

INSPECTION REPORT

EAVES PRIMARY SCHOOL

St Helens

LEA area: St Helens

Unique reference number: 104770

Headteacher: Mrs Jean Moore

Reporting inspector: Joyce Taylor
4275

Dates of inspection: 15th – 17th October 2001

Inspection number: 192912

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 – 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Eaves Lane
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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr P Lloyd

Date of previous inspection: 17th – 20th March 1997

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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4275	Joyce Taylor	Registered inspector	Geography Physical education The Foundation Stage	The characteristics and effectiveness of the school The school's results and pupils' achievements Teaching and learning Leadership and management Key issues for action
19807	Keith Osborne	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development Pupils' welfare, health and safety Partnership with parents and carers
27337	Sylvia Oultram	Team inspector	English Music Special educational needs	
4295	David Dodds	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology Design and technology Religious education	
18370	Kevin Johnson	Team inspector	Mathematics Art and design Music Equal opportunities	Quality and range of opportunities for learning

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Eaves Primary School is of average size, with 227 pupils aged 3 to 11 years on roll, including 24 nursery pupils who attend either mornings or afternoons. Overall the attainment of the children on entry to the nursery is below average and well below average in communication, language and literacy and creativity. About a third of the children are eligible for free school meals and this is above the national picture. There are 14.5 per cent of children identified as having special educational needs and this is below the national average. However the proportion of children with statements of special need is more than twice the average. There is a smaller than average proportion of children with English as an additional language and they understand and speak English well. The children enter the nursery when they are three and the reception class when they are four. The numbers of children in the nursery are falling and, as a result, in September 2002 it will only open in the morning.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school. When compared with other schools the children's achievements are better than average, particularly in mathematics and science. The present Year 6 pupils are reaching average standards in mathematics and science and below average standards in English. These children have made good progress since they took their national tests in Year 2 when their standards were well below average. In this year group about a quarter of the children have learning difficulties. The teaching across the school is good with over a third very good or excellent. The leadership and management of the headteacher are good. She has a very clear view of what needs to be done and has introduced changes to improve the standards of teaching and learning across the school. The headteacher is supported well by the deputy, other key staff and teachers. The governors provide good support for the school. The school gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- The teaching is good and often very good.
- The children's standards and achievement are improving. The standards in information and communication technology are above average and the children have made very good progress in this subject. The higher attaining children learn particularly well in most subjects.
- The provision for children with special needs is very good and they make good progress.
- The school is led and managed well. The headteacher works extremely hard to make sure the children are taught well and learn quickly. The senior staff and governors provide good support.
- The school provides an environment where the children feel happy and become enthusiastic learners. They know that their teachers like them and they work hard as a result.

What could be improved

- The standards in design and technology are below average in Key Stages 1 and 2.
- The standards in communication, language and literacy in the Foundation Stage are too low.
- The role of the subject leaders, to make sure all subjects are supported appropriately.
- The boys' toilets in Key Stage 2 are unhygienic. The school already has plans to improve them.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in March 1997 and there has been good improvement since then. The standards in literacy, mathematics, science and information and communication technology have improved. The teaching is much better. There is no unsatisfactory teaching and there is more very good teaching. The support for the children with learning difficulties is better. The areas identified as weaknesses in the previous inspection, apart from design and technology, have been given good

attention. Assessment is now managed effectively, the curriculum is organised well and the attitudes and behaviour of the older boys are satisfactory and often good.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1999	2000	2001	2001	
English	E	B	E	C	well above average A above average B
mathematics	D	B	D	B	average C below average D
science	E	B	D	C	well below average E

The standards reached by the children in Year 6 have steadily improved over the last few years, although the improvements in English have been slight. The standards appear to fluctuate. This is because the test results are strongly influenced by the proportions of children with learning difficulties who are unable to reach average standards. In 2000, the children reached above average standards in all three subjects because there were few pupils with learning difficulties in the class. In the current Year 6 the standards are below average for English, mathematics and design and technology but are average for all the other subjects. The school closely examines how well the children are learning and ensures they make good progress and achieve well.

When compared with similar schools the children who took their Year 6 tests in May 2001 reached standards that were above average in mathematics, and average in science and English. Judging by these children's standards when they took their Year 2 tests, the standards have remained steady in mathematics and science but have drifted down slightly in English. The school trend is broadly in line with most other schools. The school assesses progress effectively and this enables them to set accurate targets.

In the 2001 test results, when compared with the national picture, the Year 2 children reached above average standards in science, average standards in writing and below average standards in reading and mathematics. When compared with similar schools their standards were high in reading, writing and science and average in mathematics. When the current Year 2 children entered the reception class their attainment was below or well below average in the areas of learning. During their time in Key Stage 1 they have made good progress and achieved well. Their standards now are average in all subjects apart from design and technology. In the current reception class the children's standards are well below average in communication, language and literacy and below average in creative development. They are average in the other areas of learning. Their achievement during the past year in the nursery has been good in mathematics but too slow in communication, language and literacy. The school is aware of the need to improve the low standards and has identified the areas for development.

In the infant and junior classes the children reach good standards in information and communication technology and have made very good progress. The children with special needs achieve well and reach appropriate standards.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. The children take their work seriously and enjoy school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. The children concentrate on their work and do not let others disturb them.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. The children know that good behaviour is important and try hard to work well. They are becoming independent and responsible.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Although attendance fluctuates overall it is improving.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Good' means that the teaching is better than average.

During the inspection 43 lessons were seen. Four out of five were good or better with only one in five being satisfactory. There were four excellent lessons and twelve that were very good. No unsatisfactory lessons were seen. The teachers have many strengths. In particular they have very good relationships with the children and support the higher attaining learners skilfully. This means that the children work hard and in almost all cases they make good progress. The teachers provide a good range of work to challenge children of different abilities. They help them understand how well they are doing by providing clear targets and expect the children to improve the standards of their work. The children are given good support which enables them to behave well. This was seen, for example, in Year 6, where the children responded extremely well when the teacher gave them time to reflect on their inappropriate behaviour.

Whilst there are no significant weaknesses in the teaching, there is not enough direct teaching of early writing skills in the nursery. As a result some of the children do not achieve as well as they could in this aspect of communication, language and literacy.

In the infant and junior classes English and mathematics are generally taught well. Here the skills of writing and numeracy are taught particularly well. New ways of teaching mathematics in the nursery are proving successful through improving the children's counting and recognition of numbers and quantity. This has helped to raise the standards of numeracy in the reception class. The children with special needs are taught well by their teachers and support assistants.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good overall. The provision for English and mathematics is particularly thorough. There is not enough time given to design and technology.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. The children are identified early and given good support.
Provision for pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and including	Good overall. The pupils' moral and social development are given good support. This helps them to learn how to cope with any problems effectively. The provision for their spiritual and cultural development is

cultural development	satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good overall. The children receive very good support for their personal development and assessments of their learning are satisfactory.

The school analyses the results of the children's tests very well and knows how well each class will do. The assessments to show what children need to learn next are satisfactory but need more detailed targets to help the children make faster progress. The school works well with parents and keeps them informed about what is happening. Some parents strongly support their children's learning but many do not show enough interest, for example in seeing that homework is completed.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher is hardworking and effective. She has brought about improvements in standards and the quality of teaching. The senior staff provide good support and influence. Subject leaders need to ensure all subjects are supported properly.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The governors are hardworking and informed. They use their own skills well to help improve aspects of the school and curriculum
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The school has clearly improved the standards and teaching by identifying areas for development and working to make them better.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The budget is used well. Additional funding is sought and used to improve aspects like information and communication technology.

The teachers are particularly skilled. They are supported very well by the classroom assistants who work extremely effectively to develop the children's learning. The accommodation is adequate but cramped. The outside areas are used well to provide additional learning opportunities. Resources for learning are satisfactory. The school consults well and gets good value from its spending and applies the principles of best value well..

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 teaching is good. • The children are expected to work hard. • The children make good progress. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of homework. • The information about how the children are getting on.

The inspection team agrees with the parents' positive views. We also agree that more detailed information about how the children are getting on is needed but judge that the school provides a typical amount and type of homework.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The children come into the nursery with below average standards in mathematics and knowledge and understanding of the world. Their standards in communication, language and literacy and creativity are well below average. They have average standards of physical development and in aspects of personal development such as independence. However, they lack confidence and cannot take account of the needs of others. When they enter the reception class their standards are still well below average in the development of spoken language and writing, in creative development and reading the standards are below average. The standards in mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development are average. They have improved their personal skills but are still unsure of themselves when facing new situations. By the end of the Foundation Stage they are likely to reach average standards in reading, mathematics, physical development, knowledge and understanding of the world and personal development. Their standards in other aspects of communication, language and literacy and creativity linked to speaking and early writing are likely to be below average. Their achievement is satisfactory apart from these aspects of communication, language and literacy where it is unsatisfactory.
2. At the end of Key Stage 1 the children's test results in reading, writing and mathematics, over the past four years, have given a varied picture. Mostly the standards have been below average but occasionally they have been average or above. The children's records show how they have made particularly good progress in writing during their time in Key Stage 1 and have achieved well. In 2001 the standards in reading and mathematics were below average and were average in writing. When compared with similar schools the standards were average or well above. This is because of the effective class teaching and the additional support given to small groups of children. In reading and mathematics the standards have not always been as high as they could be, but they have now improved because of the extra attention given to these subjects in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. The standards in science are good and are supported by the children's developing literacy skills. In all three subjects the numbers of children who have learning difficulties strongly influence the test results. In some year groups up to a third of the Year 2 children have needed extra support. The potentially higher attaining children usually reach higher standards than average. They are expected to do well and their lessons are planned effectively to ensure their work is challenging. The current Year 2 children are reaching average standards in English, mathematics and science. This shows a further improvement and is due to the effective teaching in Key Stage 1.
3. At the end of Key Stage 2 the children's test results, over time, show standards that have fluctuated. Since 1999 the standards have been rising. In

2000 the children reached much higher standards than usual and were above average overall. This was because there were fewer children with learning difficulties in the group. In 2001 the standards in mathematics and science were below average but in English the standards remained well below average. When compared with similar schools the standards were average or above. The school has worked hard and successfully to raise the standards in mathematics and this is becoming effective. Recently there has been greater attention given to English with more small group work. This has improved the picture and the current Year 6 children have made good progress. About a third of them are still below average but the others are reaching average or above average standards. This still presents an overall picture of below average standards for the group as a whole but the children are achieving well. Their achievement in mathematics and science is also good. The determination and skills of the teacher who works with the oldest children indicates that an average proportion of pupils are likely to reach the appropriate levels in mathematics and science when they take their tests in the summer of 2002. A third of this group have learning difficulties so their improved standards are a particular success for the school.

4. The school builds effectively on the children's earlier learning as they move through the year groups. As a result most of them are making good progress during their time in the school. Broad targets are set for the children in literacy and these, with test results, are analysed effectively. As a result the staff have identified weaknesses in curriculum coverage that have enabled them to plan lessons based on what is needed next in order to raise standards. Since the last inspection, the standards are higher in English, mathematics, science and information and communications technology.
5. The school recently identified a concern at the standards in mathematics reached by the children in the Foundation Stage. As a result there has more time given to counting and helping the children understand about quantities. This has raised the standards. A similar concern has been noted relating to the children's fluency and understanding in speaking and their early writing skills. The children understand what they are learning but are often unable to talk about it fluently. As a result their writing and their reading comprehension does not improve at a fast enough rate.
6. By the end of each key stage the children's attainment in information and communication technology is above average; they have a good range of skills and a very secure understanding. This is an improvement since the last inspection when standards were average. The children use information and communication technology well to support other subjects. In Key Stage 1 the standards are above average in physical education. In all the other subjects the standards are average in both key stages apart from design and technology where they are below average.
7. For the children with special educational needs, work in English and mathematics is adapted at the right level. The work is carefully structured and based on an accurate assessment of what they need. Experienced and competent learning support assistants help these pupils to learn and concentrate well. In their lessons they make good progress. Pupils are identified and helped at an early age and this contributes to the good

progress they make. The children with emotional and behavioural difficulties make very good progress, especially in Year 6, because they are learning to control their behaviour and work well in the lessons.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

8. Children like coming to the school. They respect their teachers and show by their good, and often very good, behaviour in lessons that they want to learn. They take responsibilities very seriously, for example the library monitors, who are able to use a computerised book issuing system effectively, or the pupils from Years 3 to 6 on the School Council who put forward ideas for improving the school on behalf of their classmates. They show good respect for others, for example, in a Year 4 mathematics lesson the special educational needs pupils showed how well they had made models of three-dimensional shapes and the rest of the class were keen to talk with them about their work. Pupils are well aware of the school's golden rules and other expectations of good behaviour. The last inspection report indicated that there were some older boys whose behaviour was sometimes poor. This is no longer the case because the Year 6 teacher has developed very good systems to improve the children's attention and enjoyment in their learning.
9. The rate of attendance in the last academic year shows a slight decline from the two previous years but is still broadly average. The school has recently strengthened its definition of unauthorised absence to include pupils who arrive more than 30 minutes after the official start of lessons. This has had the effect of increasing unauthorised absence rates. Lateness and unexplained absences affect only a small number of pupils and the rate of holiday absence in term time is about average. Most pupils attend regularly and promptly.
10. Pupils with special educational needs show very good attitudes towards their work and enjoy very good relationships with the adults who work with them. They are keen to learn and most concentrate well.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

11. The quality of teaching is good overall. During the inspection more than a third of the lessons seen were very good or excellent. Of the 43 lessons seen 35 were good or better and 8 were satisfactory. This is a substantial improvement on the previous inspection when 15 per cent of the lessons were unsatisfactory. Since then the headteacher and senior staff have increased their support of the teaching through effective monitoring and advising the teachers on how to improve. This better quality teaching is having a strong influence on the children's attitudes and standards are rising particularly for the higher attaining children. The teachers have good subject knowledge and understanding, particularly in English, in Key Stages 1 and 2, mathematics, science and information and communications technology. As a result the children are reaching higher standards in all these subjects than at the time of the last inspection.

12. The quality of the teaching in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. The adults have a clear knowledge of how these young children learn. This was seen in the nursery when the children were encouraged to find out how to lift and move a heavy wooden branch. The staff focus on developing children's skills of concentration and listening because the children are easily distracted, particularly in the nursery. Many of them do not concentrate readily and, in reception, still find it hard to pay attention if discussions last too long. This was seen during a reception writing lesson when the children's attention wavered until the teacher began to demonstrate how they would work.
13. There are strong links between the learning opportunities in the nursery and reception classes. In both, the children are provided with many experiences to explore and play with an appropriate range of resources. For example, in the nursery the children used a tree branch as a cause for a diversion to their outdoor cycle track. The staff carefully plan direct teaching sessions where they focus, for example, on talking about the pictures and the text in storybooks. They provide appropriate practical activities that let the children practise what they have learned. In the nursery good counting sessions have raised the children's standards in mathematics. The children are now able to use many resources, such as sticky shapes, to count the quantity they need to use. Writing is taught well in reception and the children are achieving well. In the nursery less attention is given to direct teaching of writing and the development of spoken language. As a result the children's standards are lower than they should be. The staff have identified this concern as an area for development. The curriculum planning is satisfactory. For most areas of learning it is clear and shows what the children are to learn.
14. In the infant classes all the teaching seen was good or better and one lesson was excellent. In the junior classes two thirds of the teaching was good or better and four lessons were excellent. The teachers show particular strengths in the way they interest and stimulate the children with exciting and active lessons. In the Year 2 mathematics lesson, for example, the children were asked to describe how they worked out the computations. The teacher used good mathematical vocabulary to prompt the children and help them to use the technical terms for themselves. In Year 6 some of the children find it difficult to keep their attention on their work. The teacher skilfully reminded the children that their work is important and they must concentrate. The children know the teacher likes them and they respond well even though they have learning or behaviour difficulties. In this type of lesson the children work very hard and know what they have learned. As a result they make good progress. In almost all lessons there is a calm and purposeful atmosphere in the classrooms.
15. The teachers plan challenging work that the children enjoy. For example, in Year 3 the children were expected to contribute to the science lesson on teeth by describing how they lost their own first teeth. The children became very interested in what happens if teeth are neglected and had many opinions to offer. This lesson developed the children's confidence and enthusiasm and

their responses showed flair. There were very purposeful discussions and the teacher asked detailed questions to find out what the children knew. The teachers know the curriculum well and they know the next steps in each subject that will help the children achieve well. This was seen in an art lesson in Year 1 where the teacher explained what the children would learn next. She used examples of work from famous artists to help the children understand and enable them to mix the precise colours they needed. The teachers check how well the children are learning as the work is completed and identify what the children find difficult. In almost all lessons there is work of different levels for children who need it. This means that both the higher and lower attaining children are supported well and the teachers are aware of who these pupils are and how to keep up their attainment.

16. The teaching in English is very good and in mathematics it is good or better. The teachers have received regular and effective training and work with confidence. The skills of using letter sounds and spelling to help reading and writing are taught very well during literacy lessons. The children are shown how to use these skills when reading and writing in other curriculum subjects. For example, in history in Year 5 information and communication technology was used well to support the children's reading. The children effectively searched for evidence to support their historical knowledge about life in Tudor times. The children are now making good progress in all aspects of English and as a result their standards are improving in both key stages. In numeracy lessons the children are taught how to calculate and handle numbers systematically and very effectively throughout the infant and junior classes. In Year 3, for example, the teacher expected the children to apply their understanding beyond the numbers they were familiar with. They were able to work out that odd and even numbers continued past 30 although they had never previously identified them. As a result of this type of teaching the children are able to use a range of calculation strategies when working out problems. The teachers understand the importance of counting and calculating and constantly reinforce this in lessons. Skilled support staff are effectively deployed and have a very positive effect on the children's learning.
17. Where the teaching is satisfactory the teachers provide less stimulation for the children. This was seen in religious education lessons where, for example, the children were told a story and then asked to write about it. Occasionally the children are not so well managed by the teacher and they become restless and sometimes lose interest.
18. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good and often very good. All staff are strongly committed to moving the children's learning forward in a steady and systematic way. The quality of individual learning plans is good. They are precisely written with specific targets. This is an improvement since the last report. For all the pupils the curriculum is well planned and relevant to their needs because of the quality of the assessments carried out and the staff's knowledge of the pupils. There are very good relationships between adults and pupils that help them to feel confident. Learning support assistants, working with special needs children in

the bases and in the main classes, make a very good contribution and pupils benefit from this help. They enjoy their lessons, and achieve well.

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

19. The school provides a well-balanced and relevant curriculum for all of its pupils. The school has adapted the recommended curriculum guidance well to make sure the children receive interesting and carefully thought out lessons. Sufficient time is given to all subjects apart from design and technology which has too little. Learning is supported well by the range of good quality activities that take place outside of school time. These contribute well to pupils' progress and development for example in sports, music and drama. The school's efforts have been recognised through the 'Education Extra Award'. The locally agreed syllabus for religious education has been adapted appropriately to meet the school's needs. Pupils are taught about the dangers to their health of drugs and tobacco. Sex education is provided for pupils in Year 6.
20. At the time of the last inspection there were concerns about the emphasis placed on the teaching of key enquiry skills in science, history and geography as well as standards of work in design technology. Curriculum planning has been adjusted effectively to ensure key skills are now taught but there has been insufficient progress towards raising standards in design technology. This is because not enough time is allocated to allow pupils to practice the essential designing and making skills. Curriculum planning for art has improved, and there is now more challenge for more able pupils because of higher expectations.
21. The school has implemented the national literacy and numeracy strategies well. A good strength of provision is the level of extra support for groups of pupils during lessons. This significantly enhances their learning opportunities because work can be set at a level suitable for them. Pupils are given good opportunities to practice their reading, writing and information and communication technology skills in other subjects. For example computers are used in well in music, art, history, religious education and science lessons. The school uses its information and communications technology resources very effectively to ensure the children acquire the skills they need to support their work across the curriculum.
22. The school has improved its provision for pupils who have special educational needs and this is now very good. Individual plans identify specific learning targets and the children's progress towards these is carefully monitored. The teachers and teaching assistants work very well together to support the pupils' learning and their personal development.
23. The range of visits and visitors to the school adds to the quality of provision. For example visits to Warrington and Liverpool museums and Speke Hall have enriched pupils' learning in history. Personal and health education was enhanced when members of the fire service talked about aspects of safety. Other notable visitors to the school were the opera and ballet companies who organised workshops for pupils. Afterwards the children saw performances by both companies. Pupils have been given useful practical links with environmental projects. In the school grounds they helped to create a garden and pond area, and they designed the gates for a new Millennium Green.

There are regular meetings with the secondary school each half term, and sporting and induction activities to help with a smooth transfer at 11.

24. The curriculum policy has been reviewed in line with national recommendations to ensure that all areas are covered properly. Where possible, personal, social and health education topics are taught through other subjects. For example in Year 2 science, pupils explore the difference between sweets and tablets. Reception pupils learn to work as a team, to steer a ball across and round a stretched parachute. Education about growing up is included in Year 6, and discussion activities are being developed to extend pupils' self esteem and confidence. This provision is effective and helps the children understand about aspects of citizenship and their own place in the school and wider community.
25. The school has maintained good provision for pupils' social and moral development since the time of the last inspection. Provision for spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory. Spiritual development is supported through assemblies and religious education lessons. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on the importance of faith to people of different cultures and how their own actions can affect others' feelings. During discussion times pupils think about their own emotions and feelings and share their problems with one another. In one infant assembly, for example, the children thought about the importance of forgiveness. The junior children, in their assembly, were reminded not to accuse others rashly. The pupils have opportunities to appreciate the creativity of art and music. In some lessons for example, teachers ask pupils to express their own thoughts about what they see and hear, but there is little reflective writing in the form of poetry or prayers to be seen around the school.
26. Provision for moral and social development is good. It is strongly linked to the school's aims and expectations. School rules are presented positively to pupils as things to achieve, rather than things they cannot do. Right attitudes are strongly reinforced by adults and discussed by the children during their 'circle time', when they talk about problems. Staff discuss incidents with pupils. When necessary they point out why improvement might be needed so the children understand the implications of their behaviour. All adults provide very good role models and they work together closely as a team. After school clubs take place in a friendly atmosphere and pupils compete fairly. In the French club pupils drank coffee and ate croissants while trying out their conversational French. Arrangements for eating lunch provide another opportunity for pupils to socialise and establish their friendships. The children are aware of the needs of others within the wider community and work as a team to help. A good example is the organisation of a talent spotting concert by Year 6 pupils. The money raised was sent to a charity.
27. There are satisfactory opportunities for pupils to develop awareness of their own and others' cultures. In religious education lessons pupils find out about the traditions and celebrations of Judaism, Sikhism and Islam. They have visited a local synagogue and mosque as well as Liverpool Cathedral to learn

about Christian religious traditions. Different lifestyles seen in India and some European countries are studied in geography lessons and help the children understand different cultures. Pupils gain insights in their own heritage by visiting local places of historical interest and by learning traditional pastimes such as country dancing. Year 6 pupils' involvement in the creation of a Millennium Green in the community also served as a link between past and future heritage.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

28. Procedures for child protection are satisfactory overall with several good features. The teacher with responsibility for this aspect has many had years' experience of child protection matters. She is very aware of the procedures to be followed, and has had recent training to meet the new code of practice. All teaching staff have had training within the last three years. Newly appointed teachers are given appropriate information. All classroom and lunchtime staff receive basic awareness training.
29. The school takes good account of pupils' health and safety. School meals include healthy options such as fruit and vegetables, and museli bars are sold at break as well as crisps. The procedures for health and safety inspections are effective and one of the governors, who has relevant expertise, provides good advice and support. The unpleasant state of the boys' toilets in Key Stage 2 has rightly been identified as a priority for action. The condition of some of the external areas and the need to improve electrical wiring to cope with additional computers are also noted for development. The school is safe and secure.
30. The school has very effective procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' behaviour and personal development. The amount of unacceptable behaviour has been successfully reduced by ensuring that the staff are consistent in the way they deal with problems. Additionally the classroom support staff are skilled at intervening before some pupils become agitated or frustrated. They use effective discipline procedures that provide long-term incentives and rewards for self discipline. There is little serious bullying or harassment, and the school moves quickly and very effectively to deal with any isolated examples. Pupils with special educational needs receive particularly good support from teachers and support assistants. For example they were provided with a fun activity using bubbles to help develop hand - eye coordination. Procedures to promote attendance are satisfactory.
31. The systems for analysing the children's test results are very good and have improved since the last inspection. The school collects the data from the many tests the children take, particularly in English and mathematics. The information that is collected is used appropriately to see what standards the children reach and how well they are progressing each year. This enables the staff to make predictions about what national curriculum levels each pupil is likely to reach by the age of 7 and 11. The coordinators for English and mathematics examine the data for general features and give advice to

teachers on areas that need further development. This is contributing to the rising standards. Assessment systems in information and communication technology, religious education, history and geography are effectively linked to the key learning objectives. These systems are newly introduced and the teachers have not yet analysed the data. The school has rightly identified the need to introduce individual target setting in English and mathematics and plans are already in place to begin this in writing. The systems for assessing children's attainment and achievement overall have greatly improved since the last inspection and are satisfactory.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

32. Parents' views of the school are good. They feel that their children are well cared for and that the quality of teaching is good. They feel that the school helps pupils to grow and mature and their children make good progress because the school expects them to work hard. The inspectors agree with all these positive views. Some parents are less happy about homework, some aspects of links with them, and children's behaviour. Inspectors' views are that homework is typical of most primary schools, although not all children are encouraged by their parents to complete the work. The school's written information for parents is good, and the school is approachable, although parents need to make appointments in advance if they want to see the headteacher. The teachers are always available at the end of the day. There have been good improvements in behaviour management recently.
33. The school keeps the parents well informed about the progress of pupils with special educational needs. Many parents of children with special needs meet regularly with teachers and receive regular reports about how well their children are working. Although the majority of parents attend the annual review meetings, some parents of older pupils do not, despite the best efforts of the school.
34. The Friends of Eaves School raise a significant amount of money. This has been used to support the school in a range of activities, for example, to enable all Year 6 pupils to have a residential visit free of charge or in the purchase of additional computers. Some parents volunteer to help in the classroom, but fewer than in the past. Formal training is available for parent volunteers, leading to a certificate and several parents have found this helpful. There are three evenings each year for parents to meet with teachers and talk about their children's work. These are effective on one occasion that is well attended but only about half of families regularly come to the others.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

35. This is a strong aspect of the school, as it was at the time of the last inspection. The current headteacher has achieved much in the time she has been at the school. She provides staff with clear, purposeful leadership that is focused on school improvement. She has improved the systems and structures for management and communication that the school needs in order

to move forward. The team structure for senior management enables all staff to make their contribution and feel that it is valued. The headteacher has built up a good sense of team spirit and a shared commitment to improvement. She leads the school well, together with her deputy and Key Stage 1 coordinator. The special needs coordinator ensures that the provision for children with special educational needs is very good. She regularly monitors their standards and achievement.

36. The subject coordinators know when they are to lead the staff in training and development because the school uses its improvement plan effectively to identify and meet priorities for development. In this way, for example, the teaching and the standards in mathematics throughout the school have been improved. Some of the coordinators are less effective in influencing the teaching and learning in their subjects because their roles are not clearly defined. This happens when a subject is not a priority for development. In the case of design and technology, art and music for example the coordinators are concentrating on other aspects of their work. This means they give insufficient attention to these subjects. As a result the other teachers do not receive as much help as they need to teach all aspects of the subject properly. Sometimes the headteacher steps in to provide support in these subjects and adds unnecessarily to her own, already heavy, workload.
37. The governors fulfil their role well and provide the school with positive, well-informed support. They have a very good, perceptive insight into the school's strengths and weaknesses, and share the headteacher's drive to improve the school. Several of the governors use their own skills, such as financial management, information and communication technology and building maintenance to improve these aspects within the school. There is a governor who supports special educational needs. She is very involved and knowledgeable about the special needs provision made by the school and provides good support. The governors have a good overview of the school's priorities and a good grasp of the budget that is needed to finance these. The governors carry out their statutory duties satisfactorily.
38. The school improvement planning process is good. Priorities are closely linked to both the school's needs and to national initiatives. Clear costings mean that the implications for the school's budget have been considered. The headteacher, the senior management team and the governors systematically monitor progress towards the school's goals and evaluate the impact of their decisions through their regular schedule of meetings throughout the year. In addition, the headteacher has established a programme of observing the teaching and learning going on in classrooms. This has been used to help the teachers improve their work.
39. Financial planning and monitoring are good. In particular, the headteacher and governors are skilled in tracking down and making imaginative use of grants and additional sources of funding to meet needs in the school. Recent good examples of this are the targeting of grant money to develop the outdoor play area and extend the existing gardens so that the children in Key

Stages 1 and 2 can grow fruit and vegetables. Money saved in the budget will be used to improve the play area for the reception children. The proposed use of new funds to open a before and after school club is another good initiative. Financial control is also good. Procedures for using and accounting for funds are properly set up, and good use is made of the expertise of the governors. The latest audit report has highlighted only minor areas for action.

40. The school applies the principles of best value well. Both the governors and the senior staff consider carefully the best way to use their resources to match the school's priorities. This is illustrated by the consideration of applying for a neighbourhood nursery to supplement the falling numbers and benefit the community, the staff and the school.
41. The expertise of the staff is better than average. The school makes effective use of the teachers' qualifications and expertise through sharing the teaching of subjects such as religious education and science. The children's learning is supported through the very good work of the classroom assistants, for example in introducing an effective computer based school library system. The teachers and classroom assistants make good use of relevant training. Performance management has been introduced well with targets that are closely aligned to the school's development plan.
42. The school buildings are adequate. Teachers make the most of the available space by using the shared areas effectively. However the classrooms are cramped and inclined to become cluttered, and storage space is limited. The outside areas provide an interesting learning environment and the school has made good use of them to support subjects such as science and geography. The ambience of the school is currently marred by the less than efficient boys' toilets in Key Stage 2. Resources are satisfactory. The core subjects of English, mathematics and science are well resourced and the curriculum is enhanced because they are used well. There are very good resources for information and communication technology that are used more effectively than in most primary schools.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

43. In order to maintain and improve the standards achieved by the school the headteacher, staff and governors should:
 - a) Raise the standards in design and technology by:
 - making sure that all the aspects of the curriculum are taught.
(paragraphs 6, 81)
 - b) Raise the standards in communication, language and literacy in the foundation Stage by:

- extending the children's vocabulary through introducing new words and sentences and teaching the children to use the new vocabulary in their own talk;
- expecting the children to give longer answers in discussions and conversations;
- providing more opportunities for drawing and early writing in the nursery;
- teaching the children in the nursery how to form, at least, the letters in their name as soon as they understand about writing.

(paragraphs 1, 49, 50)

- c) Extend the role of the subject leaders to make sure all subjects are supported appropriately.
(paragraphs 36,85,98)

In addition to the aspects above, the following less important development point should be considered for inclusion in the action plan.

- Improve the hygiene and cleanliness in the boys' toilets, as planned, as soon as possible. (paragraph 42)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	43
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	56

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	4	12	19	8	0	0	0
Percentage	9	28	44	19	0	0	0

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

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)	19	208
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	67

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	10
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	4	28

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	1

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	19
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	14

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.8
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.5
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	15	15	30

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	12	11
	Girls	13	14	13
	Total	23	26	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	77 (88)	87 (92)	80 (88)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	12	12	12
	Girls	14	13	14
	Total	26	25	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	87 (92)	83 (88)	87 (84)
	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 6)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	15	17	32

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	11	13
	Girls	15	11	15
	Total	27	22	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	84 (56)	69 (59)	88 (56)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	11	12
	Girls	15	14	15
	Total	25	25	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	78 (64)	78 (64)	84 (55)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (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	0
White	247
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	7	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)	8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	29.7
Average class size	19

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	11
Total aggregate hours worked per week	53

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	37
Number of pupils per FTE adult	9.5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000
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	£
Total income	479765
Total expenditure	472654
Expenditure per pupil	2056
Balance brought forward from previous year	9541
Balance carried forward to next year	7111

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	227
Number of questionnaires returned	68

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	59	40	1	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	54	40	1	0	4
Behaviour in the school is good.	38	49	9	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	31	41	18	6	4
The teaching is good.	56	38	0	0	6
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	46	38	16	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	62	29	7	0	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	56	37	1	0	6
The school works closely with parents.	44	40	9	0	7
The school is well led and managed.	46	41	4	0	9
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	44	51	3	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	59	29	3	1	7

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

45. The provision for children in the nursery and reception class is satisfactory. The children feel secure and happy in the pleasant environment, and, because of the very effective induction procedures, they settle quickly into the daily routines. When children enter the nursery at three, their attainment in communication, language and literacy and creative development is well below the average expected for children of the same age. In physical development and aspects of personal development their attainment is average. In the other areas of learning their attainment is below average.
46. The children's achievement is satisfactory apart from speaking and listening and early writing which are unsatisfactory. By the end of their reception year, the attainment of most children in communication, language and literacy and the creative areas of learning are still below the expected levels. They attain close to average levels in their mathematical understanding, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and aspects of personal and social development. The current assessment procedures are satisfactory overall. The teachers use check lists based on the recommended stages of learning to record the children's standards several times each year. These procedures are in the early stages and have not identified how quickly or slowly the children make progress.

Personal and social development

47. When the children start in the nursery, many find it difficult to share with others or take turns. Many of them are not used to conforming to rules or following routines. The teaching in this area is good. As a result, the children achieve well, and by the end of the reception year, standards are broadly in line with the expectations for their age. The children still show a higher than average level of immaturity. For example the children find difficulty in resolving problems and usually tend to help themselves to toys and equipment without thought for others. When this happens many children do not know how to react without anger or becoming upset. The teachers and the nursery nurses are sympathetic to the needs of the children. They adopt a friendly but firm approach to establishing the ground rules that are the foundation for a secure and happy learning environment. The staff are particularly skilled in dealing sensitively with children who are upset or anxious. Their calm approach means that the children learn to trust the adults and settle down happily to learn. This was seen in the reception class where the children identify the activities for their own group by looking at a chart. Even the less confident pupils manage this system fairly well.
48. Teachers have high expectations of children's behaviour and the consistent approach by all the adults means that all of the children know how they

should behave. Throughout the Foundation Stage, the teachers give the children plenty of opportunities to work and play together. This means that in the reception class they are beginning to work together, take turns and share things. In the reception class, however, there are still children who play alone. For example, a little girl played by herself in the dressing up area for a considerable time. She made no contact with the other children and responded only with gestures when spoken to.

Communication, language and literacy

49. By the end of the reception year the children's standards are below the expectations for children of their age in speaking and writing. The children achieve at a satisfactory rate overall but their achievement is faster in the reception class than the nursery. The teaching in this area is satisfactory overall but there is a range of strengths and weaknesses in the learning provided for the children. In both classes the staff provide an appropriate range of play opportunities where the children can talk together and chat with the staff in a relaxed situation. Often the staff do not engage the children enough in conversation. They tend to ask questions that require a one or two-word answer, and frequently accept a nod or a shake of the head. In independent role-play situations, in the nursery, there is good adult involvement but this is not so well developed in reception. The effect of this is that, although the children communicate with one another, many of them do not progress beyond simple words and gestures.
50. In the nursery, children are introduced to books through story times, and they have good opportunities to explore books for themselves, sometimes with an adult alongside. These are useful and effective occasions. The children learn about how to handle books and that they are interesting and fun. There is an appropriate stock of suitable books and these are displayed to capture the children's interest. The effect of this is that the children learn to handle books for themselves and become familiar with the layout. In the reception class, the children are becoming familiar with early reading but very few of them can recognise any words. In reception the teacher promotes early writing skills effectively through an appropriate range of well-thought-out activities. She is skilled at teaching children the sounds that letters make by linking actions to the sounds and effectively demonstrates how to write. In the nursery the adults do not directly teach the skills of early writing and the children have a slower start than they should. For example, there is not enough drawing or use of the children's names to encourage mark making. The children are not encouraged to communicate their requirements by making marks. In the reception class the children are taught systematically how to form their letters and are beginning to write the letters of their names.

Mathematical development

51. There are few children who enter the nursery with average mathematical knowledge and understanding. For example, they have little knowledge of number or shape. By the time they leave the reception class the standards reached by most of the children match the expectations for their age. The teaching in this area is good, and as a result, the children achieve well. The staff have a good understanding of how to build on what the children know. In the nursery the children count together with the teacher for example to find the quantity of objects. As a result they can use these skills to organise and make sense of their play. For example one boy, using self-adhesive labels, counted how many he had stuck down and said 'Four, I'm four'. In the reception class the children can sort objects by quantity and most can already recognise numbers to six. They can count to at least 20. The teachers use an appropriate range of number songs and rhymes to reinforce learning. Adults take appropriate opportunities to extend children's learning in free play activities. For example during play in the home area in the nursery the teacher helped the children sort different types of food as they searched for a birthday cake. In reception the play activities like blocks and puzzles develop mathematical concepts and vocabulary.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

52. Most children enter the nursery with below the expected levels of general knowledge about the world around them. The quality of teaching in this area is good and the children achieve well. Their standards are those expected for children of six years old. Throughout the Foundation Stage, the teachers plan appropriately to interest the children in finding out about their local environment and how and why things happen. In the nursery, for example, the children had fun using a tree branch during their outdoor play. This had been found on a visit to woods and was carried back by a group of the children. This gave them a clear understanding of how to manage awkward objects and, later, how to steer their bicycles around the branch when it was placed in the play area. The children are introduced to computers in the nursery, and in the reception class higher attaining children use them to good effect to support their learning. The children use the mouse very effectively to control events on the screen. Children learn about magnets, for example, and how they attract some objects by finding 'treasure' buried in the sand. This is reinforced through toys that connect to each other magnetically.

Physical development

53. When children enter the nursery, their attainment in this area is average in their management of large movements but they show below average skills with fine movements. For example when cutting and drawing, and in co-ordinating their movements such as filling a container with sand. Through good provision and teaching, they achieve well and, in the reception class, most children reach the expected standards for their age. The staff provide plenty of opportunities for the children to practise and refine their manipulative skills through using a good range of tools, equipment and materials. In the nursery, for example, the children manage with difficulty, the

task of picking adhesive labels from a sheet of plasticised paper. In the reception class, activities such as attaching small plastic bricks and pencil control build up the children's confidence and skill. The provision for outdoor play is satisfactory. The outdoor play area in the nursery is used well. In reception the children have gymnastics lessons in the hall and sessions when they are able to use wheeled toys to practise their steering skills outside. A new area has been designed for the reception children that will provide a high standard of provision and opportunity in the near future. The children are active and use appropriate control. In their play they move with awareness of space and avoid collisions well. They move with care and precision.

Creative development

54. Children's attainment when they enter the nursery is well below the level expected for their age. The overall satisfactory teaching leads to satisfactory achievement, but by the end of the reception year, standards are still below those expected. The children show great difficulty in using their imagination to make up events when using the play resources. Teachers plan for the children to develop their imaginations by providing role-play situations. For example, in the nursery the children play in the home area. When the staff play alongside the children improve their vocabulary and organise themselves well but rarely create imaginary situations. In reception, the play area is based on 'Sing a song of sixpence. There is a counting house, the parlour and the garden. The children have very little imagination and are not able to think up their own ideas and do not extend their learning as much as they should because there is little adult interaction. When incidental involvement between the adults and the children occurs the play improves and the children adopt new ideas. The provision for art, music and dance is satisfactory overall with good opportunities for the children to sing. In reception the children listen to tapes using headsets and sing along. In both classes there are opportunities for the children to paint and draw but this part of their creative development is slower than it could be. This is because there is little direct teaching of how to use colours and designs in a progressive and developmental way as the children extend their skills.

ENGLISH

55. The children's current standards in English are average at the age of 7 and below average at the age of 11. In the National Curriculum tests for 2001, the results for the 7 year olds were well above average in reading and writing when compared with similar schools. Results for 11 year olds were average in English when compared with similar schools. A high proportion of the pupils in the current Year 6 are on the special needs register and the results for these children is likely to be below average. Despite this the pupils have made good progress and achieve well. Two key factors for this are the excellent teaching and the children's positive attitudes towards their learning. Throughout the infant and junior classes the National Literacy Strategy has been implemented well. Lessons are well planned and tasks are chosen carefully so that the children remain interested and very well motivated. Good

opportunities are provided for the children to write for a wide range of purposes, for example, in history the children in Year 5 have written detailed and interesting accounts of life in Tudor times. This is an improvement since the last inspection.

56. When the children enter school their speaking and listening skills are well below average. Despite their initial lack of confidence pupils achieve well in this area. Lessons, for example in science in Year 2, provide well planned opportunities for discussion. The teacher skilfully led the children through a well structured lesson about medicines and drugs, the children confidently expressed their opinions. The teachers value the children's responses and give them time to think through what they want to say. This encourages them to refine and improve their speaking skills. There is a high level of respect and courtesy when children listen to the opinions of others, they are interested in what is being said. When reading aloud as part of their literacy lessons the teachers model reading well so that children develop an expressive tone in their own reading. This was noted by inspectors as they heard individual children read. Older pupils explain their ideas and opinions, for example, in Year 6's work on journalism when considering rhetorical questions.
57. The pupils' skills in reading develop well from year to year. The children have a good understanding of letter sounds which helps them when tackling new words. Reading skills are taught well through daily literacy lessons and through guided reading sessions. As the pupils move through the school their fluency improves appropriately. By the time they are 11 many often reach average standards. They have developed a critical appreciation of a range of books and are able to talk about different styles and authors. Older and higher attaining pupils use the contents, index and glossary information in non-fiction books effectively. The reading skills of less able pupils and those with special educational needs are weaker, but they are well supported by carefully structured programmes and knowledgeable classroom assistants. A love of reading is being developed well. There is a good range of attractive books in each classroom. The library although small is welcoming and well arranged. Pupil librarians enjoy their work and are very efficient when issuing books using their new computerised system. The library coordinator has worked hard to develop this.
58. Pupils of all abilities make good progress in developing their writing skills. The coordinator has made good use of assessment results and identified that standards of writing and spelling were a problem. Where the proportion of children with special needs in each class is below about 25 per cent the class is reaching average standards overall. This is a result careful planning, additional time given to writing and very good teaching that has resulted in improvements in all aspects of writing. A particularly good example of very effective teaching was seen in Year 3. The teacher developed the children's drafting skills by the skilful use of white boards. This motivated the children to write quickly, revise and improve their work, before transferring their writing onto paper. All the teachers expect high standards and create regular

opportunities for children to practice their spelling and handwriting skills. Children regularly use the computer to present their work and to seek research information. By the time they are 11 children use sophisticated and interesting vocabulary to describe characters. Words are carefully chosen for effect and with the result that children can write, for example, 'The wrinkled silver haired, baggy eyed lady shuffled into the room'. In lessons like this the children are excited by their work and don't want the lesson to end.

59. Overall the teaching is very good. Across the school the teachers have a good understanding of how to teach reading and writing. In Year 2 and Year 6 the teaching is exceptional. In these lessons the children make very good progress. In all classes the children know what they are expected to learn and how this links with what they have learned previously. Teachers use rich and wide vocabulary to promote the children's interest in new words. They insist that proper terms for language are used and encourage the children to choose descriptive words accurately. These high expectations encourage pupils to be more expressive when explaining their ideas or when writing. Older children are encouraged to read between the lines to establish what the writer is getting at. A good example of this was seen in Year 6 during the extended writing session. The children successfully created character studies of the three main characters by applying these skills.
60. Pupils with special educational needs have detailed individual plans that are carefully followed and this results in very good focused teaching by teachers and classroom assistants. For example the children extend their understanding of how to use letter sounds to spell and read now words. Work in small groups gives the pupils many opportunities to succeed. The headteacher's time is well used to support this work.
61. The management of English is very good. The coordinator is knowledgeable and an effective teacher. She has used test results to identify, for example, that girls attain higher standards than boys. She has effectively analysed that a reason for this is the higher proportion of boys on the special needs register. As a result of this information the school has developed the strategies and resources that will appeal to both girls and boys. Systems for assessment are good and the school can accurately track progress and predict what individual children will achieve at the end of each year. The school has rightly identified the need to set individual targets for children and this is currently being introduced. Resources to support the teaching of English are good and help the children record and improve their ideas.

MATHEMATICS

62. Standards are average for pupils in Year 2 and Year 6. The school's most recent national test data for pupils in Year 6 and Year 2 shows that standards in the 2001 tests were slightly below average. For Year 2 this was an improvement on the previous year. In Year 6 the results are lower than in the previous year because there were more pupils with special needs.

Comparison with results from similar schools shows that pupils are achieving well. Over time standards have improved.

63. Pupils are beginning to perform better in mathematics because teaching has improved since the previous inspection. Thorough and accurate analysis of assessment information has enabled the school to set clear attainment targets for groups of children, and carefully direct extra support to where it is most needed. This is having a positive effect on pupils' achievements, for example, in their calculation skills.
62. Most of the children achieve well particularly in their knowledge and understanding of number. This is because the national numeracy strategy is now well established and having a positive impact in the school. By the end of Year 2, pupils are more confident with numbers, for example, to 100. They count on and back in different number sequences and can solve simple word problems involving addition and subtraction of numbers and coins to the value of 100 pence. By Year 6, the children use all four number processes to solve problems, some times using more than one method to multiply large numbers. Pupils use strategies such as doubling or halving to calculate quickly. They recognise fractions, for example, and equivalent decimals.
65. The children's achievement is satisfactory in their study of other areas of mathematics, such as shape and space, and data handling. In their earlier work the Year 3 pupils, for example, have applied their number skills when showing half or a quarter of a square, circle or rectangle. This linked well with their study of the half and quarter hours. When given information in a simple format they have presented it as a bar graph. In the junior classes pupils record the data they gather on tally charts and spread sheets and present it in graphs or as written statements. They understand the properties of three-dimensional shapes and measure accurately in standard units such as metres and centimetres.
66. Although the pupils' overall progress in their knowledge of number systems is good, their development of recording skills is limited by the over use of worksheets, particularly in Years 1 and 2. This has created a weakness in recording skills which is still evident in pupils' work in the junior classes.
67. The quality of teaching and learning in mathematics lessons is good and there is a creditable amount of very good teaching. All teachers have good knowledge of the numeracy framework and this enables them to plan appropriate work for the pupils. The teachers use assessment information well to gauge what the pupils need to learn. Extra support provided by classroom assistants ensures that the children, of all abilities, are working at the right levels. Teachers and assistants establish very good relationships within the classroom and this promotes good behaviour and an enthusiasm for learning. Pupils with special needs are managed very sensitively so their learning is not interrupted.

68. Learning is most effective where the teacher sets a brisk pace for the lesson. For example, in one lesson the early focus was multiplication tables. The teacher engaged the pupils very well in quick mental calculation to challenge their knowledge. At the same time she posed questions using a variety of mathematical language to test their understanding. By the end of this session the pupils were alert and ready for the main activity. Sometimes mental arithmetic sessions are not managed as well as they could be because the teacher does not fully take account of the wider ability range by allowing enough time or posing simpler questions for less able pupils.
69. Resources are used well to help pupils learn. In a Year 2 lesson for example very good use was made of the computers in the classroom to help pupils learn directional language by programming the 'roamer' to move around the screen. In another lesson, good use was made of a construction kit to reinforce the concept of three-dimensional shapes. This particularly helped a group of pupils who have additional learning needs, to understand the relationship between the faces and edges of the shapes they made.
70. Management of the subject has been taken over by the deputy head teacher who has been in post since the beginning of the autumn term. She has already gained a clear overview of the standards in the school and has developed an action plan to manage the identified weaknesses. Her leadership qualities, commitment to improve and her teaching skills are already moving the subject forward.

SCIENCE

71. Pupils reach average standards in science in both key stages, and they achieve well. Standards have risen since the last inspection, especially in investigative science, and have improved when compared with similar schools. Three years ago standards were well below the national average.
72. Science is taught well, and often very well in both key stages. The teachers have good expertise in the subject. Clear lesson objectives, high expectations and brisk teaching ensure good pace and coverage. The teachers provide many opportunities for pupils to consolidate their knowledge and understanding through investigations. The pupils are expected to work with increasing independence when undertaking and recording their findings. For example, the pupils in Year 6 were faced with some unexpected results in a test. They learned how to reconsider the chances of things going wrong during the testing and to retest in order to account for any errors. An imaginative study in Year 2 allowed pupils to use their own knowledge and understanding to sort unlabelled pills and medicines from sweets and soft drinks. They then devised their own rules and safety procedures to adopt to ensure the safe use of medicine. This work made an excellent contribution to the pupils' personal health studies and was made even more effective when the children realised that they had been sorting sweets only.

73. The children's attitudes to the subject are good. They listen very carefully, follow instructions well and work quickly. Consequently, they make good progress. The work is usually set out well in their exercise books, with neatly labelled diagrams. In some classes the work is undated, done on paper and then put into folders. However in these cases the work does not help pupils gain a clear view of their own progress.
74. The pupils work well together and use apparatus carefully. They use simple measuring equipment accurately. They record their work independently and set out their findings carefully, including tables and charts. They are learning to use information and communication technology effectively to gather and present information. For example, the Year 3 class researched information about human teeth from a CD-ROM as a follow up to work that involved cleaning their teeth and then using disclosure tablets to see how successful they had been. Knowledge and understanding was well consolidated by the use of good teaching resources, including large models of teeth, X-rays and extracted teeth. The effective use of resources is a feature of the school's science teaching. Teachers' planning is effective, with clear objectives, and lessons are organised well. The good progress that pupils make in each key stage is in part due to well planned lessons and good summing-up procedures, when children can think about what they have learned.
75. Science is led well. The teachers have a good understanding of the subject, and use the scheme of work effectively to support them. The resources are good. The school has satisfactory procedures in place for assessing progress. Lesson evaluations are generally used very well to influence later lessons. The coordinator has used non-teaching time very effectively to identify development areas. For example, using final part of the lesson to check what has been learned, has been developed well. Additionally, teachers' effectiveness in asking questions has been supported and this has led to good class discussions and successful interventions during lessons.

ART AND DESIGN

76. By the time pupils reach the end of Year 2 and Year 6, their standards and achievement are average. The standards are improving and many of the children are beginning to produce work that is above average. Basic skills such as colour selection and drawing are taught well and pupils successfully expand the range of their work as they move through the school. There has been good improvement since the last inspection.
77. Since the previous inspection a new scheme of work has been developed. This provides a strong basis for teachers' planning and clearly corrects the shortcomings noted in the previous report. Pupils are developing a better knowledge and appreciation of art as they progress through the school. For example Year 2 pupils link Georgia O' Keefe's picture called Poppy Fields to their reflections on remembrance, while Year 6 seek inspiration from the works of Clarice Cliffe or William Morris.

78. The children's work is attractively displayed. Colourful presentations of work linked to Egyptians and Tudors demonstrate the good level of care pupils take over their work, while print designs by Year 6 show careful observation and interpretation of William Morris' designs. The African masks in Year 2 show imaginative application of different materials to bring out the various facial expressions and features.
79. Teaching and learning in the lessons seen was good overall. The lessons are well prepared and teachers use resources well to demonstrate learning objectives and interest the pupils in their work. This was seen clearly in a Year 1 lesson. The teacher used examples of work by Kandinsky and Paul Klee to show the children how shape and colour could be used. Pupils responded very well by describing what the works reminded them of. Afterwards they used the skills they had gained in previous lessons to mix the colours and shades they needed for their own designs. They all concentrated very well to produce work of a very high standard for their age.
80. The subject is led well by the head teacher who also developed the scheme of work. This is a very sound document that provides for the teaching of knowledge and skills in a systematic way. Resources are satisfactory overall and provide pupils with opportunities to work with clay and fabrics as well as painting and drawing.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

81. Standards in design and technology are unsatisfactory at the end of each key stage. This is because not all aspects of the subject are taught. Food technology and textiles are under represented. Although the pupils are given some experience with textiles their work is undertaken as an art and design task rather than as design and technology. Similarly, food technology does not occur frequently enough for the pupils to gain sufficient knowledge and understanding of the processes of designing and evaluation when dealing with food. The subject is not taught consistently through the school and insufficient time is allocated to it.
82. Evidence of well made artefacts were seen from Year 2 and Year 4 pupils had recorded their work using information and communication technology. They had digitally photographed their models and then created an illustrated design sheet that included a description of the materials used and the method of construction. The pupils enjoy making things and can construct models well. They have experiences in modelling with card, wood and construction kits.
83. There are some unhelpful practices in the way the subject is managed. For example, the pupils use a range of loose-leaf sheets, ring files, folders and some work is saved on computer hard-drives. This makes the work very inaccessible for the coordinator, when evaluating the continuity, progression, coverage and achievement in the subject. There are no design books that

could enable the pupils to evaluate their own learning and progress in the subject.

84. The scheme of work is an amalgamation of a commercial scheme and the nationally recommended scheme. So far the school has not evaluated how successful this combination of schemes has been in providing a broad and balanced curriculum for design and technology. The school has not provided training for the staff so many teachers have insufficient knowledge of the subject or a clear picture of how the scheme should be implemented.
85. There are sufficient resources for construction work. Resources for food and textiles are just adequate. The subject is not well led. This does not reflect upon the ability of the coordinator to lead the subject. It reflects upon the school's priority for the subject and the attention it has been given. It has not received the attention it needed following the previous inspection, when attainment was below the expected level. This is because the school focused on improving the standards in literacy and numeracy.

HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY

86. The standards in history and geography are average in both key stages. These standards have been maintained since the last inspection. The children including those with special educational needs achieve at a satisfactory pace. Two history and no geography lessons were observed during the inspection. In these lessons the teaching was satisfactory and good.
87. In history, by the age of seven the children develop their knowledge and understanding of the lives of people in the past. For example children in Year 2 know that the development of the railways in Victorian times enabled people to make longer journeys. The children went on a train journey to Liverpool and then compared the present railway system with the Victorian one. Good use of the computer and well chosen pictures made it easier for the children to understand the differences. The geography curriculum linked well with this work. The children had examined travel in African countries and identified the differences with their own travel experiences.
88. In Key Stage 2 the geographical skills and knowledge are developed well. The children build on their earlier learning using videos, textbooks, including maps atlases and globes. They work from aerial photographs of their own surroundings and compare aspects such as the local rainfall with places like Barcelona, for example. In history older children further develop their understanding of chronology by studying topics such as the Ancient Egyptians, Romans and Tudors. In Year 5 the children are trying to find out what life was like for Henry VIII. The detail in their writing shows their wide knowledge of life in those times. The pupils have good opportunities to use their literacy skills as they imagine life as an evacuee writing a letter home.

89. The children in both key stages search for information about their history and geography work from a good range of different sources. They use the Internet and reference books to find answers. They pose key questions for themselves and search for answers developing their skills of geographical and historical enquiry. This area has improved since the last inspection.
90. Good use is made of visits to historical sites such as the museum in Warrington and to Speke Hall. Visitors to the school are also used well, for example Living History groups who bring Victorian times alive for the pupils. This contributes to the children's enjoyment of the subject. In geography the children use the school grounds well to support their map work. There is provision for weekend activities, for Year 6, on orienteering that the children enjoy and this also develops their map work.
91. The history coordinator is new, but the useful policy, linked to the nationally recommended scheme of work, has ensured that the teachers are supported well. The geography coordinator has recently taken up the post. She is an experienced coordinator and has a clear view of how to support the subject. In her previous post as assessment coordinator she collated key areas of learning in history and geography to be used to assess how well the children are doing. This is helpful in ensuring that the children's skills, knowledge and understanding are built on appropriately each year.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

92. The children's standards are above average in both key stages. Their level of achievement is very good. This is an improvement since the last inspection. In both key stages there are teachers who have a good understanding of information and communication technology and, as a result, the subject is taught well. The classroom assistants, who often support the children working with computers, are also skilled and help the children to make good progress. For example, one of the classroom assistants has introduced a library system for the children to use. This is run by Year 6 pupils who efficiently use a junior library program with a bar code reader that scans the pupils' library cards.
93. The teaching of information and communication technology is good and sometimes very good. As a result, by the end of Key Stage 1 the children can work independently and confidently. They have learned a good range of basic skills, such as using the keyboard and mouse, effectively to word process and mix text with pictures. They can control floor robots and robots on the computer screen. By the end of Key Stage 2 the pupils have extended their skills very well. They are working with a range of information to create multi-media presentations, including text, pictures, sound and digital photos. They can evaluate and edit their work and explain the processes. Many children do not have access to computers at home but in their lessons they listen very attentively and pick up new skills quickly. They work well together and are supportive of each other's learning. A Year 4 pupil went to great pains to help another child who had less understanding of how to use a spell

check facility. Teachers and pupils share an enthusiasm for the subject. All staff are proud of the achievements of their pupils.

94. Information and communication technology is used very effectively across the curriculum. For example the Year 4 pupils used digital photography to record their design technology models. Year 5 pupils use Internet information to find out about mountain regions in geography. Year 2 pupils use a floor robot to develop their understanding of directions, turns and angles in mathematics. The Year 3 class use an art program of Roman images to develop their writing in history. Word processing is used extensively to record work, narrative and poetry in English. Specialist subject programs, such as 'Crocodile Clips' in science are used for specific learning. In Year 6 the pupils' understanding of syncopation in a music lesson was greatly extended by the teacher using a program to show the sound waves of the music being played.
95. Information and communication technology is much improved the since the last inspection. The coordinator has a very good grasp of the subject and he leads it very well. He is enthusiastic and very supportive of his colleagues. He has a clear view of how to develop the subject further. The school is well resourced and computers are well used. The coordinator has successfully introduced the nationally recommended scheme of work and has modified it to meet the needs of the school. He has helped put appropriate assessment procedures into place. The subject also benefits from the practical help provided by members of the governing body who help to set up programs and resolve problems.

MUSIC

96. Pupils reach average standards in music by the end of Years 2 and 6. They sing tunefully and perform confidently on percussion instruments, showing a developing sense of rhythm and an understanding of musical terminology. The children's standards in singing have been maintained since the previous inspection. Some pupils now have better opportunities to play instruments and experiment with sound patterns to create their own musical sequences using electronic keyboards as well as tuned and untuned percussion instruments. The school choir meets weekly in a classroom and this is a good opportunity for pupils to use their creative talents. The quality of singing in these sessions is very good. The children's achievement is satisfactory.
97. Two lessons were seen during the inspection. In one the teaching was excellent and in the other it was good. Teachers use their expertise and musical knowledge well to meet pupils' needs. In a lesson for Year 4 children, for example, the teacher used a Mozart concerto effectively to demonstrate how patterns of music are repeated. Pupils then practised a similar arrangement of patterns on their recorders and percussion instruments. By the end of the lesson pupils had a good understanding of how a 'musical sandwich' is used in composition. Some outstanding teaching was seen in a Year 6 lesson, where pupils learned to recognise syncopation in music by watching the movements of sound patterns displayed on the computer screen. This gave pupils a very clear understanding of the changes from stronger to lighter rhythms and how they can be interwoven in the music. Pupils also used tuned and

untuned instruments to perform their own music by interpreting the shapes shown on a poster into symbols for musical notation. In both of these lessons, pupils were fully engaged in their learning and showed very high levels of interest and enthusiasm.

98. The school uses a commercial scheme of work, which supports the teachers who do not have specialist music skills. However this does not provide equal emphasis on all of the required musical experiences throughout the school. Although pupils perform within lessons there are not enough opportunities for them to perform for others. The subject is not led effectively enough. The music coordinator does not have enough knowledge of the music work that other teachers cover and standards are not monitored. She teaches a recorder group and has introduced the ocarina in her own class. This work is done well. Resources are satisfactory and used well in lessons to promote music skills

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

99. During the inspection two lessons were observed. The same teacher was seen teaching in both Years 2 and 6. At the end of Key Stage 1 the children reach standards that are above average. At the end of Key Stage 2 the standards were average overall although several children reach higher standards. In both key stages the standards are better than at the time of the last inspection. The children are achieving well in Key Stage 1 and at a satisfactory rate overall in Key Stage 2. The children have good provision for swimming and by the time they reach the age of eleven, almost all of them reach the expected national standard of being able to swim 25 metres.
100. In the lessons observed, the teaching was good in one and very good in the other. The teacher expected the children to make independent decisions that would enable them to work well. In Year 2, for example, they were expected to use the ball that best suited the task and to change their resources if they felt the need. The children responded very well to this and made sensible selections in order to complete the bouncing and throwing tasks as well as they could. She gave clear instructions and used demonstrations to good effect and helped the children develop good catching positions. In the Year 6 class she effectively showed the children the skills needed to send, receive and intercept a ball using basketball skills. The children responded well by trying to improve their performance. Most of them worked well in small groups and began to understand, through activities, how to improve skills of interception. Lessons are planned well and have a good structure. The main activity is always preceded by a warm up and children 'cool down' at the end of the lesson. They understand the importance of warming up before starting skill practices because the teacher discuss with them the effect that exercise has on their bodies.
101. There is a wide range of out of school sport and games activities and these support the learning well. Both boys and girls join in. The coordinator leads the subject well, is enthusiastic and has good expertise. She provides the

teachers with good advice on planning and teaching their lessons. There is a scheme of work which gives the staff confidence and ensures the curriculum is covered appropriately.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

102. The pupils' attainments are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus for both key stages. They achieve at a satisfactory rate. The children's spoken responses and understanding in the lessons seen were good but the standards were often lower when pupils wrote their own ideas or stories they had been told. Whilst standards remain similar to those of the previous inspection progress in the development of pupils' attitudes and values has improved. For example, the children in Year 1 are beginning to learn to value their own achievements and to have positive feelings about themselves.
103. Religious education is taught soundly, and at times well. The teachers closely follow the school's scheme of work. Children are taught stories from the Bible and sacred writings from other world religions. They learn about places of worship from the major faiths, and artefacts associated with these religions. They are able to reflect on what they have learned and are encouraged to develop values like honesty and fairness.
104. The pupils develop their understanding appropriately as they move through the school. For example, they learned about special people in their own lives and about the Christian Christmas story in Year 1. In Year 2 the children considered feelings when belonging to a group, and the celebrations of different faiths. In Key Stage 2 the children are able to express their wishes, hopes, and regrets through writing personal prayers and reflect upon the beauty of the world. In Year 5 the pupils are able to reflect, for example, on their attitudes and opinions about important issues such as cigarettes, bullying and being unscrupulous. Year 6 pupils are able to use individual research on famous people that they respect. As a result they created an effective and thought provoking display on 'Heroes' including exhibits on Martin Luther King, Florence Nightingale, Nelson Mandela, and Mahatma Gandhi. Teachers effectively link classroom activities and the act of worship to reinforce the children's learning.
105. The pupils enjoy religious education. They are attentive in lessons and are confident enough to voice their ideas and opinions. They respond well when given opportunities to present their ideas in unusual or interesting ways. At the end of the previous year the children in Year 6 created multi-media presentations about places of worship, based upon images and information they had retrieved from a variety of sources.
106. The subject is soundly led. The subject leader has established a scheme of work that provides systematic coverage of the agreed syllabus and helpful ideas on how to teach it. The teaching and children's work are not monitored or evaluated by the subject leader. However, the school has recently

introduced assessment procedures that link effectively to the agreed syllabus. This has revealed a weakness in the work about people and places that represent world faiths. The subject leader has already planned how to improve this aspect by arranging visits to different places of worship and bringing visitors into school who represent a range of world religions.