promotes. The consultation exercise, prior to the inspection, revealed that parents and carers consider the school to be well led and managed. The great majority would feel comfortable in approaching the school with problems or questions concerning their children. They are of the view that teaching is good and they feel their children are making good progress. The vast majority of parents and carers are of the opinion that the school expects their children to work hard and achieve of their best. They feel their children like school and are helped, by the school, to become mature and responsible. The inspection findings support all these positive views.
- 62 While the majority of parents are happy with the arrangement to inform them of their children's progress, some of those at the parents' meeting with inspectors expressed the view that the current end of year reports are too impersonal. The school has recognised this concern and proposes to make adjustments to the arrangements for

the end of the current year. The inspectors found the arrangements for reporting on pupils' progress to be satisfactory, although they agree that there is scope for making pupils' end of year reports more personalised.

- 63 A relatively small minority of parents and carers are dissatisfied with the amount of homework their children are given. The inspection findings are that the school makes good use of homework to support the pupils' learning. Homework is systematic and closely linked to work being undertaken in class. Good parental support for the home-school reading scheme is having a positive effect on the pupils' reading standards.
- 64 A small minority of parents and carers feel that the school does not provide an interesting range of activities outside the classroom. The inspectors found extra-curricular provision to be very good, supported by highly effective use of educational visits and talks by visiting speakers to enrich the curriculum and to promote the pupils' personal, social and cultural development.
- 65 The quality of the information provided for parents and carers, by the school, is satisfactory. Since the full inspection in 1997, some improvement has been made to the prospectus and the governing body's annual report. Teachers are now making better use of the home-school reading records as a means of communicating with parents. The home-school agreement explains clearly and concisely what parents may expect of the school and what parents and pupils may expect of the school in terms of attendance, punctuality and support for school policies. The parents and carers are kept well informed in relation to the school's behaviour and anti-bullying policies.
- 66 Communications with parents and carers of children under five are good. Most of the parents and carers have daily personal contact with nursery and reception staff. The parents bring their children into the nursery in the morning and help them hang up their coats and find their name and pictures for registration. Before transferring to the reception class or, in the case of children joining the school from other pre-school settings, before admission to the reception class, all the children are visited in their homes by the reception teacher and the classroom assistant. They are given a "Toolkit", provided by the local education authority, containing scissors, writing materials and other useful items to help prepare them for starting school. This is a very good feature of the school's provision for children at the Foundation Stage of their learning.
- 67 The school values the good contribution the parents and carers make to its life and work. A small number of parents and grandparents help regularly inside school and many give generously of their time to assist with educational visits. Volunteers come into school every morning to make toast for the pupils' mid-morning snack, an important part of the school's healthy eating policy, as sweets and crisps are strongly discouraged. Parental support for events such as school concerts and the Christmas and summer fairs is always very good. The parents are also very supportive of parent-child activities such as the 'scarecrow' day which was held in the autumn term and which involved parents and children working together in the school hall to make scarecrows of every shape and size. Other, similar activities have included a kite making day and an Easter bonnet day which were both very successful.
- 68 The school arranges numerous courses for parents, in conjunction with the local education authority, St. Helens College and the 'Share' scheme. Currently, some of the reception children and their parents and grandparents are participating in a family numeracy course, the 'Share' scheme is operating successfully in Year 1 and Year 4

and a computer course, open to all parents and friends of the school, involves weekly classes in the school's new and very well equipped computer suite. The computer suite is available for pupils and their parents to use one evening a week, an example of the school's very good arrangements for educational inclusion. By reaching out to parents and carers in ways such as these the school is enabling them to help their children gain maximum benefit from their education.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

- 69 Leadership and management is of high quality. The headteacher provides outstanding leadership. This is the most important factor in the excellent progress made by the school since the full inspection in 1997 when the standard of leadership and management was described as unsatisfactory. The headteacher works closely with the highly effective senior management team and the governing body to provide clear vision and direction for the work of the school. They are well supported by a committed, hard working staff.
- 70 Governors show a good understanding of the school's strengths and priorities for improvement, and are proud of the progress which the school has made in recent years. Their increasingly purposeful involvement in the work of the school is an important factor in the improvements achieved since the last inspection. Appropriate governing body committees have been established, and they work effectively and successfully to ensure that statutory requirements are met. Governors linked to subjects and areas of the curriculum liaise with co-ordinators, visit classrooms and sometimes attend staff meetings dealing with their areas of responsibility. This gives them a very good insight into the work of the school and helps them to make informed decisions about areas for development.
- 71 The strong leadership and clear guidance provided by co-ordinators for subjects and aspects of the curriculum contribute greatly towards the sense of purpose which exists in the school. They play an important part in producing and updating subject policies and schemes of work which help teachers to set appropriately challenging work for pupils at all levels of attainment. Their work contributes strongly towards the good quality of teaching which now exists. Highly effective leadership provided by the co-ordinators for English and mathematics has been an important factor in the successful implementation of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy throughout the school. The school is now well placed to continue to improve by building on existing strengths and addressing the relatively few weaknesses.
- 72 The school's mission statement and main aims are communicated effectively to parents through the school prospectus. The school sets out to create a welcoming and secure learning environment, "where children shine". The school's aims emphasise the importance of promoting children's personal and social as well as their academic development. These aims are consistently reflected in all of the school's work.
- 73 The governing body ensures that the requirements of the Code of Practice for special educational needs are successfully addressed and that the school provides equality of access and opportunity for all of its pupils. The school makes good provision for all pupils including those with special educational needs, those from different cultural backgrounds and those for whom English is an additional language. Appropriate care is taken to monitor pupils' progress in terms of gender.

- 74 Very good procedures have been established for monitoring teaching and the curriculum, which form an important part of the school's strategy for performance management. Teachers are keen to improve, and increasing emphasis is placed on self-evaluation and reflection. The school has focused in particular on monitoring the teaching of literacy and numeracy in recent years, but has also made considerable progress in improving information and communication technology. The headteacher and relevant co-ordinators visit classrooms regularly to evaluate teaching and the quality of curricular provision. Criteria for evaluation are agreed with class teachers in advance. The feedback from lesson evaluations is considered during annual personal interviews with teachers, and personal targets are agreed for the year ahead. The standard and quality of work produced by pupils are monitored at regular intervals by the headteacher and co-ordinators.
- 75 Responsibilities for co-ordinating subjects and aspects of the curriculum are shared appropriately and defined clearly. Medium and short-term planning is scrutinised by relevant co-ordinators in order to check curricular balance and provision in their subjects. These arrangements help to ensure appropriate emphasis on the development of literacy and numeracy as well as information technology skills in work across the curriculum, and are successful in maintaining a broad and relevant curriculum.
- 76 Well conceived school development planning procedures enable the school to move steadily towards the targets identified. The consultation process ensures that the views of all staff and governors are considered before priorities for inclusion in the plan are agreed. Targets for improvements are listed clearly and appropriate information is provided about action to be taken to support their implementation. This includes deadlines for meeting targets, persons responsible, and criteria for evaluating the success of initiatives. The effective use of the plan to inform spending ensures that money is spent appropriately on relevant educational priorities.
- 77 The requirements for staff appraisal are met through the annual personal interviews. Strong emphasis is placed on staff development. Teachers, support staff, governors and voluntary helpers are given opportunities to attend relevant in-service training. There are appropriate procedures for supporting the induction of newly qualified teachers and staff who are new to the school.
- 78 Very effective use is made of all funding. The excellent use of grants for specific purposes is a very strong feature in financial management. The development of the computer suite, for example, took advantage of a grant to extend community involvement. The end product is an outstanding facility which is used regularly by members of the local community as well as the school's pupils. Good use is made of the element within the school's budget for making provision for pupils with special educational needs. The relatively large amount of money carried forward from the last financial year was to avoid the disruptive effect of change in income caused by fluctuation in the number of pupils on roll; it is anticipated that this amount will be reduced significantly during the current financial year.
- 79 The governors' finance committee liaises closely with the deputy headteacher to oversee financial matters. They combine effectively with the headteacher and highly efficient school administration to monitor spending and ensure efficient financial control. Administrative staff are appropriately trained and make very good use of information technology to support financial management. The school is also well supported by expertise provided by the local education authority. The last audit of finance by the local authority found the financial systems at the school to be operating

efficiently. All of the audit's relatively minor recommendations are currently being addressed.

- 80 The increasing attention given to monitoring school performance is a good feature in the work of the governing body. The headteacher provides regular information to enable governors and senior management to compare the school's performance with similar schools as well as the national picture. Governors demonstrate a good awareness of the school's strengths and priorities for improvement. The growing emphasis placed on setting individual, as well as school targets for improvements, is an indication of the school's commitment to continue raising standards.
- 81 The governing body also seeks to secure best quality and value when purchasing resources and arranging for work to be completed. Much of this is done in conjunction with the local education authority. The successful completion of the computer suite, initiated by the headteacher and governors, provides a good illustration of the application of best value principles. The quality of provision was improved and good value for money was secured.
- 82 All resources are very well managed. The school has sufficient suitably qualified and experienced teachers to meet the demands of the curriculum for pupils at all stages of their education; they are deployed very effectively.
- 83 Very good use is made of the range of facilities provided by the accommodation and school grounds. The nursery includes an outside play area which is appropriately fenced off from other parts of the school. The large steps into the play area present potential difficulty of access for children with physical disabilities, and the school has identified this as an area for improvement. In the remainder of the school, classrooms are appropriately spacious, library areas and the computer suite provide valuable additional facilities, and the playing field is a valuable asset. All areas of the curriculum are well resourced.
- 84 Standards of cleaning and caretaking are high, and the quality of the internal environment is considerably enhanced by displays of pupils' work which are of a very good standard. They are used very effectively to celebrate pupils' achievements, support their learning, and promote enquiry.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

What should the school do to improve further

85 In order to raise standards and the quality of work further, the governing body, headteacher and staff should:

1) improve the arrangements for assessing pupils' progress by:

- a) placing greater emphasis in teachers' marking on identifying areas for pupils to improve;
- b) strengthening procedures for monitoring and recording pupils' progress in subjects other than English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology.

(paragraph ref: 30, 31, 32, 57, 107, 115, 122, 138)

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

- Create more opportunities for pupils to make independent written responses to their studies in history and geography.

(paragraph ref: 137, 138)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	69
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	25

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
6%	37%	41%	15%	0%	1%	0%

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	11	220
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		104

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	13
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	3	79

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	2

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	20
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	25

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.1
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.8
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2000	15	14	29

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	10	9
	Girls	13	13	12
	Total	23	23	21
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	79 (69)	79 (71)	72 (80)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	10	15
	Girls	13	14	14
	Total	23	24	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	79 (71)	83 (80)	100 (86)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2000	14	23	37

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	12	14
	Girls	17	15	22
	Total	28	27	36
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	76 (51)	73 (53)	97 (73)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	11	14
	Girls	18	15	18
	Total	27	26	32
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	73 (58)	70 (56)	86 (67)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	80 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	2
White	188
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21
Average class size	27.5

Education support staff: YR– Y6

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	201

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	48

Number of pupils per FTE adult	7
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999
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	£
Total income	565,215
Total expenditure	510,350
Expenditure per pupil	2,136
Balance brought forward from previous year	5,836
Balance carried forward to next year	60,701

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	220
Number of questionnaires returned	76

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	58	36	5	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	58	37	3	1	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	46	42	5	0	7
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	46	37	13	0	4
The teaching is good.	55	39	1	0	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	50	38	7	4	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	67	24	7	3	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	62	37	1	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	39	47	9	3	1
The school is well led and managed.	58	30	5	1	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	50	42	7	1	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	37	38	11	3	12

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

- 86 The school's provision for children at the Foundation Stage in the nursery and reception class has improved since the previous inspection and is now very good. The curriculum is based on the nationally agreed six areas of learning, and provides the children with very broad and balanced experiences. The school provides a wide range of challenging and focused experiences to promote the early learning goals in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development.
- 87 The overall attainment levels of most children entering the nursery are well below those expected nationally. A significant number of children have very poorly developed speaking skills. This is confirmed by baseline assessment. Teaching in nursery and reception is of a high standard and this has a very positive effect on children's learning. The great majority, at all levels of ability, make good progress towards the nationally agreed early learning goals in all areas of the curriculum. However, the proportion likely to achieve appropriate standards by the time they enter Key Stage 1 is below that found nationally in communication, language and literacy and mathematics.

Personal, social and emotional development

- 88 Children's personal, social and emotional development is given a very high priority, and children make very good progress. They enjoy coming to school, respond well to the rules and routines of nursery and school life and are eager to learn new skills and to explore new ideas. Strong emphasis is placed on helping children to develop an understanding of appropriate behaviour and what is right and wrong. Children learn to share and work together in a variety of situations, such as computer games and role-play. The good development of social skills were in evidence, for example, as children played in the water and negotiated who would have the next turn of the exciting tubes and funnels. Older children work independently for sustained periods of time and take pride in their achievements. They work hard at difficult tasks such as completing complex jigsaws or making their very own 'fire officer's helmet'. Relationships are very positive and children are encouraged to reflect on their feelings, actions and experiences. There are well-planned opportunities for children to develop a sensitivity of their own culture and an awareness of other people religions and ways of life.

Communication, language and literacy.

- 89 In both year groups communication, language and literacy are given a very high priority, and the teaching is of consistently high quality. This enables children to achieve good standards in relation to prior learning. The nursery and reception classes provide a wide range of effective experiences and activities to develop and extend children's language and literacy skills. In the nursery, emphasis is placed on providing stimulating activities and experiences which will promote language development and thinking skills. By the time children move into the reception class they are becoming more attentive listeners. They enjoy listening to stories and rhymes and join in familiar ones with enthusiasm. In both the nursery and the reception class children are encouraged to share conversations with adults and are given very good role models to develop their spoken language. Challenging questions and comments are used to promote children's thinking. However, many children's language and communicating

skills are very limited, and this restricts their achievement. Structured play situations, snack times and together times provide opportunities for children to talk about their own experiences and extend their vocabulary. Very clearly labelled displays, alphabet and sound friezes and individual name cards help children develop early reading and writing skills. Children are encouraged to make marks on paper as they make appointments at 'The Doctor's Surgery' or write the recipe for 'flapjacks'. In the reception class, children draw recognisable pictures and attempt to write their own simple sentences using familiar letters, sounds and words as they make their own 'Three Little Pigs' storybooks. Children learn to recognise their own names, and older children write their own names with increasing accuracy, using capital and small letters. Comfortable and inviting book corners promote a love of books and children learn to handle books with care. Exciting resources are used very effectively to encourage children to act out a favourite story such as 'Mrs Lather'. Higher attaining reception children recognise initial sounds and use these to read unfamiliar words. Children choose books as an activity and enjoy using the teacher's pointer to 'read' familiar stories from the excellent range of books available.

Mathematical development

- 90 The nursery and reception classes provide a wide range of activities to promote mathematical understanding. This helps those at all levels of attainment to make good progress. Children enjoy mathematics and learn to use mathematical ideas and skills in real situations, such as when they weigh out the ingredients to make gingerbread men, make imaginary telephone calls to book appointments or count out the money needed to buy a toy from the class shop. In both classes, children have opportunities to compare, match, sort, order, sequence and count using a range of games, routines and experiences. Through well-planned topic work, they explore number, pattern, shape and measurement. Number lines are used effectively to develop an understanding of order and position and children in the reception class are able to count with increasing confidence up to ten. Teachers place great emphasis on developing appropriate mathematical language. Children consider size, shape and position when emptying and filling containers in the water and sand play or when comparing their heights. Children are encouraged to solve simple problems as they work out how many can play in the different activities or complete challenging jigsaws. Staff use number rhymes such as '5 little firemen' to develop children's ideas of early addition and subtraction.

Knowledge and understanding of the world.

- 91 Children develop a good understanding of the world around them. Interesting topics develop the natural curiosity of young children. For example, a well-planned topic on people and places helped children develop an understanding of their own community as they observed the workings of a real fire engine and real firemen visiting their nursery. Many children need considerable support to express their knowledge and understanding and explain to adults what they are doing. Care for living creatures is encouraged as children observe the life cycle of a snail which included the snail giving birth to 'hundreds' of baby snails! Children in the reception class observe the changes that occur as they bake gingerbread men or blow bubbles. They learn about the passage of time through celebrating birthdays, talking about the days of the week and the changing seasons and weather. Children make good progress in learning about other cultures and different ways of life. As part of their celebration of the Chinese New Year, for example, children ate Chinese foods, learned how to write Chinese script and performed their very own dragon dance. Staff carefully observe and assess children's skills, providing them with support and encouragement to help

them improve their skills of cutting, folding and sticking. The computer and tape recorders are popular choices and many children are confident and competent in using the 'mouse' and using different programs to support their learning in mathematics and language and literacy. Reception children have formal ICT lessons and through good teaching they are becoming skilled in using the return key and space bar to record their own names. Construction toys are used well to encourage children to design and make their own models and to discover how things work.

Physical development

- 92 Very good provision is made for children's physical development and most make good progress at the Foundation Stage. Children's natural exuberance and energy is successfully catered for. A very good range of large and small equipment is available on a daily basis to help children develop their physical skills. Very good adult intervention ensures that children develop their skills of throwing and catching when playing with bats, balls and hoops. In the nursery and reception class, children have structured physical education lessons to promote their development. In these lessons, children develop good spatial awareness, control and imagination as they respond to music and ideas. They learn to move in different ways and in different directions with increasing co-ordination and confidence. Children who are less confident are given very sensitive support to encourage them to take part in lessons and improve their skills. Children move around the school safely and are able to line up in order to go to different parts of the school. Emphasis is placed on developing children's skills when handling tools, construction toys and malleable materials and they are becoming increasingly competent and skilled as they handle a variety of tools and materials safely and with care.

Creative development

- 93 Children enjoy a very good range of experiences in art, music, story and imaginative play. Through such experiences, children are encouraged to use appropriate vocabulary and to develop their use of language to express ideas. A good range of musical instruments, songs and rhymes helps to develop children's understanding of sound and rhythm and pattern. Children enjoy taking part in the many very good role-play situations provided, such as the 'Doctor's Surgery', 'Three Little Pigs', and 'The Fire Engine'. These situations provide children with a range of opportunities to use their imagination as they take on the roles of the customers, shop assistants patients and doctors and use a range of interesting and stimulating resources. There are many activities available for children to develop their senses through investigating texture, shape and colour. Baking is available on a regular basis and children explore different tastes and smells of foods through snack time. Staff provide materials with interesting natural and man-made textures, from which children can choose to create their own designs, pictures, models and collages. They work with play dough and junk materials to create two and three-dimensional pictures and models. Malleable materials such as sand and water are available for children to explore on a daily basis.

Teaching

- 94 Teaching in the early years is very good. All staff have a secure understanding of how young children learn and of the importance of play and first hand experiences. This has a very positive effect on the good progress children make towards the early learning goals and provides a very firm foundation for learning in Key Stage 1. Lesson

plans are very detailed and provide a very good framework for learning. They clearly identify appropriate learning objectives linked to the early learning goals. Experiences are very interesting and challenging and are focused very closely on what children need to learn. Each activity, whether on-going, such as construction or water play, or a focused teacher activity, such as making gingerbread men, includes what children are expected to learn and what vocabulary should be introduced. Activities are well organised and appropriate to promote communication, language, literacy and mathematical development. Appropriate elements of the literacy and numeracy strategy are effectively implemented for children in the reception class and this has a positive effect on their achievements.

- 95 There is a very good balance of teacher directed activities and child initiated ones. Staff provide very effective support for all activities, interacting to check and extend children's understanding. However, occasionally in the reception class the deployment of staff on teacher directed activities results in some missed opportunities to support children in their own chosen tasks. Staff are very aware of the weaknesses in a significant number of children's communication skills and provide children with real situations such as the visit of the local Fire Brigade to enhance their experiences and develop thinking, speaking and listening. Praise and encouragement are very effective in promoting positive behaviour and personal, social and emotional development. Staff use questions, comments and observations very well to assess children's progress and to plan for future learning. Baseline assessment is shared with parents and is used very effectively to help teachers plan an appropriate learning environment for children under five. Staff use assessments to track progress and to identify the support children need to achieve their full potential. A very useful record system indicates children's progress towards the early learning goals and identifies areas of weakness or gaps in provision. Teachers and classroom support assistants are enthusiastic, have high expectations of the children and work very well together. This has a positive effect on the quality of the learning. Parents are actively involved in their children's learning through sharing story books and early reading scheme books at home or, whenever they can, working alongside their children in the nursery or reception classes.

ENGLISH

- 96 Standards achieved by seven year old pupils are broadly average. This is better than the picture presented by the most recent National Curriculum test results. In Year 6, although a majority of pupils are on course to meet the national standard, overall standards are below those found nationally. However, this is not typical of Key Stage 2 as a whole, where standards are generally consistent with the most recent national test results. These showed the pupils' performance to be in line with the national average and well above the performance of those in similar schools.
- 97 Throughout the school, pupils achieve generally good standards in relation to their prior attainment in all aspects of the subject. This reflects considerable progress since the full inspection in 1997 which referred to significant underachievement at both key stages. The development of literacy skills is now given a very high priority throughout the school. All areas of weakness highlighted by previous inspections have been addressed with considerable rigour and enthusiasm. Considerable emphasis is placed on developing pupils' writing skills in a variety of contexts and for a wide range of purposes. Pupils at all attainment levels use their reading and writing skills well in other areas of the curriculum; for example, when recording their investigations in science lessons, evaluating their art work or writing a poem in religious education. The significant increase in the number of pupils exceeding the national standard in

English since the 1997 inspection is confirmed by recent national test results, which showed that 24 per cent of pupils at Key Stage 2 achieved Level 5.

- 98 The school has enthusiastically implemented a range of national and local initiatives, including the National Literacy Strategy, additional literacy for both key stages and booster classes. These are having a very positive effect on raising standards of achievement. Teachers are very skilled at implementing these strategies, pupils are very aware of the skills they are acquiring, and most lessons have an atmosphere of hard work and commitment to high standards. The pupils with special educational needs receive very good support and most pupils achieve well.
- 99 Despite the very good provision at the Foundation Stage, many pupils enter Key Stage 1 with language skills which are below those expected for their age. The school recognises this and emphasis is placed on providing pupils with experience and opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills in a variety of settings. Role-play, drama and discussion encourage pupils to develop confidence and a richer use of language. Teachers are very aware of the vocabulary needed in each subject when introducing a new topic. All staff, including classroom support assistants, ensure that pupils understand the vocabulary being used and are always ready to introduce new words to add interest to conversations. They are aware that different situations demand different responses and that often responses need to be enlarged and explained. For example, in Year 5, pupils had to say whether a story of Daedalus and Icarus was a myth or a legend. The teacher insisted on pupils expanding their answers with well thought out reasons based on previous learning. In assemblies and lessons, pupils have opportunities to express their ideas and opinions, and offer answers, confident that they will be listened to and valued.
- 100 The school provides a wide range of high quality and challenging books and texts to foster all pupils' love of books and develop their independent reading skills. Pupils are encouraged to read for a wide variety of purposes. As well as reading for enjoyment pupils are encouraged to read instructions, such as on how to operate the computer and Internet, or read information, such as a newspaper article about a British gold medallist. As a result of a very literate environment by the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment in reading is broadly in line with the national average. Pupils are aware of authors and illustrators and are able to identify the main characters and events in their favourite books. Younger pupils read simple books with increasing accuracy and understanding. An understanding of phonics, word families and spellings give pupils confidence in tackling unfamiliar words and this has a very positive effect on the progress they make in becoming fluent and capable readers. Higher attaining pupils in Year 2 read aloud with confidence and are becoming aware of appropriate expression and understanding. Pupils take books home regularly and family members are encouraged to hear their children read in order to improve their progress in reading.
- 101 At Key Stage 2, the good progress made at Key Stage 1 is built on and often accelerated. Books are well matched to pupils' attainment and interest levels and most pupils are fluent readers of a wide range of texts. Higher attaining and average attaining pupils understand plot, setting and characterisation. They show an understanding of different writers' styles and accounts and are able to make deductions and inferences from their reading. Lower attaining pupils use a variety of strategies to help them recognise unfamiliar words, such as letter patterns and sounds, context and pictures. Pupils develop good independent research skills as they use dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses, encyclopaedias, CD-ROMS and the Internet to extend their learning. Some pupils have favourite authors and they choose books because of their particular interests in topics such as animals or adventure

stories. The more reluctant readers continue to receive support and are encouraged to improve their reading.

- 102 Standards in writing at Key Stage 1 are broadly in line with the national average, and significant improvement has been achieved since the last inspection. Pupils' progress in developing writing skills is often very rapid and a significant number of pupils are in line to exceed the expected levels of attainment at the end of the key stage. By the age of seven the majority of pupils are spelling common words correctly and making good attempts to spell more complex words. They write for a variety of purposes, such as writing thank you letters after a visit to the museum or recording instructions on how to make a model. Seven year olds write very interesting stories and accounts observing the rules of punctuation, using full stops and capital letters. Higher attaining pupils use question marks, apostrophes and connectives to add interest to their stories. Challenging stimuli such as the poetry of Steven Cummins and Rupert Brooke encourage pupils to write very thoughtful poems of their own. Handwriting is almost always very neat and well formed with the youngest pupils learning to join their letters.
- 103 At Key Stage 2, pupils progressively develop their ability to write for different purposes and audiences, using a wide range of styles. A study of 'The Flour Babies' encouraged Year 6 pupils to write in a particular style. They were able to recognise a main clause and to use connectives and similes to create complex sentences. Pupils learn to use appropriate layout and vocabulary to enhance their work. They plan experiments, record their analysis of data and write up their geography research. Creative writing is enhanced by the good use of grammar such as onomatopoeia adverbs and adjectives. Play scripts, biographies, autobiographies and poems such as those based on William Shakespeare's 'Hubble, bubble, toil and trouble' are of a high quality and hold the attention of the reader. Writing is very well organised and higher attaining pupils use bullet points, lists, paragraphs and notes to add interest and speed to their work. Information technology is used effectively to support knowledge and understanding and older pupils are in the throes of publishing their own school newspaper.
- 104 Behaviour is invariably good and often very good. Pupils show very favourable attitudes to learning and enjoy positive relationships with their teachers. Most pupils are very eager to learn, stay on task and show very good levels of independence and concentration. This makes a considerable contribution to their rate of progress and the standards of achievement. Opportunities to work collaboratively and to develop personal skills are well used.
- 105 Teaching at both key stages has improved since the last inspection and is now highly effective in helping pupils to make good progress. Lessons are well planned and all the programmes of study are effectively covered. Teaching across both key stages is never less than satisfactory and is often very good. All teachers are confidently implementing the literacy hour and additional literacy for younger pupils, and the use of booster classes is having a very positive effect on achievement. Teaching is very carefully structured and well planned to meet the needs of pupils of all attainment levels. Teachers share the learning objectives with the pupils and ensure that pupils are very clear about what it is they are expected to learn. Class and group targets provide a clear focus for learning, and pupils respond positively. The use of targets for individual pupils has yet to be introduced. Plenary sessions effectively check that pupils have understood the lesson, are ready to move on to the next stage of learning or need further help to reinforce their learning. Speaking and listening is given a very high profile and staff ensure that pupils are listened to carefully and encouraged to

express their views. Spelling, punctuation and grammar are given a particularly high priority and pupils' knowledge and understanding of basic skills are apparent in their extended writing. Imaginative and challenging opportunities for extended writing ensure that progress in this aspect of English is very good. Teachers use humour, praise, comments and questions effectively to check understanding and extend thinking. When teaching is very good or outstanding, expectations are particularly high and the teacher's enthusiasm, explanations and knowledge have a very positive effect on attainment and progress. In excellent lessons, teaching is lively and exciting. For example, in Year 4, Stravinsky's music the 'Rite of Spring' was used very effectively to help pupils produce high quality and imaginative writing. In most lessons, pupils are constantly reminded of the strategies they need to improve their work, such as good handwriting, correct spelling and punctuation.

- 106 Pupils confidently offer answers to teachers' questions, knowing that even if their answers are incorrect the teacher will help them to discover for themselves the right answer. Relationships are very good, and teachers have high expectations of the pupils' behaviour. This results in very good discipline and high standards. Teachers use a range of well selected, high quality resources to support the teaching of literacy. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and tasks are always well matched for pupils' individual needs. Support staff are used very effectively to give additional help to designated individuals and groups of pupils. Their contribution greatly enhances the learning opportunities for the pupils.
- 107 Assessment and record keeping are very good. National Curriculum tests and other school tests are used very effectively to identify areas for school development. Teachers mark work on a regular basis. Marking is always positive and there are some very good examples of how comments help pupils to improve their work. However, this is not a consistent feature, and there is scope for the marking to place more emphasis on identifying specific areas for pupils to improve. Homework is used effectively to extend work done in lessons and to check that pupils have fully understood new learning.
- 108 The curriculum meets all requirements. The curriculum leader is highly motivated, very enthusiastic and knowledgeable about the subject. Monitoring of lessons and planning has had a very good impact on the quality of the teaching and learning. National test results and teacher assessments are carefully scrutinised to track pupils' progress and improve standards.

MATHEMATICS

- 109 Standards achieved by pupils aged seven and 11 are in line with those found nationally. This shows much improvement since the last inspection. Standards at Key Stage 1 are better than the most recent national test results. The improvement reflects the successful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy. At Key Stage 2, standards are consistent with the most recent national test results, which showed the pupils' performance to be in line with that of pupils nationally, but well above that of those in similar schools. At both key stages, the great majority of pupils at all levels of attainment, including those with special educational needs, make good progress.
- 110 Most pupils have a good understanding of basic number work by the end of Key Stage 1. They can read, write and order numbers to 100 and beyond. Many of the pupils are quick to recall basic number facts and their progress is helped by the attention which their teachers give to mental activities during numeracy lessons. Good use of a range

of appropriate apparatus and the time given for the pupils to explain their strategies does much to assist their learning. In a Year 2 class, the pupils were quick to solve 19×5 and to point out where the answer should be positioned on an empty one hundred square. The pupils are beginning to understand basic processes of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division through equal groupings. The higher and average attaining pupils are beginning to use this knowledge when solving simple problems using money and number. By Year 2, most of the pupils have a good sense of the size of a number and where it fits into the number system, and they are beginning to grasp the concept of place value.

- 111 At Key Stage 2, good lesson planning helps pupils to build progressively on their earlier achievements. They make good progress in understanding place value and demonstrate a good level of accuracy in their computation work. When engaged in mathematical investigations and when solving quite complex problems the pupils demonstrate growing skills in organising their work effectively. The good quality teaching at Key Stage 2 contributes greatly to the pupils' good progress. By the end of the key stage, the pupils have a good knowledge of the extension of the number system and this is reflected in their work on negative numbers and in their knowledge and understanding of the relationship of fractions, decimals and percentages.
- 112 At both key stages, the pupils benefit from a variety of activities and experiences which support effectively their learning in work related to shape, space and measures. The pupils gain increasing skills in using relevant mathematical language accurately because teachers expect precision when pupils answer questions or discuss their work. Many of the younger pupils know how to use correct terminology when describing the properties of three and two dimensional shapes. Older pupils are increasingly confident and proficient when using a range of measures. They can read scales with reasonable accuracy in work related to temperature or when investigating liquid measures down to millilitres. Year 6 pupils have a good knowledge of perimeters, area and volume and use correctly simple formulae when calculating solutions to related problems.
- 113 At both key stages, the teaching is based appropriately on the programmes of study and provides appropriate challenges for all pupils. At Key Stage 2, pupils are introduced to handling data and make good progress in collecting data, recording their results and interpreting their findings. Older pupils have a good understanding of the use of measures of average, and use appropriately terms such as mode, median, mean and range in relevant problem solving contexts.
- 114 At both key stages, pupils make good progress using and applying their mathematical skills in a range of situations. They work hard to overcome minor difficulties during problem solving tasks and usually present information and results in a clear and logical way.
- 115 Teaching is usually good and sometimes of high quality. Lessons are generally planned carefully and are based appropriately on the format recommended by the National Numeracy Strategy. Pupils particularly enjoy mental work because the teaching is interesting, well paced and challenging. Good use is made of a variety of resources to assist the pupils' learning. Good quality questioning is a strength in most of the teaching. It is effective in probing the pupils' level of understanding, consolidating their learning and extending their thinking. However, in one lesson, the work planned failed to challenge pupils sufficiently, and higher attaining pupils in particular were not fully extended. Classroom assistants make a significant

contribution to the pupils' learning in many of the classes. They are well briefed and know the pupils well. Pupils with special educational needs benefit greatly from the sensitive and caring manner in which they are supported. This additional support is an important factor which underpins the good progress made by many of these pupils. The school is at an early stage in setting pupils' individual targets in mathematics. However, some of the targets are too general, and this makes it difficult to measure progress towards them.

- 116 Throughout the school, frequent opportunities are provided for the pupils to practise and consolidate their mathematical skills in other subjects. For example, in a Year 1 class, Venn diagrams were used to record science investigations relating to sounds in and around the school. In Year 3, the pupils consolidated their precise measuring skills when cutting the length of axles in a design and technology project. In a Year 6 class, the pupils entered the results of a science investigation onto a spreadsheet before printing out a graph which showed clearly that the size of a parachute canopy determined the rate of descent. Throughout the school, the use of information and communication technology to support the pupils' learning in mathematics is a good feature of the provision.
- 117 Standards have improved considerably since the full inspection in 1997. The quality of teaching and learning is now much better. The successful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy has been a significant factor in raising standards. The co-ordination of the subject is very effective. Careful attention is given to analysing test results in order to raise standards even further, and the planning of work and the quality of the teaching are monitored carefully.
- 118 Overall, the subject makes an important contribution to the school's aims. It also makes an important contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through projects inside school and in the locality. An appropriate amount of time is allocated to mathematics and the content of the work meets fully the requirements of the National Curriculum.

SCIENCE

- 119 Standards in science have improved considerably since the full inspection in 1997. Standards achieved by pupils aged seven and 11 are in line with those found nationally. In the 2000 national tests a very high proportion of eleven year old pupils achieved the national standard, and some exceeded this level. This was above standards found nationally and was a far better result than that achieved by pupils in schools with similar characteristics.
- 120 By the age of eleven the pupils have developed a very secure fund of knowledge in all areas of science. They are able to explain the forces acting on moving objects in practical investigations, such as the forces affecting the speed of a dropping parachute. They know about different rocks and soils and can classify rocks according to hardness. They know that materials can exist in different states and about reversible and irreversible changes in materials as they are heated or cooled. Most pupils have a good scientific vocabulary and apply the correct terms in appropriate circumstances. They have a very good theoretical knowledge of the principles of scientific enquiry, and can explain what should stay the same and what should be changed in systematic investigation. Pupils know the appropriate scientific equipment to measure time, mass, force or distance and know that their results will be more reliable if measurements are repeated. However, some are less certain in applying these principles systematically in their investigations and do not always

produce reliable data that can give them a clear answer to the question under investigation. Most pupils are able to make simple predictions about what they think will happen. However, some are less confident in giving reasons for their ideas, and their interpretation of data does not always contain sufficient explanation or analysis.

- 121 By the age of seven, the pupils are developing their scientific knowledge well through a wide range of practical activities. They can classify familiar materials according to their characteristics. They know what happens to foods such as eggs, butter, chocolate or bread when they are heated. They know how to make a bulb light in a simple circuit and know that they can use other components, such as a buzzer, in a circuit. In their investigation to identify the best curtain fabric for keeping out sunlight, pupils demonstrated good levels of independent scientific enquiry and reliability as they tested each fabric and recorded their findings. With support, they were successful in drawing conclusions from their investigation and finding the answer to their original question.
- 122 The teaching in science is nearly always of at least a good standard, and a third of the lessons observed were very good. The contexts in which the lessons are set are appropriate and successful in engaging the interest of the pupils. The high level of practical investigation gives the pupils very good opportunities to develop their scientific understanding and makes a good contribution to their social and moral development. The activities planned for the pupils usually offer appropriate challenge at different levels to meet the needs of all the pupils. In most classes, the high quality questioning techniques used by the teachers are very effective in consolidating the pupils' previous learning and in probing their existing understanding. Some teachers use the pupils' errors and misconceptions very skilfully as a basis for modifying understanding and developing new learning. The very good strategies for class management used by most teachers ensure that pupils behave appropriately during practical activities and are able to make good progress in their learning. Throughout the school, the teachers create a very secure and positive learning environment for their pupils in which it is safe to contribute ideas and make mistakes. This is a very significant contributing factor to the success achieved by the pupils in science. Teachers' marking of pupils' work is positive and supportive, but there is scope for more emphasis on identifying specific areas for improvement.
- 123 The subject is very well managed. The co-ordinator provides strong leadership in the subject and is well qualified to support her colleagues in their professional development. Her monitoring role is well established and she maintains a reliable overview of standards, subject provision and teaching quality. The action plan for science identifies accurately the areas in need of development; for example, the development of ICT to support the subject. The scheme of work, developed by the school, meets the requirements for teaching the subject and gives sufficient challenge to the more able pupils by extending the areas of study beyond the basic requirements. Sufficient emphasis is given to scientific enquiry, both as independent investigation and as an integral part of the knowledge based learning in the subject. The system for assessment, built into the scheme, is an effective means of monitoring the progress of pupils against the key learning objectives. The resources and equipment available for science are sufficient in quantity and quality to support effectively the practical activities undertaken by the pupils.

ART AND DESIGN AND DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

- 124 The standards achieved by pupils aged seven and 11 are generally in line with the

national expectations and there are examples of high quality work in both subjects.

- 125 In art and design, pupils, at all levels of attainment, make good progress at both key stages. Pupils are provided with a wide variety of experiences. These enable them to make good progress in exploring and developing their ideas and to extend their knowledge and understanding of art and design. From an early stage, pupils learn to mix and apply paint effectively and are encouraged to use a wide range of media to express themselves. For example, following a visit to Llandudno, younger pupils showed good skills in drawing and in using pastels to illustrate some of their experiences. Pupils in Year 4 used pen and ink very effectively to draw some high quality portraits of their friends in the class. The same class used modroc with great success to produce their versions of Greek sculpture, linked to their work in history. The emphasis placed on direct observational drawing is a strong feature in the school. Pupils in Year 6 produced some excellent drawings of plants in pots. They added colour to the drawings and used their compositions as the basis for some very impressive work in textiles. Throughout the school, the pupils benefit greatly from their studies of famous artists and from visits to the school by talented art specialists who work with pupils for a period of time.
- 126 In design and technology, pupils at both key stages make good progress in developing ideas, planning, making products and evaluating them. They benefit particularly from the opportunities to make products which use different methods for creating movement. In Year 1, for example, pupils used different types of paper fasteners to join together the relevant parts in order to make a simple, moveable paper puppet. Pupils in Year 2, used a simple form of pneumatics to lift and lower the back of a model tipper truck. During the year, pupils in Year 6 produce fairground models with electric motors. These are linked to the computer. This enables the pupils to extend their awareness of how computers are used to control devices in real life. Some of the projects in design and technology are of high quality. For example, pupils in Year 4 planned and made model vehicles. They used wood technology techniques very effectively to produce the structure for the chassis before building the bodywork carefully in cardboard. The axles and wheels were carefully added, together with a simple elastic mechanism to create movement. The models were carefully finished to make them look attractive, before a final evaluation was completed to find ways of making improvement in any future project.
- 127 Teaching in both subjects is good at Key Stage 1 and very good at Key Stage 2. Work is planned carefully to present an appropriate challenge to the pupils and pupils respond positively to challenging work. They work productively and take a pride in their achievements. Clear explanation and good questioning skills are strong features in the teaching. This gives pupils a good understanding of what is required of them and draws effectively on their imagination and creativity. Lessons are well organised, enabling pupils to have easy access to relevant equipment, resources and materials. Class management is consistently good, promoting good standards of behaviour in all classes. Teachers at both key stages are successful in meeting the needs of all pupils. The effective work of support staff helps to ensure that the needs of those at different levels of ability are met and that pupils for whom English is an additional language are appropriately challenged and supported. Care is taken to ensure that boys and girls have access to all aspects of the curriculum in both subjects. Work in both subjects contributes significantly to the development of literacy skills, and some of the design and technology projects include tasks which enable the pupils to extend their skills in mathematics.
- 128 Both subjects are very effectively co-ordinated and the requirements of the National

Curriculum programmes of work are met fully. The school has made very good progress since the full inspection in 1997, when the standard of work in art at Key Stage 1, and design and technology at Key Stage 2 were judged to be unsatisfactory.

HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY

- 129 The school alternates the teaching of history and geography in four-week units of time and so it was only possible to see a limited number of lessons during the inspection. However, the evidence from these lessons, scrutiny of the work produced previously by the pupils and discussion with the pupils, indicates that the majority of pupils achieve standards that are broadly in line with those expected for their ages in both subjects. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, make appropriate progress in relation to their prior levels of learning. This shows an improving picture since the full inspection in 1997.
- 130 In history, by the age of seven, the pupils show a sound understanding of the distinction between the recent past and the present when they examine old toys and compare them with the modern equivalent. They are able to use appropriate language relating to the passing of time and are beginning to recognise some of the differences between their own lives and those of children in the recent past. In their studies of how seaside holidays have changed since 1900, the pupils in Year 2 were able to recognise some of the things that are different and what has stayed the same. In work on Remembrance Day, they were able to use different sources of information about the past, including eye-witness accounts and old photographs.
- 131 By the age of eleven, the pupils have developed effective research skills, and are able to use a range of sources to find out about both recent and distant past events and cultures. Through their studies of topics such as Ancient Greece and Tudor England, the pupils gain a good range of factual knowledge. They are able to place events and periods studied within a chronological framework, for example placing Henry VIII correctly in a time line, and use contemporary paintings to gain information about Tudor clothing and lifestyle. In Year 6, the pupils carried out their own research into different aspects of World War II and showed an impressive range of general knowledge gleaned from interviews with older people, books, artefacts and the Internet. However, their ability to interpret historical evidence and to identify reasons for historical events, is not so well developed.
- 132 In geography, by the age of seven, the pupils know that maps and plans represent a locality and can locate different parts of the school on a plan. In their studies of localities further afield, such as Llandudno and St Lucia, they know some of the ways in which these places are the same or different from their own locality. They develop appropriate vocabulary to support their learning, for example the vocabulary relating to coastal areas.
- 133 By the age of eleven, the pupils have acquired a sound geographical knowledge base about places near to home and further afield. They know about the physical and human features of localities such as Llandudno and Ayres Rock in Australia and can draw maps showing their location. In Year 4, the pupils produced guide books for different European cities that showed a sound knowledge base about the characteristic features of the different cities and cultures. They are consolidating their geography study skills through field trips and the use of books, atlases and the Internet. However, their geographical enquiry skills are less secure and many are unsure in analysing evidence and communicating their findings independently in

appropriate ways.

- 134 The pupils respond with interest to their work in geography and history and usually behave well. They contribute confidently to class discussions and are keen to show what they know. However their written responses, in both subjects, do not always reflect their growing knowledge and understanding. They are confident in talking about what they know, but are less confident in expressing their thoughts in independent writing.
- 135 The quality of teaching, in both history and geography, is good and sometimes very good. At both key stages, the teachers use very effective strategies for managing lessons and organising their pupils. Very good use is made of educational visits to places of interest, such as the toy museum and a field trip to Llandudno.
- 136 At Key Stage 1, the teachers choose very stimulating topics which are successful in engaging the interests of their pupils. In Year 1, for example, old toys were used very effectively to develop understanding about the past, and in Year 2, the teacher used real tropical fruit successfully to teach the pupils about the food found in St Lucia. Relationships between pupils and teachers are very good and help to create a very positive learning atmosphere.

- 137 At Key Stage 2, the teaching is good. The teachers' planning indicates that the pupils are offered an appropriate range of activities for their ages and interests. For example, a study of Tudor menus and the making of Tudor sweetmeats engaged the interest of the pupils very successfully in their study of Tudor times. Pupils in Year 3 wrote postcards from different localities at home and abroad to communicate what they had learned about climate, food and places of interest. The teaching, in both subjects, offers a suitable range of study but does not provide the pupils with sufficient opportunities for making independent written responses to their studies.
- 138 Both subjects have recently adopted the national schemes of work but these have not been implemented for a sufficient period of time for the school to monitor their effectiveness or their impact on the quality of either subjects. The time allocated to the subjects is limited and the co-ordinators are monitoring the effectiveness of the alternating timetable in order to evaluate how well it caters for the full range and quality of both subjects. Although the co-ordinators review the teachers' planning for their subjects, and occasionally monitor the pupils' work, this is to monitor the match of work with curriculum requirements rather than to evaluate the standards achieved. The progress made by the pupils, in the development of their history and geography study skills, is not systematically tracked or monitored and this limits the scope for evaluating and raising standards in both subjects. The work in history and geography makes a good contribution to the development of the cultural awareness of pupils, both in relation to their own culture and in their growing appreciation of the cultures of people in other countries and times.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

- 139 By the age of seven, pupils achieve standards which are in line with the national expectation and those at all levels of ability make good progress at Key Stage 1. By the time pupils reach the age of 11, standards are at least in line with, and in some aspects above, the national expectations. The great majority of pupils make very good progress at Key Stage 2. The programme of work meets fully the requirements of the National Curriculum. The perceptive use of ICT to support work in other subjects is a particularly strong feature in pupils' learning.
- 140 From an early stage, pupils quickly develop confidence in using the mouse to control a screen image. They use the keyboard effectively to enter text, often produced in support of their work in English or other subjects. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils know how to amend the text by deleting a mistake, making a space, or changing to capitals or lower case letters as required; they are able to print out their work without fuss. During the course of the year, pupils at Key Stage 1 extend their skills in handling information. They produce pictograms to represent information gathered as part of class surveys. They make particularly good progress in developing an understanding of control technology. They are able to enter a set of instructions to programme a robotic toy to travel certain distances and change direction. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils apply the same principles to enter a sequence of commands to draw simple geometrical shapes on the screen.
- 141 At Key Stage 2, pupils build effectively on this good start. They benefit greatly from regularly timetabled lessons in the computer suite as well as meaningful opportunities to use the computers in classrooms to support work in other subjects. They benefit from work which is stimulating and challenging and respond with interest and enthusiasm. They often work at levels which are above those expected for their age. In Year 4, for example, pupils are able to incorporate graphic images, such as pictures or diagrams, to complement the written text. Many are able to use cut and paste

techniques to shift parts of the text about when engaged in word processing. The pupils make very good progress in handling information and recognise the need for care and accuracy when searching for information, using the CD-ROM or the Internet. By the age of 11, pupils are able to enter data onto a spreadsheet to support various investigations in mathematics. They are able to present information in various forms to suite particular purposes. In Year 6, for example, pupils used appropriate graphs to present their findings after engaging in activities to monitor temperature. Older pupils also show good skills in control technology. They are able to programme the computer to produce some quite complex shapes and patterns and, by the end of the academic year, use these skills to enable the computer to control a working model of fairground rides, produced as part of the work in design and technology.

- 142 By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils use ICT to structure, refine and present information in different forms and styles for specific purposes. They know how to log on and access the Internet to find relevant information. This was evident when pupils in Year 6 successfully engaged in an activity which involved accessing a web-site and narrowing down their search questions progressively to find the relevant category of information.
- 143 Opportunities in communicating and handling information have a positive effect on the development of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. In science, the use of light and heat sensors linked to the computer are beginning to be used to enhance investigative work. In other subjects, pupils regularly use ICT to support their work, which helps them to appreciate its value and develop confidence in its use.
- 144 The quality of teaching is generally good at both key stages and often very good at Key Stage 2. Regularly timetabled lessons in the computer suite are contributing significantly towards the very good progress which pupils are making in extending their ICT skills. Work is usually pitched at a high level. Pupils respond positively to challenging work and show confidence in learning through trial and error. At both key stages, clear explanation and good questioning skills by teachers help to stimulate interest. Teachers make very good use of the large central screen to introduce tasks and offer guidance and clarification when necessary. Pupils concentrate well and are able to apply effectively the guidance provided by their teachers. The fact that each pupil has access to a computer means that they are able to progress at a good pace. Class management is good in all lessons, and this promotes good behaviour and a mature and sensible response by pupils. The good level of teacher expertise and the valuable contribution of support staff are important factors in promoting the good and often very good rate of pupils' progress.
- 145 The highly effective work of the co-ordinator has a positive effect on standards and quality of work in ICT. This has enabled the school to make excellent progress since the full inspection in 1997, when standards and teaching in ICT were described as unsatisfactory.
- 146 The programme of work now makes good provision for all pupils. Appropriate care is taken to involve and extend girls as well as boys, and to ensure that pupils at all levels of ability, including those with special educational needs, are supported effectively. In addition, care is taken to ensure that pupils from racial minority groups, for whom English is a second language, are sensitively supported and encouraged.

MUSIC

- 147 Pupils aged seven and 11 achieve appropriate standards for their age. Most, including

those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress during their time in the school.

- 148 At Key Stage 1, the pupils follow an appropriate programme of work. This gives them the opportunity to create musical patterns, explore and organise sounds and musical ideas and to listen and express their feelings about music. By the age of seven, the pupils sing confidently, with increasing sensitivity, a growing repertoire of songs and hymns. Their singing is clear and tuneful. They know how to start and finish together and can keep to a steady pulse.
- 149 At Key Stage 2, the pupils develop these earlier skills and make increasing progress in singing songs and hymns with clear diction and control of pitch and dynamics. They sing effectively in unison, in parts and in rounds, giving shape to their singing by adopting a good posture and controlling their breathing appropriately. They make satisfactory progress playing a range of tuned and untuned percussion instruments. For example, in a Year 4 class, they worked co-operatively in small groups to plan and create their own music after listening to part of Grieg's "Peer Gynt". They understood how to write a graphic score and to perform their piece so that it conveyed successfully the mood and feeling they were trying to evoke. They demonstrated increasing skills in understanding how sounds can be combined and used expressively.
- 150 Some of the pupils demonstrate growing expertise in playing a variety of musical instruments, including the saxophone, cornet and recorder. They clearly benefit from expert teaching and have good skills when reading from staff notation. They play with increasing control and rhythmic accuracy and are confident when playing to an audience.
- 151 The quality of the teaching is generally good. Planning is well conceived and includes an appropriate balance of the development of the interrelated skills of performing, composing and appraising. Lessons are well organised and resourced so that all pupils can participate fully. Although day-to-day assessment is used to help pupils to make improvements during lessons, the school has yet to implement an assessment strategy which influences the planning of future work in the subject, to help the pupils reach even higher standards.
- 152 The co-ordination of the subject is shared between two teachers who have only recently taken over this responsibility. They are working hard to develop the subject further and to give staff additional support and guidance. The co-ordinators have done much to introduce the pupils to a range of music from our own and other cultures. For example, Grieg's music was played at the beginning and end of assemblies, as composer of the week. In addition, the co-ordinators teach the school choir who sing at various functions in the locality and also play an important part in regular school productions, including the most recent performance last summer of "Music through the ages".
- 153 Music makes an important contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, particularly through the use of singing during school assemblies. The content of the work is generally well balanced and meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. Since the full inspection in 1997, the school has maintained satisfactory standards in music and the overall quality of teaching has improved.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- 154 The standards achieved by pupils aged seven and 11 are generally in line with those expected nationally. The great majority of the pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in relation to their prior attainment. This represents a significant improvement since the full inspection in 1997.
- 155 At Key Stage 1, the pupils enjoy games lessons and demonstrate increasing skills during throwing and catching activities. They co-operate effectively and show increasing control and co-ordination. They make good use of space while showing respect for the space needed by others. By Year 6, the pupils build effectively on these earlier skills where the range of opportunities to learn and practise new skills widens. For example, a class of the oldest pupils were taught skills and techniques in hockey. They were able to keep the ball under reasonably close control in dribbling, holding the stick correctly to guide the ball. They knew how to receive the ball coming at speed and to use these skills to good effect in a small-sided competitive situation.
- 156 In dance, the pupils understand how to create imaginative movements making expressive use of gesture and changes of direction to give impact to their performance. For example, in a Year 2 class, the pupils devised interesting starting positions before creating a dance to music. They made expressive use of their hands and faces in working at different levels. They could remember and repeat simple movement patterns with control and increasing co-ordination.
- 157 Safety aspects are emphasised appropriately, particularly in gymnastics. This is especially evident when pupils create and perform linked sequences varying the level, speed and direction of their movements. For example, in a Year 3 class, the pupils benefited from the clear teaching of skills and techniques required to complete forward rolls successfully. They were then able to link together a series of movements incorporating a well executed forward roll to good effect. They listened carefully to evaluative comments from their teacher and from each other so that by the end of the lesson they were able to demonstrate good progress in their gymnastics.
- 158 In addition to dance, games and gymnastics, the programme of work at Key Stage 2 enables the pupils to participate in swimming, athletic activities and outdoor adventurous activities. School records indicate that by Year 6, the great majority of the pupils can swim unaided for at least 25 metres.
- 159 The quality of teaching is generally good overall and lessons are carefully planned and resourced appropriately. Classes are managed effectively and the content of the work is well sequenced so that time for pupils to engage in worthwhile activities is maximised. Although lessons begin with a brisk warm up, they are frequently brought to an abrupt conclusion and the importance of a carefully controlled cool down period is under-emphasised. The teaching makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs, so that they are included in all aspects of the work.

- 160 The teachers give much of their own time and expertise to organise a variety of extra-curricular sporting activities which enhance the pupils' physical education skills. School teams for boys and girls compete against local schools. Last year the school won the St Helens schools' rugby league, a notable achievement for a relatively small school. In addition, the school was awarded the Football Association Charter Standard in autumn 2000. The subject is co-ordinated effectively and the content of the work meets the requirements of the National Curriculum.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

- 161 Since the full inspection in 1997, the school has done much to improve the quality and provision for religious education. At the end of both key stages, pupils' attainment is now in line with the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus and most pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in relation to their prior attainment.
- 162 At Key Stage 1, pupils show a sound understanding of the basic beliefs and traditions of Christianity, Judaism and Hinduism. They recognise the importance of family members to themselves and to different faiths and cultures as they learn about the role of Jesus' disciples. Pupils in Year 2 are aware that prayer is a way of communicating with God and write their own prayers to say thank you for the gift of hearing.
- 163 By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' understanding of Jewish, Hindu and Islamic religions has developed further. They know about the customs, symbols, festivals, holy books and buildings of major religions. Important festivals such as Eid, Divali, Hanukkah and Christmas all play an important part in helping pupils to develop their understanding of the different traditions and religions. Visits to a synagogue and Liverpool Cathedral bring the subject alive for pupils and reinforce respect and for all faiths. Comparisons and contrasts are made between aspects of different faiths and traditions. Pupils in Year 6 have studied different versions of the 'Creation Story' and are able to identify similarities such as the idea of one Supreme Being who creates 'goodness'.
- 164 The significance of the main Christian Festivals, the life of Jesus, important Biblical characters such as Moses, and important aspects of worship are taught throughout Key Stage 2. Pupils are encouraged to consider the effect that religion can have on people's lives. A very effective lesson in Year 3 involved pupils finding out about how being a Christian had affected the lives of famous people, such as Jonathan Edwards and Judy Simpson. The use of modern day heroes and heroines captured pupils' imagination, maintained their interest and considerably added to their understanding of the significance of religion and faith.
- 165 Pupils show interest and enthusiasm for their work in religious education, and at both key stages, the discussions and reflections on religious issues make a very important contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- 166 Teaching is never less than satisfactory and is occasionally good. The scrutiny of work and discussions with pupils and staff indicate that there is a systematic approach to teaching the subject, which ensures that pupils' knowledge and understanding is developed effectively across the school. Pupils are challenged to consider the effect that religion might have on their own or people's lives. There are good opportunities to compare different world religions and to gain a deeper insight through quality resources, visits and visitors. Links with other subjects enhance understanding further, as pupils write their own poems about the creation, and design Torah scrolls

using Hebrew script. Whole school and class assemblies make a good contribution to pupils' religious education.

- 167 The co-ordinator is very much committed to raising the profile of religious education in the school. Her enthusiasm and secure subject knowledge has had a positive effect on raising standards, making the subject one that staff enjoy teaching and pupils enjoy learning.