

INSPECTION REPORT

ST MARY'S C OF E PRIMARY SCHOOL

West Derby, Liverpool

LEA area: Liverpool

Unique reference number: 104624

Headteacher: P M James

Reporting inspector: D S Roberts
1743

Dates of inspection: 1 – 4 October 2001

Inspection number: 193261

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior

School category: Voluntary Aided

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Meadow Lane
Liverpool

Postcode: L12 5EA

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Rev Canon R Wikeley

Date of previous inspection: March 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Mary's Church of England Primary School is situated in the West Derby district of Liverpool. It is an average sized school, and currently provides full-time education for 129 boys and 107 girls ranging from four to 11 years of age. The proportion of pupils entitled to receive free school meals is close to the national average. The attainment levels of children entering the school at the Foundation Stage is broadly in line with that found nationally. Over 30 per cent of the pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs, which is above the national average. Twelve pupils are at stages 3-5, including four with statements of specific needs. Their requirements include those for moderate and severe learning difficulties, emotional problems, speech and communication difficulties, visual impairment and physical difficulties. At present there are 11 pupils from families belonging to minority ethnic groups, none whom speak English as an additional language.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school with many strong features. It provides a good level of care for its pupils and makes very good provision for their personal and social development. The teaching is of good and often very good quality, and literacy and numeracy lessons are consistently of high quality. Standards are above the national expectations in English, mathematics and science, in history and geography in classes for older pupils, and in some aspects of music. Although standards in information and communication technology are in line with those found nationally, the use of ICT to support pupils' learning across the curriculum is underdeveloped. The school provides a generally broad curriculum. However, the current use of the school hall to accommodate a class imposes significant extra pressures on the staff and prevents the school from meeting the statutory requirement for teaching gymnastics. The headteacher, governors and staff co-operate very successfully to create a welcoming and supportive atmosphere, where the Christian ethos is strongly emphasised. The school is very well led and managed, and provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils make good progress and achieve standards which are above the national expectation in English, mathematics and science, in history and geography at 11 years of age, and in some aspects of music.
- The quality of teaching is generally good and often very good, particularly in English and mathematics.
- Throughout the school, pupils demonstrate very good attitudes towards their work and their behaviour is of a high standard.
- Very good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs, who make generally very good progress towards the targets set in their individual education plans.
- The school makes very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The quality of leadership and management is very good.

What could be improved

- Achieve more systematic and consistent use of information and communication technology to support learning in other subjects throughout the school.
- Resolve the current accommodation problems as a matter of urgency in order to meet the statutory requirement for teaching gymnastics.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made good progress since the last inspection in 1997. During the four years up to Year 2000, the school's rate of improvement was consistent with the national trend. The proportion of 11 year old pupils attaining or exceeding Level 4 has increased steadily since the last inspection. There has also been a significant increase in the proportion of pupils exceeding the national standard, reflecting the attention given to challenging higher attaining pupils more effectively. Considerable work has been devoted to improving provision and teaching in information and communication technology, which were unsatisfactory at the time of the last inspection and now meet the national expectations. The improvements in the quality of teaching throughout the school is confirmed by inspection findings. The proportion of lessons judged to be at least satisfactory has increased from 91 per cent, in the 1997 inspection, to 100 per cent, and, more significantly, the proportion judged to be very good from three per cent to 39 per cent. The key issues listed in the last report have been successfully addressed. In addition to the improvements already referred to, the school has introduced an appropriate system of planning for children at the Foundation Stage in the reception class, strengthened the arrangements for assessment throughout the school and placed increasing emphasis on the development of pupils' enquiry skills. The school is well placed to continue improving by building on its current strengths and addressing the areas for improvement identified in this report.

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			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	A	A	A	A
mathematics	B	B	C	B
science	A	C	A	A

Key

well above average A
 above average B
 average C
 below average D
 well below average E

Inspection evidence indicates that children at the Foundation Stage, in the reception class, generally achieve the early learning goals in all areas of the curriculum before entering Year 1. By Year 2 pupils achieve standards which are above average in speaking and listening, reading, writing, mathematics and science. By Year 6 pupils achieve above average standards in English, mathematics and science. The slight fluctuation in pupils' performance from one year to the next is mainly due to the varying ability levels within different year groups. From Year 1 to Year 6, pupils achieve good standards in relation to their prior attainment in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science.

Pupils achieve at least appropriate standards in all other subjects, and exceed the national expectation in history and geography at Key Stage 2 and in some aspects of music. In physical education, nearly all pupils swim at least 25 metres unaided by the time they reach the end of Year 6. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs make very good progress towards the targets identified in their individual education plans.

The school is on course to meet the targets set by the governors in English and mathematics at the end of the current academic year.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils demonstrate very good attitudes towards the school and their work. They listen attentively, show interest and enthusiasm, respond well to challenging tasks and are keen to take part in all school activities.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is of a high standard throughout the school. This is apparent in assemblies, classrooms, playground and dining hall.
Personal development and relationships	Excellent. Pupils show confidence and a mature sense of responsibility; they demonstrate this when working independently and in groups. They value each other's contributions to lessons and demonstrate sensitivity and respect towards other pupils' values and beliefs.
Attendance	Very good. Well above the national average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	good	good	good

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

Teaching is generally good and often of very good quality. No unsatisfactory lessons were observed. There is a close link between the quality of teaching and learning.

The teaching of children at the Foundation Stage, in the reception class, is consistently good, enabling the great majority of pupils to meet the early learning goals expected of them in all areas of the curriculum, before entering Year 1. Teaching from Year 1 to Year 6 is generally good and often of high quality, particularly in literacy and numeracy. This enables most pupils, at all levels of attainment, to establish a good knowledge of the key skills of learning. The teaching of information and communication technology as a subject is also of good quality, although it is generally underused to support work in other subjects. Throughout the school, the consistently effective support provided by teachers and support staff for pupils with special educational needs, enables the pupils to make very good progress towards the targets identified in their individual education plans.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Overall, the school provides a good curriculum, which successfully emphasises the development of literacy and numeracy skills. The provision for pupils' personal, social and health education and contribution of the community to pupils' learning are very strong features. However, the systematic use of information and communication technology as an integral part of learning in subjects across the curriculum is underdeveloped. The school is currently unable to make provision for gymnastics.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good provision throughout the school. The work of support staff has a very positive effect on pupils' progress. Specific and measurable targets in individual education plans help to support pupils' progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good provision in all dimensions across the curriculum and in assemblies. Positive adult role-models and good opportunities for pupils to participate in residential visits, contribute significantly towards the rapid progress made by pupils in their personal development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school provides a good level of care for pupils. It provides very good educational support and guidance and is highly successful in promoting very good behaviour and attendance.

A good partnership has been developed with parents. Communication between the school and home is generally good, but there is scope for improving pupils' end of year progress reports.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The quality of leadership and management is very good. The headteacher and deputy headteacher work together very effectively and liaise closely with the governing body to provide clear direction for the work of the school. They are well supported by co-ordinators and all staff. These are important factors in creating a purposeful and positive ethos for learning.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are successful in ensuring that statutory requirements are met. They are currently working hard to restore gymnastics provision.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good use is made of local and national comparative information to evaluate and set targets for improvement in English, mathematics and science which are appropriately challenging.
The strategic use of resources	Highly effective school development planning ensures money is spent wisely on educational priorities. Resources are managed very efficiently.

The overall quality of leadership and management is very good, and the governors successfully apply best value principles. The school is well staffed and appropriately resourced, but the temporary arrangements for accommodating a class in the hall is imposing significant additional strain on the school.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The children like school. • The children make good progress. • Behaviour is good. • The teaching is good. • Parents would feel comfortable in approaching the school with questions or problems. • The school expects their children to work hard. • The school is well led and managed. • The school is helping their children to become mature and responsible. 	<p>A significant minority of parents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • would like the school to work more closely with them; • would like more information about their children's progress; • feel that their children do not receive the right amount of homework; • would like a greater range of learning opportunities outside the classroom.

The inspectors agree with parents' positive views about the school. They find that the school makes good provision for extra-curricular activities, although most of it is for older pupils. They find that the school works closely with parents and that the arrangements for reporting to parents on children's progress is similar to those in most schools. However, there is scope for improving the current end of year written reports on pupils' progress, by placing more emphasis on identifying areas where pupils need to improve. The school makes good use of homework to support learning, particularly in English and mathematics.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

- 1 The attainment levels of children on entry to the reception class are average compared with those found nationally. Pupils at all levels of attainment make generally good progress during their time in the school, and by the time they reach the end of Year 6, overall standards are above national expectations.
- 2 Comparative information, based on the Year 2000 National Curriculum test results, indicates that the performance of seven year old pupils in reading and writing is in line with both the national average and the average for pupils in schools with similar characteristics. Their performance in mathematics is above that of pupils in all and similar schools.
- 3 Comparative information for pupils aged 11, based on the Year 2000 tests, indicates that the pupils' performance in English and science is well above both the national average and the average for similar schools. In mathematics, the pupils' performance is in line with the national average and above that of pupils in similar schools.
- 4 Year 6 national test results, for the three years up to 2000, indicate a rate of improvement in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science which is in line with the national trend. During the same period, there was no significant variation in the performance of pupils in terms of gender.
- 5 Inspection evidence indicates that the large majority of children in the reception class reach the early learning goals in all areas of the curriculum by the time they enter Year 1.
- 6 Inspection evidence for Key Stage 1 (Years 1 and 2) indicates that standards in speaking and listening, reading, writing, mathematics, and science are above the national expectation. This is a better picture than the Year 2000 national test results, and the improvement is reflected in the most recent national test results, for 2001, although comparative information is not yet available. Pupils at all levels of attainment make good progress during their time at the key stage, and pupils with special educational needs make very good progress towards the targets set in their individual education plans.
- 7 Inspection findings for Key Stage 2 (Years 3 to 6) indicate that standards in English, mathematics and science are above the national expectations. The findings for English and science are broadly consistent with the Year 2000 national test results. However, the findings for mathematics indicate a better picture than the Year 2000 results, which is reflected in the most recent national test results, for 2001, which indicated that 30 per cent of pupils exceeded the national expectation.
- 8 In English, the great majority of pupils, at both key stages, make very good progress in speaking and listening. By the age of seven, the majority are capable speakers, able to answer questions and to talk confidently about their work. This is particularly evident during the whole-class elements of literacy lessons, when pupils participate confidently to answer questions and share ideas. Older pupils, at Key Stage 2, demonstrate a growing capacity to vary expression, in order to engage the listener, and to pay close attention to what others say. Pupils, at both key stages, make good progress in extending their skills in reading, and reach standards which are above the national

expectation. Younger pupils quickly acquire a very good understanding of phonics, word families and spelling, and this helps them to be increasingly fluent and confident in their reading. At Key Stage 2, books are well matched to pupils' attainment and interest levels, helping those of differing abilities to make rapid progress. Higher attainers read challenging books, with fluency and expression, and talk confidently about events and characters in the stories they have read.

- 9 In writing, pupils make good progress at Key Stage 1, and a significant proportion exceed the national expectation by the age of seven. The success of the close attention given to improving writing at Key Stage 1 is reflected in the considerable increase in the proportion of pupils achieving Level 3 in the most recent national tests. Most pupils spell common words accurately, and are beginning to write in sequences of sentences, making appropriate use of simple punctuation. The writing of higher attainers is increasingly well organised and their vocabulary is imaginative and adventurous. Although pupils make at least satisfactory progress at Key Stage 2, standards in writing are not as good as those in other aspects of English. The majority of older pupils produce work of good quality during literacy lessons, applying newly acquired skills appropriately and increasingly using correct punctuation, complex grammatical structures, paragraphs and interesting vocabulary to add interest to their writing. The same quality is not so apparent in their written work across the curriculum, where standards of handwriting, punctuation and spelling are less consistent than in work produced during literacy lessons.
- 10 In mathematics, pupils at all levels of attainment make good progress in developing their numeracy skills at Key Stage 1. They count reliably and read, write and order numbers to a 100 and beyond with much accuracy and confidence. By Year 2, pupils demonstrate a growing understanding of place value. They make good progress in their calculations, selecting and using addition and subtraction processes accurately. At Key Stage 2, pupils build effectively on these early skills, and older pupils demonstrate an increasing grasp of the extension of the number system. This is reflected in their understanding of negative numbers and in their knowledge and understanding of the relationships between fractions, decimals and percentages.
- 11 In science, pupils at both key stages make good progress. By the age of seven, pupils have acquired a good fund of scientific knowledge related to their daily lives and experiences. Through their own observations, they have acquired a good understanding of how living things grow and change. They name accurately the main parts of plants and the human body, and show an increasing knowledge and understanding of the conditions for plant growth, drawing effectively on their observations of how crocus bulbs grow. They develop sound enquiry skills through a range of practical experiences. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have made good progress in extending their scientific knowledge and understanding. They know about animal habitats, the factors affecting plant growth and seed dispersal, the fact that changes to the state of some materials, such as melted ice, can be reversed by freezing, while other changes, such as sugar dissolved in tea, are irreversible. They show a good knowledge of the properties of different materials and of various phenomena such as balanced and unbalanced forces. Although pupils at Key Stage 2 have made satisfactory progress in acquiring enquiry skills, this important area of science is not as well developed as the other aspects of the subject.

- 12 In information and communication technology, (ICT), standards in Year 2 and Year 6 are in line with the national expectations. Throughout the school, pupils at all levels of attainment make good progress in relation to prior learning.
- 13 Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs make very good progress towards the targets set in their individual education plans. They benefit greatly from the good quality support provided by class teachers, support staff and the part-time support teacher. The school makes good provision for all pupils, meeting their particular needs in terms of gender, background and ability. In all of these categories, the great majority of pupils make consistently good progress in relation to their prior attainment.
- 14 Pupils at both key stages work at levels which are at least in line with national expectations in all other subjects. Standards in history and geography at Key Stage 2, and some aspects of music, are above the national expectations. In physical education, nearly all pupils are able to swim 25 metres or more, before leaving the school at the end of Year 6, and a significant number achieve higher standards.
- 15 Standards of literacy and numeracy are generally above those expected for pupils' ages throughout both key stages. The successful implementation of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy has a very positive impact on pupils' achievements throughout the school.
- 16 The governors set appropriately challenging targets for improvements in English and mathematics for future years, which take full account of the varying ability levels of different cohorts of pupils. The school is on course to achieving those set for the end of the current academic year.
- 17 Since the last inspection, the school has made good progress in improving standards. Standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, which were judged to be in line with the national expectations in the last inspection, are now generally above those levels. Significant progress has been made in improving the standards achieved by higher attaining pupils, which is reflected in the proportion of pupils now exceeding the national expectations. In addition, the school has made significant progress in raising standards in ICT, which were previously described as unsatisfactory and are now in line with the national expectations.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

- 18 The pupils demonstrate very positive attitudes towards the school and their behaviour is very good. They enjoy school and are enthusiastic about all school activities. These are important factors in the good progress pupils make during their time in the school. There have been no exclusions in recent years,
- 19 Relationships throughout the school are excellent, and this has a very positive impact on pupils' progress, irrespective of race, ability, gender or background. The pupils are kind to one another. In the playground they play amicably and sensibly and in class they readily support one another; for example when working with a partner on the computer or when engaged in practical work. The many opportunities they are given to work as part of a group, for example in science lessons, help to promote their social development and enable them to learn from one another.
- 20 The pupils are polite to their teachers and to the other adults who work with them. During lessons they follow the class rules and work with good concentration and perseverance. They contribute confidently to class discussion, for example in

literacy and numeracy lessons, asking perceptive questions and listening attentively to what others have to say. Pupils take a pride in the presentation of their written work. This is evident from their books and from items on display in classrooms and around the building. They are open and friendly towards visitors and eager to explain the work they are engaged in and what they have done in previous lessons.

- 21 The pupils move around the school in a safe and orderly manner, respecting the fact that in some areas conditions are quite cramped, for example in the dining room. Their sensible behaviour helps to overcome associated difficulties and lunch is an enjoyable social occasion. Older pupils help younger children in the dining room and assist the staff by giving out the water. The pupils enjoy taking responsibility in this way. Since the last inspection opportunities for taking responsibility have been increased and, from an early age, the pupils have various duties in the classroom which they carry out with real enthusiasm. The monitors in Year 6 contribute a great deal to the school community by helping around the school and by setting a good example to younger pupils in terms of their behaviour, for example in assembly, and their general appearance.
- 22 Caring for others is emphasised in all aspects of school life. At the pre-inspection meeting with inspectors the parents and carers praised the pupils for their helpfulness and expressed their appreciation for the way in which older pupils help to care for younger pupils. The pupils write their own prayers and post them on the prayer board in entrance hall. During the inspection, the school chaplain incorporated these prayers into the whole school assembly. They showed compassion for the sick and for the people in America who are suffering as a result of the recent tragic events. The pupils also demonstrate their awareness of the needs of others by their fund raising efforts for charity. Usually, the ideas and the suggested causes come from the pupils themselves. They can approach the headteacher at any time, with their suggestions, and these are put to the School Meeting assembly which is held once a week, for discussion and approval by the pupils in Years 3 to 6. During the past year, the pupils have raised a considerable amounts of money, sufficient to sponsor a guide dog for the blind and to support Christian Aid, the Children's Society, the annual Blue Peter appeal and the Newborn appeal in one of the local hospitals. Activities such as these strongly uphold Christian principle of caring for people in need and provide valuable opportunities for the pupils to develop their understanding of citizenship
- 23 The pupils' record of attendance is very good and well above the national average for primary schools. The rate of unauthorised absence is extremely low, below that found nationally. Good levels of punctuality have been maintained since the last inspection. The vast majority of the pupils arrive on time in the mornings and lessons start promptly.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

- 24 The quality of teaching and learning is good and often very good throughout the school. The teaching in 92 per cent of the lessons observed was judged to be at least good and 39 per cent was very good or better. There were no unsatisfactory lessons. Throughout the school, there is a close match between the quality of teaching and learning.
- 25 The quality of teaching for children at the Foundation Stage, in the reception class, is consistently good. Teaching gives high priority to promoting the children's personal, social and emotional development. The good co-operation between teaching and support staff is an important factor in the effectiveness of provision in this area. Children are helped to settle quickly, to develop confidence in expressing themselves and to work sensibly and happily with others. This enables children to contribute effectively, during literacy and numeracy lessons for example, and take greater advantage of the range of learning opportunities provided for them. The teaching is effective in promoting generally good progress by the great majority of pupils towards the early learning goals in all areas of learning. However, the scope for teachers to make provision for physical development is restricted by the limited facilities for structured outdoor play.
- 26 At Key Stage 1 (Years 1 and 2), the quality of teaching is generally good and often very good. All of the lessons observed were judged to be at least satisfactory, 82 per cent were good or better and 36 per cent very good. The quality of teaching at Key Stage 2 (Years 3 to 6), is also good. In 94 per cent of lessons the teaching was at least good and it was very good or better in 45 per cent of lessons. Teachers in classes catering for mixed age groups work hard to make appropriate provision for their pupils and are helped considerably by the school's arrangements to re-constitute classes according to ability in English and mathematics.
- 27 The teaching of English is predominantly of very good quality at both key stages. Over 75 per cent of the lessons observed were judged to be very good. Teachers have a secure knowledge of the subject and a good understanding of how pupils learn. Lessons are well planned and follow closely the structure of the National Literacy Strategy. This enables pupils to develop their skills progressively as they move through the school. The imaginative selection of text to stimulate interest and extend pupils' thinking is a consistent feature. Imaginative strategies to enable pupils to participate during the whole-class elements of literacy lessons is a particularly strong feature in classes of younger pupils, enabling pupils to sustain concentration and interest and consequently enhancing their learning.
- 28 The teaching of English, at both key stages, is carefully structured to meet the needs of pupils at all levels of attainment. Class teachers and support staff co-operate very effectively to make good provision for pupils with special educational needs, and this enables them to make very good progress towards the targets set in their individual education plans. The perceptive adaptation of the literacy lesson to meet the needs of lower attaining pupils at Key Stage 2 is a good feature. At both key stages, the teaching is lively and exciting, helping pupils to learn at a fast pace and encouraging very positive attitudes towards the subject. Although the setting of formal individual targets for improvements has not yet been introduced, group targets for aspects of English, such as improving writing skills, have been successfully introduced and are having a positive effect on pupils' progress. In all aspects of English, the arrangements for assessing pupils' progress are generally good. Pupils' work is marked regularly and there are some very good examples of how teachers' comments help pupils to improve their work.
- 29 The teaching of mathematics is of very good quality. Over 85 per cent of lessons were good or better and 57 per cent were very good or better, including one excellent lesson.

The teaching is well planned, and work is matched carefully to the needs of pupils at different levels of attainment. Much thought and preparation is evident in all lessons, and teaching is very well guided by the National Numeracy Strategy. The pupils enjoy the brisk and lively mental work, which is a strong feature in all lessons. The pupils' learning is well supported by the good knowledge and understanding of the subject which the teachers demonstrate. This is regularly reflected in high calibre questioning, which probes pupils' thinking and extends their understanding. Some of the teaching is quite inspirational, captivating and challenging pupils, and developing a real enthusiasm for mathematics. The valuable and constructive support provided by classroom support staff makes a significant contribution to the pupils' learning and progress, particularly those with special educational needs.

- 30 Throughout the school, the teaching of science is consistently good and sometimes of very good quality. All of the lessons observed were good and 16 per cent very good. Teachers' planning is successful in creating a wide range of learning experiences, which provide their pupils with good opportunities to achieve the planned objectives for lessons. A good balance is achieved between teacher explanation and the pupils' own practical explorations, and pupils are productively involved during learning activities. Teachers use questioning very effectively to build on previous learning and check new learning. The development of pupils' scientific knowledge and understanding is promoted very successfully, enabling pupils to make significant progress in extending their knowledge of aspects such as life and physical processes. The area of scientific enquiry is developed successfully at Key Stage 1, but a little less consistently at Key Stage 2, where some teachers do not create sufficient opportunities for pupils to design their own ways of investigating a question fairly and to select appropriate equipment to help them complete the investigations.
- 31 In ICT, teaching is good at both key stages. This enables pupils to gain confidence and appropriate skills and make good progress during their time in the school. Teachers are increasingly confident and secure in their subject knowledge, and planning is well conceived. This enables pupils to make confident use of the good facilities available in ICT and reach appropriate standards for their age. Although some teachers are making increasing use of ICT to support learning in subjects across the curriculum, this is not yet a consistent feature throughout the school and remains a priority for attention.
- 32 Throughout the curriculum, teachers make good provision for pupils at all levels of attainment and respond effectively to the differing needs of boys and girls and pupils from different ethnic minority groups and backgrounds. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good throughout the school. The effective co-operation between teachers and support staff is a strong feature which helps to promote very good progress by pupils in this category. In addition, very good teaching is provided by the support teacher for special educational needs. The work of all staff is effectively guided by good quality individual education plans. This enables the pupils to work systematically towards the realistic and manageable targets set for them.
- 33 In other subjects, tasks are pitched at an appropriate level to challenge pupils, and opportunities are generally taken effectively to extend literacy and numeracy skills. In art and design and design and technology, the teaching promotes successfully the pupils' creative development. At both key stages, the teaching of physical education is generally effective in helping most pupils to make steady progress in their physical development. Swimming is taught effectively, enabling nearly all pupils to swim at least 25 metres before leaving the school at the end of Year 6. At present, the loss of the school hall for physical education means that teachers are unable to make provision for gymnastics.

- 34 The school has made significant progress in improving the quality of teaching since the full inspection in 1997. The proportion of lessons judged to be satisfactory or better has increased from 91 per cent to 100 per cent, and the proportion judged to be very good or better from three per cent to 39 per cent. Perceptive leadership by senior managers and co-ordinators, hard work by all staff, and the successful implementation of initiatives, such as the national strategies for literacy and numeracy, have contributed greatly towards better quality teaching throughout the school.

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

- 35 The school provides a good curriculum, which is broad and balanced and successfully emphasises the development of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. The curriculum for the children in the reception class at the Foundation Stage, is well planned to support the children's progress towards the nationally agreed early learning goals for each area of the curriculum. However, the absence of a secure outdoor play area imposes some restrictions on the development of children's skills through structured outdoor activities. Plans to improve the accommodation include provision for an outdoor play area for reception children.
- 36 The curriculum for pupils at Key Stages 1 and 2 is of good quality and generally meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. However, the systematic and consistent use of ICT to support work across the curriculum is underdeveloped. In addition, the school is currently unable to make provision for gymnastics, due to the use of the hall to accommodate a class.
- 37 Since the last inspection, the quality of curricular planning has improved, and now places more emphasis on challenging higher attaining pupils. The newly established computer suite now gives the pupils many more opportunities to develop their skills in ICT. The improvement in standards of literacy and numeracy since the last inspection owes much to the successful implementation of the national strategies for these areas. Provision for pupils in the mixed age classes is helped considerably by the arrangement to re-constitute these classes for literacy and numeracy lessons, enabling teachers to meet the needs of pupils more effectively.
- 38 The committed and hardworking teaching staff give much of their own time to provide the pupils with a good programme of extra-curricular activities, all of which are well attended. Regular opportunities provided for pupils to experience educational visits in the local area and further afield are a particularly strong feature in this provision. For example, the pupils from Year 1 to Year 6 take part in residential visits to the Colomendy Environmental Study Centre, the Kingswood Centre in Denbigh, the Royal Holloway College in London, and to Stratford on Avon. The pupils also benefit from the expertise of a range of visitors to the school including artists, poets and various theatre and music groups. Such opportunities serve to enhance and enrich the statutory curriculum.
- 39 Provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good and permeates all aspects of school life through the strong Christian ethos of the school. The pupils' spiritual development is promoted very effectively throughout the school. School assemblies convey a strong sense of spirituality and are reverent occasions in which the pupils show, through tone and posture, the importance of prayer and reflection in their lives. They are able to develop this, on a personal level, through the 'prayer board,' which gives them the opportunity to write their own prayers for sharing with the school. Many opportunities are created for

the pupils to experience awe and wonder in their learning. For example, the pupils in Year 1 demonstrated a strong sense of spirituality during a lesson about growth and change. They showed wonder and delight at the news that a child's family was expecting a new baby to be born that day. A lesson on series and parallel circuits generated much excitement in a Year 5 class, and pupils in Year 6 were silent in awe as they looked at photographs of a glacier, taken by their teacher.

- 40 Provision for the pupils' moral and social development is very good. In accordance with its mission statement, the school is a caring Christian community that promotes a strong sense of right and wrong in all aspects of its work. The teachers and pupils agree sets of class rules that reflect a moral code centred on honesty, integrity and respect for others. This is successful in fostering a very caring and supportive environment in which the pupils can grow in confidence and self esteem. The teachers speak to the pupils with courtesy and respect and this is very successful in promoting a reciprocal courtesy from the pupils.
- 41 The pupils of all ages are given opportunities to carry increasing levels of responsibility as they move through the school. There are many opportunities to act as monitors and to take responsibility for carrying out tasks that aid the smooth running of the school community. In an infant assembly, the Year 2 pupils were given the responsibility of escorting the reception pupils back to their classroom and they did this with care and sensitivity. In Year 6, every pupil has a particular responsibility during the year. For example, they care for the younger pupils at lunchtime, help to prepare the infant classrooms for afternoon lessons, oversee the organisation of the reference library and assist in the running of the infant sports day.
- 42 In lessons, the pupils show high levels of moral and social awareness in their learning. For example, they show great concern for issues such as the destruction of the rain forests and the plight of working elephants in Sri Lanka. The weekly School Meeting gives pupils the opportunity to express their views on matters that affect them in school and allows them to make decisions about issues such as which charities they should support. They were very successful in their efforts to raise money for a guide dog and organised all the fund raising events themselves. In residential visits to destinations such as Colomendy, Ned Nook and London, they learn how to be self-reliant and to function within a social group away from their families.
- 43 Provision for the pupils' cultural development is very good. Subjects such as history and geography provide the pupils with opportunities to learn about the significance of ancient civilisations, such as the Aztecs and the Romans, and to appreciate their effect on present day life. In music, art and English lessons they are taught to appreciate a good range of creative media and to learn about famous artists, composers, poets and authors. They are taught to appreciate their own culture through an extensive series of arts events, such as visits from touring theatre groups and visits to the Unity Theatre, which enable them to experience a rich and varied range of performances such as 'The Little Match Girl' and 'Romeo and Juliet'. During a special arts week, the pupils in Year 5 engaged in a wide range of high quality cultural experiences, such as dance, poetry, drama, circus skills and percussion music. The older pupils learn about the language and culture of France and they have opportunities to meet people from other countries, through links with Uganda and Sri Lanka. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to study other faiths and this gives them an informed understanding of the value systems and beliefs of other cultures, through which they learn tolerance and respect for others.

- 44 The school is entirely successful in implementing the governors' policy for equality of opportunity. All of the pupils, irrespective of gender, race, ability or background, have equal access to the whole curriculum. The school's commitment to promoting equality of opportunity and developing positive attitudes in the pupils is reflected regularly across the curriculum. Throughout the school, teachers frequently take opportunities to raise the pupils' awareness, often through carefully chosen literacy texts and through other subjects including art and music.
- 45 The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. The school maintains an appropriate register for special needs that complies with the national Code of Practice and meets statutory obligations. Detailed individual education plans are drawn up for all pupils who need them. The targets set for the pupils are very well matched to individual need and the plans state clearly how the targets will be achieved. The individual education plans are reviewed each term, progress is evaluated and new targets are set where appropriate. The parents are invited to school to discuss the outcomes of the reviews and how they can help their child. Those unable to attend receive clear written information about the outcome of the review. Very good provision is made in lessons to support pupils with special educational needs. In literacy and numeracy, small withdrawal groups receive very high quality teaching that focuses closely on the needs of the pupils and enables them to make very good progress. In other lessons, the teachers and teaching assistants provide good quality support for the pupils. Appropriate adaptations to books and worksheets are often made, to meet individual needs and to enable the pupils to take a full part in lessons. The needs of pupils with statements of special educational need are very well catered for and they are enabled to make very good progress within the context of the normal classroom.
- 46 The school places great store on promoting the pupils' personal and social education. In this respect, provision is very good. A well conceived health education programme is taught throughout the school. This gives appropriate attention to sex education and drug misuse. The pupils are taught essential facts and provided with the necessary skills and knowledge to enable them to make informed choices now and in the future.
- 47 Very good links have been established with the local community. Regular visits by police provide the pupils with important information for their own safety. In addition, strong links with St Mary's Church and the church community enable the pupils to understand the importance of contributing to the life of the area. For example, at harvest and Christmas time groups of pensioners are invited to the school to share in the celebrations. At other times the pupils are taken over to the church for special services. Good links are well established with two nearby secondary schools. A smooth system is in place for the transfer of relevant records and attainment data. Good induction procedures help the pupils to feel confident about moving to their new school.

- 48 Despite the demands of the National Curriculum in recent years, including the implementation of Curriculum 2000, the school has been successful in maintaining a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum. In the last two years the curriculum has been broadened further by the school's involvement in a modern foreign languages project. This enables Year 6 pupils to benefit from specialist French teaching. The project is successful not only in extending the pupils' awareness of other languages, but also in enhancing their speaking and listening skills in English.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

- 49 The school provides a good level of care for its pupils and is successful in ensuring their welfare, health and safety. Child protection procedures are good, adhering to clear guidelines provided by the local education authority. Regular attendance and punctuality are strongly encouraged and the pupils' record of attendance is very good, well above the national average for primary schools. Monitoring arrangements are very thorough and any concerns are brought to the immediate attention of the educational welfare officer, who gives very good support to the work of the school. The school also receives strong support from the educational psychologist, the school nurse, the City's road safety officer and the police community liaison officer in matters concerning the pupils' welfare and guidance.
- 50 Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are generally good, particularly in English and mathematics. A carefully planned programme of statutory and non-statutory tests are set throughout the school. The results are analysed carefully, and used effectively to track pupils' progress and to set appropriate targets for future attainment. The school has not yet introduced the setting of personal targets for improvements by individual pupils in the core subjects, but it is well placed to do so. Group targets are currently set in aspects of some subjects, such as writing, and this is having a positive effect on pupils' progress. Teachers' marking is constructive in recognising what pupils have attained and setting appropriate new challenges. Good use is made of information gathered from the assessment of pupils' work to inform the next stage of teaching and learning.
- 51 The monitoring of pupils' academic progress is carried out effectively in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. However, there is scope for strengthening current arrangements for monitoring and recording pupils' progress throughout the school in ICT, history and geography, which are not sufficiently systematic at present.
- 52 Procedures for monitoring and supporting the pupils' personal development are very good. The Christian ethos of the school is central to all of its work and the pupils are taught to care for one another inside school and to reach out to the wider community through fund raising for a range of national and international charities. In conjunction with a local secondary school, the school has established links with a school in Uganda and through these the pupils are developing an understanding and an appreciation of a way of life which is very different from their own. Links with the parish church are very strong and contribute significantly to the pupils' personal, social and moral development. The school chaplain is a regular visitor and very supportive. He leads a weekly assembly inside school and is well known to the pupils and their families. Special celebrations in the Christian calendar are held in the church and parents and carers are made welcome on such occasions. A shortage of space inside school makes it impossible to include parents in school assemblies.

- 53 Since the last inspection the school has placed greater emphasis on giving the pupils opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning and for duties in the classroom. Increasingly, as they move through the school, the pupils take additional responsibility outside the classroom. For example the Year 6 pupils organise the hall ready for assembly and operate the overhead projector for the hymn singing. The Liverpool Compact "Going for Gold" scheme gives the Year 6 pupils a good insight into the world of work and helps to prepare them for transfer to secondary schools. They develop a systematic approach to setting their own personal targets for learning, attitudes and behaviour.
- 54 Arrangements for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are of a very high order. Hard work and caring, helpful attitudes are rewarded consistently and fairly with a range of rewards such as praise, stars, merit certificates and Bronze, Silver and Gold awards. The pupils respond positively. They know what is expected of them and their behaviour is of a very high standard in lessons and around the school. Relationships throughout the school are excellent. Monitoring arrangements are very thorough and this assists in keeping a track of individuals' achievements and in noting any concerns which arise in relation to attitudes or behaviour.
- 55 The school has a strong tradition of residential visits and these play an important part in the pupils' all round education. Residential visits begin in Year 1 with a three-day visit to Colomendy. Pupils in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 participate in visits of longer duration to Colomendy and various other outdoor pursuits centres and places of learning. In recent years the Year 6 pupils have stayed in the halls of residence in the universities of Oxford and Cambridge and a visit is planned for this year to Royal Holloway College, London. These experiences help the pupils to gain independence and self confidence. They also play a part in building good relationships and developing a sense of community and an enjoyment of learning. The visits to the universities are invaluable in preparing the Year 6 pupils for the next stage of their education and in encouraging them to look forward, in an informed way, to what higher education has to offer.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

- 56 The school has established a good partnership with parents. Parents and carers have positive views about the school and appreciate the attitudes and values which the school promotes. The consultation exercise, prior to the inspection, revealed that parents and carers feel very strongly that their children like school and are helped to become mature and responsible. The vast majority consider behaviour to be good and are of the view that the school expects its pupils to work hard and achieve of their best. Most parents and carers would feel comfortable in approaching the school with problems or questions concerning their children. They are of the view that teaching is good and they feel their children are making good progress. The inspection findings support all these positive views.
- 57 A significant minority of the parents and carers are of the opinion that the school does not provide an interesting range of activities outside the classroom. The inspection findings are that the range of extra curricular activities provided for the pupils is good, and that the arrangements to provide annual residential visits for pupils in most year groups is a strong feature.
- 58 A significant minority of parents and carers would like the school to work more closely with them and are dissatisfied with the amount of work their children are expected to do at home. Some felt that there is too much homework and others would like more. The inspection finds that the school works closely with parents and

that parents and carers make a good contribution to their children's learning at school and at home. A number of parents help inside school, listening to readers, assisting with ICT and supporting groups of pupils with practical work such as art and design and design and technology. The inspection finds that teachers make good use of homework to support pupils' learning, particularly in English and mathematics, and that parental support for the home-school reading scheme and for homework in general is having a positive impact on pupils' attainment and progress. For example, in history the Years 3 and 4 pupils are studying the Roman invasion of Britain and they are working hard to produce some very interesting portfolios using books from the library and information taken, at home, from the Internet. The parents are very supportive in sending in items linked to various areas of study. During the inspection, one of the pupils brought in a book about Moses to share with the rest of the school in assembly.

- 59 Communication between school and the home is generally good. However, a significant minority of parents and carers would like the school to keep them better informed in relation to their children's progress. The inspection finds that the procedures for informing parents about their children's progress are similar to those in most schools. Pupils' annual written reports provide useful information about pupils' progress, but place insufficient emphasis on identifying areas for improvement. In addition, the section on technology, which currently covers ICT and design and technology should be separated into two distinct sections. Parents and carers have suitable opportunities to discuss their children's progress formally, with class teachers, at the parents' evenings which are held twice a year. They are kept well informed in relation to school policies, procedures and events through the prospectus, regular correspondence and the governing body's very detailed annual report. Since the last inspection a home-school agreement has been introduced, which sets out very clearly the responsibilities of the school, the family and the individual pupil.
- 60 At the pre-inspection meeting with inspectors some parents expressed the view that the arrangements for dismissing pupils at the end of the day could be improved. The school proposes to review the existing arrangements in the near future.
- 61 The parents and carers, through the Parent Teacher Association, continue to give good support to the life and work of the school. They provide refreshments at various school functions and organise numerous social and fund raising events during the course of the year. Each year the association agrees a specific target for fund raising. This year's target is to increase the level of resourcing for numeracy. In recent years, money generously donated by the association has been used to subsidise the cost of educational visits and improve the level of resourcing in English, music, physical education and ICT.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

- 62 The quality of leadership and management is very good. The dedicated headteacher provides perceptive and purposeful leadership, and is strongly supported by a knowledgeable and committed deputy headteacher. These are important factors in the good progress made by the school since the last inspection. Senior staff work closely with the governing body to provide clear vision and direction for the work of the school. They are well supported by a talented and hard working staff.

- 63 Governors are proud of their school and show a good understanding of its strengths and priorities for improvement. Appropriate governing body committees have been established, and they work effectively and successfully to ensure that statutory requirements are met. The governing body is currently anxious to restore the statutory provision for the teaching of gymnastics, which has been temporarily stopped by the loss of a classroom. Governors for areas of the curriculum and aspects of provision, such as special educational needs, liaise effectively with co-ordinators. The insight they gain, through working in the school or visiting classrooms, helps the governing body to assess and appreciate the progress which the school is making and contributes towards informed decisions about areas for development.
- 64 The headteacher and deputy headteacher work closely with co-ordinators for subjects and aspects of the curriculum. This contributes greatly towards the commitment for improvement which exists in the school, and is an important factor in the successful implementation of the literacy and numeracy strategies. Co-ordinators play an important part in producing and updating subject policies and schemes of work which help teachers to set appropriately challenging work for pupils at all levels of attainment. Their work contributes strongly towards the good quality of teaching which now exists. The school is now well placed to continue to improve by building on existing strengths and addressing the weaknesses identified in this report.
- 65 The school's mission statement is communicated effectively to parents through the School Prospectus. The school sets out to: "provide a caring, Christian education, and to create a stable, secure and happy environment within which children are able to develop to their maximum potential." These aims are consistently reflected in all of the school's work. The governing body ensures that the requirements of the Code of Practice for special educational needs are successfully addressed and that the school provides equality of access and opportunity for all of its pupils. The school makes good provision for all pupils, irrespective of gender or ability.
- 66 Very effective procedures have been established for monitoring, evaluating and developing teaching and the curriculum, which form an important part of the school's strategy for performance management. Teachers are keen to improve, and increasing emphasis is placed on self-evaluation and reflection. The school has focused in particular on the teaching of literacy and numeracy in recent years, but has also made considerable progress in improving the teaching of ICT which was identified as a weakness in the last inspection report. The headteacher visit classrooms to evaluate teaching and the quality of curricular provision. Criteria for evaluation are agreed with class teachers in advance. The feedback from lesson evaluations is considered during interviews with individual teachers, and personal targets for improvement are agreed for the year ahead. Senior management and co-ordinators monitor curricular planning regularly to ensure appropriate curricular coverage in each year group. They also carry out regular scrutiny of work produced by pupils in order to monitor their progress and the standards they achieve.
- 67 Responsibilities for co-ordinating subjects and aspects of the curriculum are shared appropriately and defined clearly. Co-ordinators produce clear action plans in their subjects which are incorporated into the school plan. Well conceived school development planning procedures enable the school to move steadily towards the targets identified. Targets for improvements are listed clearly and appropriate information is provided about action to be taken to support their implementation. This includes deadlines for meeting targets, persons responsible, and criteria for evaluating

the success of initiatives. The effective use of the plan to inform spending, ensures that money is spent appropriately on relevant educational priorities.

- 68 Strong emphasis is placed on staff development. Teachers, support staff and governors are given opportunities to attend relevant in-service training, and there are appropriated procedures for supporting the induction of newly qualified teachers and staff who are new to the school. The requirements for staff appraisal are met through the annual personal interviews, which form an important part of the school's performance management procedures. Very effective use is made of all funding. Good use is made of the element in the school's budget for making provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- 69 The governors' finance committee liaises closely with the headteacher and highly effective school administration officer to oversee financial matters efficiently and effectively. School administration makes very good use of information technology to monitor spending and ensure efficient financial control. The most recent audit of finance by the local authority found the financial systems and procedures established at the school to be operating extremely well. All of the audit's recommendations have been addressed.
- 70 The increasing attention given to monitoring school performance is a good feature in the work of the governing body. The headteacher provides regular information to enable governors and senior management to compare the school's performance with similar schools as well as the national picture. The governing body also seeks to secure best quality and value when purchasing resources and arranging for work to be completed. The successful initiative to develop a computer suite provides a good illustration. Various options for equipping the suite were carefully considered in seeking to achieve best quality and value for money.
- 71 All resources are very well managed. The school has sufficient suitably qualified and experienced teachers to meet the demands of the curriculum for pupils at all stages of their education; they are managed and deployed very effectively. Very good use is made of all the facilities provided by the accommodation and school grounds. The school works hard to successfully overcome the difficulties presented by limited floor-space and lack of storage. However, the current arrangements to accommodate a classroom in the school hall, following the demolition of a temporary classroom, is causing serious difficulties. The school is currently unable to meet the statutory requirement for teaching gymnastics. The governing body is hopeful that a replacement classroom will be in place before the end of the academic year. The extended accommodation will improve further the provision for children in the reception class, and includes plans for an outside play area for children at this early stage. Limited teaching space and increasing numbers of pupils present an on-going problem for the school, and it is necessary, at present, to have two mixed aged classes. Much emphasis is placed on ensuring that the needs of pupils in these classes are met fully.
- 72 Standards of cleaning and caretaking are high, and the quality of the internal environment is considerably enhanced by displays of pupils' work which are of a good standard. They are used very effectively to celebrate pupils' achievements, support their learning, and promote enquiry.
- 73 Since the last inspection, the school has achieved significant improvements in the provision for ICT, which was described as unsatisfactory in the last report. The overall quality of leadership and management has continued to improve and is now of very good quality.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

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

(i) achieve consistent and systematic use of ICT in subjects across the curriculum by:

- * identifying ICT opportunities in the planning of other subjects;
- * providing relevant in-service training where necessary;
- * monitoring regularly to ensure consistent coverage.

(paragraph references: 31, 37, 106, 118, 122)

(ii) resolve current accommodation problems in order to restore provision for teaching physical education, by:

- * implementing plans to provide an additional classroom, so that pupils can have regular access to the gymnastics facilities in the school hall;

(paragraph references: 33, 36, 63, 71, 132)

In addition to the key issues above, the following recommendation arising from areas of relative weakness should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

improve the quality of the end of year written reports on children's progress by:

- * placing greater emphasis on identifying areas for improvement;
- * providing separate sections for the reports on ICT and design and technology;

(paragraph reference: 59)

strengthen further the arrangements for monitoring and recording pupils' progress in ICT, history and geography.

(paragraph references: 118, 123)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	49
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	24

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	18	26	4	0	0	0
Percentage	2	37	53	8	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. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than two percentage points.

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)	-	236
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	-	26

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	-	6
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	-	75

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	9
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	2

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.7
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	12	17	29

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	12	12
	Girls	16	17	17
	Total	27	29	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (94)	100 (97)	100 (100)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	12	12
	Girls	16	17	17
	Total	27	29	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	94 (94)	97 (97)	100 (100)
	National	85 (85)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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
	2001	26	17	43

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	23	21	24
	Girls	17	13	16
	Total	40	34	40
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	93 (90)	79 (80)	93 (93)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	21	15	23
	Girls	16	21	16
	Total	37	36	39
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	86 (93)	84 (83)	91 (97)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	
Indian	
Pakistani	1
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	6
White	227
Any other minority ethnic group	4

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	11
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21
Average class size	29.5

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	87

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000/01
	£
Total income	491,956
Total expenditure	490,194
Expenditure per pupil	2,078
Balance brought forward from previous year	20,711
Balance carried forward to next year	22,473

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	0
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	0
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	236
Number of questionnaires returned	82

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	71	24	4	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	60	20	9	4	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	63	28	1	2	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	28	33	20	12	7
The teaching is good.	55	27	2	4	12
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	41	24	21	7	6
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	60	22	11	7	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	62	27	4	4	4
The school works closely with parents.	35	30	18	13	2
The school is well led and managed.	49	39	2	4	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	60	30	0	4	6
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	35	17	17	18	12

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

75 The children enter the reception class with levels of attainment which are average compared with those found nationally. Since the last inspection, the quality of teaching has improved and the planning of the work is now based appropriately on the nationally agreed early learning goals for children at the Foundation Stage. Consistently good quality teaching means that children make good progress, and almost all are on course to achieve the early learning goals by the beginning of Year 1.

Personal, social and emotional development

76 In the personal, social and emotional area of their learning the children are well supported by all of the adults who work with them. Relationships are very positive and the children enjoy coming to school. They respond very well to the rules and routines of the class. Strong emphasis is placed on helping them to understand what constitutes appropriate behaviour and what is right and wrong. As a result, the children are very well behaved. They co-operate willingly with staff and with each other. For example, during imaginative play in 'Café Uno' they took turns being the chef, waitress and customers. When using the hall over the road from the school, the children show much confidence and independence when changing for physical activities. Good quality teaching underpins this aspect of the children's development. During lessons, most demonstrate an increasing ability to listen and concentrate, to sit quietly when appropriate and to respect their teachers and each other.

Communication, language and literacy

77 The teaching of communication, language and literacy is good and the content of the work interests the children. For example, they listened to the story of 'Handa's Surprise' with a great deal of attention. They responded to the good quality of questioning with effective recall skills. The vocabulary they used was clearly influenced by their experience. The children enjoy books. They handle them carefully, hold them correctly and know how print and pictures carry meaning. The teaching is successful in using good quality literature to broaden the children's developing vocabulary. However, during some activities, such as construction work, staff do not always interact sufficiently with the children. This results in missed opportunities to develop further the children's speaking skills. Many of the children are beginning to use well taught phonics to help them write simple regular words. Almost all can write their names using correctly upper and lower case letters. A good feature of the teaching is the incidental planning of writing which encourages the children to write during imaginative activities. For example, the waitress in the café made a list of the items requested by the customer. At times she checked with the chef to see if some of the items were available, crossing out those which were off the menu. The parents play an important part in helping their children to read. Books are taken home regularly and the children make good progress recognising many commonly used words. When this poses some difficulty they use their knowledge of individual letter sound to blend these into a recognisable word. Their good progress in this respect reflects the good quality of the teaching they receive. As a result the children are on course to achieve the early learning goals in this area of the foundation curriculum. Good assessment procedures result in the early identification of children with special educational needs. Good quality planning and

helpful interaction enables these children to take a full part in lesson and their progress is monitored effectively.

Mathematical development

- 78 The vast majority of the children are on course to achieve the early learning goals in mathematics by the time they enter Key Stage 1. Their progress is supported effectively by well planned experiences and activities. Good quality teaching is based appropriately on the needs of the children at the Foundation Stage in mathematics. A good balance is achieved between formal and informal methods. The adaptation of the principles of the National Numeracy Strategy to meet the needs of the children at the Foundation Stage is very successful. A variety of well chosen activities enable the children to count to 10 and beyond. They enjoy mental work and many know the number before and after all of the numbers to 9. Children understand how to order numbers to 10 and in one group, for example, they used fruit to sort into sets, and understood how to combine sets to give a total. The children generally count reliably up to 10 everyday objects. One group demonstrated good progress in solving problems such as the number needed to total five if they had three objects. In solving related problems they showed much accuracy. The teaching in the mathematical area is generally good. The children are introduced to an appropriate range of experiences including number rhymes and counting songs. However, opportunities are sometimes missed to develop mathematical language during investigative and imaginative play. This is particularly so in relation to size and position. However, good use is made of the computer to help the children to recognise and match common regular shapes.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

- 79 The quality of the teaching in the area of work related to knowledge and understanding of the world, is good. The children receive helpful support in working with the computer so that they make good progress in manipulating the mouse and in becoming increasingly familiar with the keyboard to achieve their desired intentions. The children are helped to understand the passage of time through the celebration of birthdays, talking about the days of the week and the changing seasons and weather. In a recent project to assist their understanding of then and now, the children brought in colour photographs of themselves as small babies and current photographs of them ready to begin in the reception class. Well planned discussions using these photographs enabled the children to talk about their own lives and those of their families. The children have many opportunities to construct with a wide range of objects. The teaching provides them with many choices, especially during plastic construction activities. However, too few opportunities are currently provided for them to shape, assemble and join materials using a range of tools and techniques. In the limited work observed the children are generally on course to reach the early learning goals in this area of their development.

Physical development

- 80 The reception class is temporarily accommodated in a Key Stage 2 classroom, pending the implementation of plans to build a new classroom and create appropriate outdoor play facilities in the main school. As a consequence the children have insufficient access to outside play provision and this restricts the range of activities planned by the staff. The school has done its best to resolve the position by hiring a new hall across the road from the school. Here, a shortage of large and small equipment limits the range of learning opportunities. However, good quality teaching results in the children learning to use space appropriately, to control their bodily movements and to understand the importance of regular exercise. In the classroom, well planned experiences enable the children to make good progress

handling pencils, crayons, paint brushes, modelling tools and print making materials. While most of the children demonstrate developing control and dexterity, a minority have some difficulty in controlling scissors adequately. In most respects, however, the children are on course to achieve the early learning goals in this area of their development.

Creative development

- 81 The children make good progress in the creative area of their learning and are on course to achieve the nationally agreed early learning goals. The quality of teaching is good and the children benefit from a range of carefully planned experiences including imaginative play, music, art and story. In printing activities they know how to mix and apply paint in ways which demonstrate progress in combining colours for a particular purpose.
- 82 The children are helped to work on both large and small scale projects. For example, a group made good progress and clearly benefited from the teaching of weaving techniques. They created a large scale woven fruit basket for a display based on their literacy work, 'Handa's Surprise'. They showed good dexterity in basic weaving techniques and produced a well crafted product by the end of the lesson. The children know how to sing a growing repertoire of songs from memory. They accompany their singing with well co-ordinated actions which demonstrate their growing understanding of rhythm. The children play confidently alongside each other in imaginative activities. For example, the 'Café Uno' provided a good stimulus for them to engage in role play as cooks, customers, waiters and waitresses. With adult help, they were able to develop their own story line and at one stage a customer sent back the food because it was not to her liking!
- 83 The quality of teaching by all of the adults who work in the reception class is generally good, and effective use is made of resources which are broadly adequate. The teaching is successful in helping children to work confidently in all areas of the curriculum, but there is scope for the greater emphasis to be placed on developing further their capacity to work independently and to bring their own ideas to tasks which are sometimes overdirected. Day-to-day assessment strategies are used effectively to plan further work and to determine which of the children need additional support. The quality of such support provided by all of the adults is effective in maintaining the momentum in the children's learning, especially those who have special educational needs.

ENGLISH

- 84 By the time pupils reach the ages of seven and 11, standards are above the national expectations. This is an improvement on the standards achieved at the time of the last inspection which were in line with the national expectation. The improving picture is confirmed by national test results. There is no significant variation in the performance of pupils in terms of gender.
- 85 At both key stages, pupils at all levels of attainment achieve good standards in relation to their prior learning. Those with special educational needs make very good progress towards the targets set in their individual education plans; they benefit greatly from the setting of work which is appropriately challenging and the good quality support provided by teachers and support staff. The programme of work in English meets fully the requirements of the National Curriculum.

- 86 In speaking and listening, pupils at both key stages make very good progress and achieve standards which are generally above those expected for their age. The increasing confidence and skills of younger pupils are very apparent during literacy lessons, when they respond quickly to questions arising from the text and interact enthusiastically with their teachers. The imaginative way in which whole-class elements of the literacy lessons are organised contributes significantly to the pupils' rapid progress at this stage. In a Year 1 literacy lesson, for example, pupils used individual writing boards to jot down their responses to their teacher's questions about phonics and new words, before sharing their views with the whole class. By the age of seven, most pupils show a capacity to listen carefully and respond appropriately to what others say and higher attaining pupils show a growing ability to talk and listen confidently in different contexts. Pupils continue to make good progress at Key Stage 2. They show an increasing sense of audience and a growing ability to vary the amount of detail and the use of vocabulary during discussion. In a Years 4/5 science lesson, for example, pupils used relevant scientific language to explain how some changes to the state of materials, such as ice melting, can be reversed, while others, such as sugar dissolving in tea, are irreversible. By the time pupils reach the age of 11, they talk and listen confidently in a wide range of contexts, including whole-school assemblies, school council meetings, whole-class and group settings. Participation in school production enables many of them to enhance and extend their skills. The ability of a significant number of older pupils to vary expression and vocabulary to engage the listener is a strong feature in their learning, as is their willingness to pay close attention to what others say.
- 87 Throughout the school, pupils make good progress in reading and by the time they are seven and 11 achieve standards which are above those expected for their age. They benefit considerably from the support of parents, particularly in the early stages of their education. The strong emphasis placed on the development of phonic skills, during literacy lessons, in Years 1 and 2, contributes positively towards the good progress made by pupils up to the age of seven. In a Year 1 lesson, for example, the teacher focused on words in the introductory text which contained particular sounds. Pupils were asked to come to the whiteboard and place the appropriate magnetic letter in place to complete sounds and simple words. They did this with impressive accuracy, demonstrating a good grasp of phonics. By the age of seven, most pupils use appropriate strategies to help them read unfamiliar and increasingly challenging texts. High attainers read with increasing fluency, showing a good understanding of what they read. During Years 3 to 6, pupils build successfully on this good start. Many read expressively a wide range of stories, plays and poems, and show growing competence in finding information from reference materials and from the Internet. By the age of eleven, many higher attaining pupils achieve standards in reading which are above those expected for their age. They read challenging novels of their own choice, and are able to discuss confidently the plot, characters and style of books.
- 88 Pupils in Years 1 and 2, make good progress in writing and achieve above average standards. This reflects the close attention given to improving writing skills in recent years. Younger pupils benefit greatly from the literacy hour, and by the time they are seven, most are able to write in a sequence of sentences, making appropriate use of capital letters and full stops, and generally spelling simple words correctly. A significant minority of higher attaining pupils write with growing imagination, showing good skills in spelling more complex words. Although pupils make at least satisfactory progress at Key Stage 2, standards in writing are not as high as those in speaking and listening and reading.
- 89 By the time pupils reach the age of 11, their writing is generally lively and thoughtful. Most use an appropriate range of punctuation with accuracy, and understand how to construct paragraphs. They benefit greatly from very good quality teaching during the

literacy hour, which challenges those at all levels of attainment. This enables pupils to make good progress in acquiring new skills in writing. The imaginative way in which the literacy hour is adapted to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs, enables them to make very good progress in relation to their prior attainment. The successful implementation of the literacy hour is reflected in the good quality of the relatively short pieces of written work produced during literacy lessons. Some high attainers use an increasingly adventurous vocabulary and make accurate use of their new skills, such as complex sentences, for example. However, the same quality is not so apparent when pupils produce more extended writing in work across the curriculum. Many pupils fail to apply their new skills, and standards of handwriting and presentation are less consistent. The school has recognised this, and writing continues to be a priority for attention.

- 90 In some classes, the increasing use of ICT to support work in English has a positive impact on standards and extends the pupils' ICT skills. Pupils enjoy seeing their work presented in good quality print, and benefit from the use of the spell-check facility to identify and improve weaknesses in their spelling. However, the purposeful use of ICT to support learning in English is not yet a regular feature in all classes.
- 91 At both key stages, the quality of teaching is generally of a very good standard. Over 90 per cent of lessons observed were good and 70 per cent very good. There were no unsatisfactory lessons. Throughout both key stages, careful preparation helps teachers to be secure in their subject knowledge. This enables them to plan work which is appropriately challenging to extend pupils at all levels of attainment. Pupils respond positively to the challenge and make good progress in developing their literacy skills. The purpose of each lesson is explained to the pupils, giving them a good self-knowledge of their own learning. Texts for the introductory element of the literacy lesson are carefully selected and "big books" and other materials, such as posters, are used effectively as shared reading texts. Careful explanation and highly effective questioning skills help to capture pupils' attention and interest. Teachers convey a strong sense of their own enjoyment, and use humour very effectively to stimulate, encourage and introduce a sense of fun into pupils' learning. This creates a positive context for learning, where pupils know that their efforts will be valued and are not afraid of making a mistake. In many classes, the very effective contribution of support staff is of particular benefit during group work, achieving a high level of interaction between pupils and adults, and helping pupils to work productively. The high expectations which teachers have of their pupils is a strong feature at both key stages. They use a rich and varied vocabulary when explaining new work and questioning pupils. This promotes pupils' desire to use new words, which they often incorporate into their writing. In Year 4, for example, pupils used words such as "venomously" and "menacingly" to describe the actions of the farmers, following the study of a text from the "Fantastic Mr Fox". Class management is nearly always very good, contributing significantly towards the high standard of behaviour in lessons. Pupils show very good attitudes towards their work. They listen attentively during whole-class text work and work productively during group and independent activities. During all aspects of the work, teachers take care to include and involve all pupils. Their questioning takes care not to favour either gender, and learning activities challenge effectively pupils at all levels of attainment.
- 92 The highly effective work of the co-ordinator is a significant factor in the good progress made in English since the last inspection. There has been a considerable improvement in the quality of teaching, which was described as satisfactory by the last inspection. This, together with the successful implementation of the National Literacy Strategy, has been the most important factor in raising standards in English.

MATHEMATICS

- 93 The standards achieved by pupils aged seven and 11 are above the national expectations. Pupils, at all levels of attainment, make good progress in relation to their prior attainment, and those with special educational needs make very good progress towards the targets set in their individual education plans. Standards at both key stages are better than those indicated by the 2000 national tests and are consistent with the most recent national test results, for 2001, which are above average. The successful introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy has resulted in a higher proportion of the pupils reaching Level 5, which is above the national expectation. This figure has risen from 23 per cent in 2000 to 30 per cent in 2001. National test results for the last four years indicate that there is no significant variation in the performance of girls and boys.
- 94 By the age of seven, most of the pupils have acquired a good knowledge and understanding of basic number work. They show confidence in their ability to read, write and order numbers to 100 and beyond. The pupils demonstrate good skills in the recall of basic number facts. This is the result of brisk and lively mental work at the beginning of lessons. The teaching is very effective in helping the pupils to recognise number patterns and sequences, including odd and even numbers. By Year 2, the pupils demonstrate a growing understanding of place value and recognise that the position of a digit signifies its value. They make good progress in their calculations, selecting and using accurately appropriate addition and subtraction processes. For example, in a Year 2 class, as part of a topic on shopping pupils calculated accurately the cost of the two articles, each priced between 12p and 20p, using horizontal addition. The higher attaining pupils went on to use their knowledge of subtraction when finding change from a given amount. They were able to use a number of methods including the fact that subtraction is the inverse of addition.
- 95 In Years 3 to 6, the good quality of planning enables the pupils to build successfully on their prior learning. They make good progress in their understanding of place value and demonstrate increasing accuracy in computation work using the four rules. They are quick to recall essential facts and know how to find, from known facts, those they cannot recall. The oldest pupils demonstrate an increasing grasp of the extension of the number system. This is reflected in their understanding of negative numbers and in their knowledge and understanding of the relationships of fractions, decimals and percentages.
- 96 Throughout the school, the pupils make good progress in work related to shape, space and measures. This is because the teaching is lively and well planned. The pupils are introduced to precise mathematical language. As a result, the pupils acquire accurate vocabulary which they use effectively when describing the properties of three and two dimensional shapes. For example, some of the higher attaining Year 4 pupils were able to explain why a tetrahedron did not fit into the category of prisms. By the time the lesson reached the final plenary stage, they were able to draw on their prior knowledge to deduce accurately the definition of a hexahedron. One child remarked, "Well, that's the shape of dice isn't it?". The oldest pupils show increasing confidence and proficiency using a range of measures. They know how to measure angles to the nearest degree. In calculations, they can find the third angle of a triangle when only two are known. By Year 6, they know how to find perimeters, areas and volume using appropriate formulae.

- 97 The pupils are introduced to handling data at Key Stage 2. They make good progress collecting information, recording results and interpreting their findings. They benefit greatly from the high quality of teaching which helps them to understand and use an appropriate range of graphs, charts, diagrams and frequency tables.
- 98 In each year group, the pupils make very good progress using and applying their mathematical skills in a range of relevant situations. They know how to organise their work effectively and present their findings in a clear and organised manner. The standard of their presentation is extremely high. In some classes, the pupils benefit from using ICT to develop their mathematical expertise. However, this is not a consistent feature of the provision, and in many classes the use of ICT to support learning is underemphasised.
- 99 The quality of teaching is very good with some examples of high quality inspirational teaching which captivates and challenges the pupils. Lessons are well planned and based appropriately on the National Numeracy Strategy format. The pupils enjoy the brisk and lively mental work which is a strong feature in all lessons. The pupils' learning is very well supported by the knowledge and understanding of the subject which their teachers demonstrate. Lesson content is well matched to the pupils' different needs. Questioning is a strong feature in lessons and is used effectively to consolidate learning and to assess the pupils' level of understanding. The final plenary part of lessons is used effectively to consolidate pupils' learning and sometimes to correct misconceptions. However, in some classes insufficient use is made of the plenary to extend pupils' thinking. Classroom assistants and volunteer helpers provide valuable support in many classes. They make a significant contribution to the pupils' learning and progress, particularly those who have special educational needs.
- 100 The successful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy has played a highly significant part in raising standards of numeracy since the last inspection. The higher attaining pupils are now challenged more appropriately and the proportion of Year 6 pupils attaining Level 5 is testimony to the much improved quality of the teaching. The subject is very well co-ordinated. Test results are analysed effectively and teaching is monitored carefully. Mathematics makes an important contribution to the school's aims and the content of the work meets fully the requirements of the National Curriculum.

SCIENCE

- 101 The standards achieved by pupils aged seven and 11 are above the national expectations. This is consistent with recent national test results and is an improvement on the last inspection when standards were found to be in line with the national expectations. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in relation to their prior levels of ability.
- 102 By the age of seven, the pupils have developed a good fund of scientific knowledge relating to their daily lives and experiences and make good progress. They learn effectively about how living creatures grow and change through their own observations and apply their knowledge to other life cycles. For example, they describe the change from caterpillar to butterfly and tadpole to frog. They name accurately the main parts of a plant and the human body and know about conditions for plant growth through direct observation of how crocus bulbs grow. In their

investigation of different materials they develop a good understanding of common materials and their properties. They know, through the experience of making Krispie cakes, that the melting and cooling of chocolate is a reversible change and are beginning to use the appropriate scientific language to describe what they observe. They extend their understanding about how the physical environment functions, for example in their observations of electrical and magnetic phenomena, and attempt to explain what is happening in terms of cause and effect. They acquire sound enquiry skills through a good range of practical experiences. They make simple predictions about what might happen and record their observations systematically in a table. They did this very well in a comparison of ordinary, toasted and frozen bread and could give explanations for the differences they found.

- 103 By the age of eleven, the pupils have made good progress in the development of their scientific knowledge. Their scientific enquiry skills, although satisfactory, are not as well developed as the other aspects of science. In their studies of life processes, pupils learn very successfully about animal habitats, and use keys to classify minibeasts accurately, according to observable characteristics. They know, through practical investigation, about the factors that affect plant growth and differences in methods of seed dispersal. In their work with materials, they make very good progress in their understanding about changes of state, for example of what happens when water is frozen or heated, and use the appropriate scientific vocabulary to explain these changes. They know how to separate solutions and mixtures such as sand and salt. In a lesson on the use of filtering, for example, they reached good levels of understanding, through practical investigation, about how to separate soil and water. They have good levels of knowledge about the properties of different materials, and are able to test, for example, to find the strength of different papers and the effects of hot water on the solubility of powders, in order to extend their understanding. The pupils make very good progress in their understanding of how the physical world functions. Through a wide range of challenging studies, they learn very successfully about balanced and unbalanced forces; they understand the effects of friction on movement; they know about the effects of gravity and can test this in an investigation using paper helicopters; they know how to measure in Newtons and use forcemeters to measure the force needed to move objects over different surfaces. In some good lessons on electrical phenomena, the pupils learned very successfully about the effects of series and parallel circuits on how bulbs light, and showed sound understanding of the symbolic conventions of how to represent bulbs, batteries and switches in a circuit diagram.
- 104 The area of scientific enquiry is less well developed than the other aspects of science. Although the majority of pupils can make predictions about what they think will happen in an investigation and collect data systematically in table form, some are not so adept at converting their data into graphs, without support, or in explaining what the data shows in relation to the question they are investigating. In some classes, insufficient opportunities are created for pupils to engage in tasks such as designing their own ways of investigating a question fairly, selecting appropriate equipment and making a series of appropriate measurements which they interpret in order to explain their findings.
- 105 The teaching in science is consistently good and there were examples of very good teaching. The teachers in all classes provide a good range of learning contexts for their pupils. They explain new learning very clearly and reflect very secure subject knowledge for teaching the primary age group. The teachers' planning is successful in providing learning experiences that give their pupils good opportunities to achieve

the planned objectives for lessons. Practical learning situations are very well planned and prepared. A good balance of teachers' explanations and the pupils' own practical explorations in lessons ensures that all the pupils are productively involved in active learning. All the teachers observed during the inspection used questioning very effectively to build on previous learning and check new learning. Intervention in the practical tasks was used very well to guide and probe learning and to correct misunderstandings. The management of pupils is usually very good and there are few behaviour problems as a result. Occasional instances of inappropriate behaviour are usually dealt with promptly. The generally good behaviour of the pupils and their positive attitudes to science are strong contributing factors in the good progress they make. The teachers know their pupils well and usually make appropriate provision for different ability ranges, for example by providing extra support for less able pupils. However, all the pupils are often given the same written tasks and there are occasions, when pupils are asked to fill in commercial worksheets or copy text rather than respond in their own words.

- 106 The subject co-ordinator has a good overview of standards and provision in the subject through the sampling, each term, of teachers' planning and pupils' work. National test results are analysed in order to monitor the quality of subject provision. A newly implemented record keeping system has been designed to track the progress of individual pupils as they move through the school. The range of books and resources is sufficient and is efficiently managed to ensure access and quality. However, the use of ICT to support learning in science is underdeveloped.

ART & DESIGN and DESIGN & TECHNOLOGY

- 107 The standards achieved by pupils aged seven and 11, in art and design are in line with those expected nationally. Due to the timing of the inspection and the school's timetabling arrangements, it was only possible to observe one lesson in design and technology. However, scrutiny of teachers' planning and work completed by pupils before the inspection indicate that standards at the end of both key stages are consistent with the national expectations. In both subjects, pupils at all levels of attainment, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory and sometimes good progress during their time in the school, and the programmes of work meet the National Curriculum requirements.
- 108 In art and design, good quality planning enables the younger pupils to develop increasing skills using a range of media, tools and techniques. For example, Year 1 pupils produced some good quality imaginative paintings, and were clearly influenced by Picasso's work during his blue period. They used paint mixing skills to good effect in creating a subtle blend of blue tints to add depth to their pictures. From an early stage, the pupils are taught to observe carefully and to note how to make effective use of pattern, tone, line and shape. For example, in Year 4 as part of their Viking studies, the pupils produced good quality drawings of long ships. These were well proportioned and striking in their attention to detail. Teaching is organised successfully to enable the pupils to develop their own creative ideas within set frameworks. This was evident for example, in a Year 5 class, influenced by the work of William Morris. They produced bold and imaginative designs which they repeated to give good balance and structure to their work. In this lesson, the pupils benefited greatly from the constructive evaluative comments of their teacher. They acted on this good advice and as a result made worthwhile improvements to their work as it progressed. Pupils build progressively on their art and design skills from one year to the next. Within the work an appropriate balance is achieved

between two and three-dimensional aspects of the subject. For example, some of the older pupils demonstrated well-developed techniques in paper sculpture. They produced well-formed birds and insects revealing good skills in bending, cutting and curling techniques.

- 109 In design and technology, pupils make steady progress in designing and making a product and evaluating what they have produced. Younger pupils demonstrated these skills when making musical instruments from reclaimed materials, and when engaged in food technology projects linked to work in science. Older pupils, at the end of Key Stage 2, show an ability to produce and follow step by step plans and demonstrate good skills in using tools and manipulating materials when engaged in a project on weaving.
- 110 In design and technology, the only lesson observed was of good quality, but it is not possible to make an overall judgement of the teaching. In art and design, the quality of teaching is consistently good. Effective planning helps the pupils to build progressively on their prior skills and knowledge. The content of lessons interests the pupils so that they are well motivated and keen to succeed. Resources are well organised and a good balance is achieved between the teaching of skills and techniques and the time allocated in lessons for the pupils to engage in practical tasks. The pupils exhibit very good standards of behaviour and benefit greatly from the support of their teachers and classroom assistants. All of the adults co-operate very effectively to make good provision for pupils with special educational needs. Care is taken to enable all pupils, irrespective of gender, race, background or ability to be involved fully in lessons.
- 111 The standards apparent at the time of the last inspection have been maintained in both subjects. In art and design, the content of the work now includes a greater focus on the development of the pupils' knowledge and understanding of the work of artists from our own and other cultures. In addition, art notebooks have been introduced. These now make a good contribution to the development of pupils' observational skills and ideas. The subject is well co-ordinated and supports effectively the aims of the school.

GEOGRAPHY and HISTORY

- 112 At the age of seven, standards in history and geography are in line with expectations and a significant number of pupils exceed this level. At age eleven, standards in both subjects are above those expected for the age of the pupils. This represents good progress and is a better picture than that existing at the time of the last inspection. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in relation to prior attainment.
- 113 In history, by the age of seven, the pupils show a satisfactory understanding of the distinction between past and present and know about the lives of famous people from the past, such as Guy Fawkes and Joan of Arc. They know some of the ways in which they can find out about the past and are able to use several sources of information, including books, pictures, photographs and artefacts, for this purpose. They use appropriate language to describe the passing of time and are developing a satisfactory understanding of how their own lives differ from those of people in the recent past. In a recent lesson, they used old photographs of the local area very successfully to compare the past with the present.

- 114 By the age of eleven, the pupils have widened their fund of historical knowledge, to embrace the more distant past. Their history study skills are developed to a good level through an appropriate balance of activities. In their lessons about the Romans in Britain, for example, pupils showed a good level of chronological awareness and used timelines successfully to locate the Roman invasion in the correct period of time. They knew how Roman roads were constructed and had a good fund of knowledge about the conditions in which Roman soldiers lived. In Year 3/4, they used their research skills very effectively to find answers to historical questions about the Romans, posed by their teacher. The pupils make good gains in their knowledge about the working conditions in Victorian cotton mills and about the rapid development of transport systems as a result of industrial development. In an extensive range of study about the Tudor period, pupils researched the lives of contemporary people and events and showed a good level of understanding of how ordinary people lived in Tudor times. They gave reasons for why Henry VIII ordered the dissolution of the monasteries and were able to sequence the series of events that led up to the defeat of the Spanish Armada.
- 115 In geography, by the age of seven, most pupils have made good progress in their understanding of the physical and human features of their own locality. They know that maps and plans represent places and draw pictorial plans of their routes to school that include keys to explain the features represented. They use a plan of the school to show the most direct routes to various destinations, such as the headteacher's room and the computer room. In a 'street walk' they identified human features in their local environment, such as shops, and located these on a plan. They are developing good levels of understanding about more distant localities, such as Sri Lanka, and recognise the similarities and differences between their own lives and the lives of people in other countries.
- 116 By the age of eleven, the pupils have made good progress in developing their geographical study skills and in their knowledge of physical and human geography. They used maps and atlases with confidence and accuracy, to locate places and features. In a very good lesson about glacial erosion, pupils showed good levels of familiarity with map conventions and were able to locate the Swiss Alps in an atlas, quickly and accurately. Through their studies of localities overseas, such as St Lucia, Chembakoli in India and the countries of the European Union, they develop good levels of understanding about contrasting climates, land use, culture and lifestyle. They have high levels of awareness about local and overseas environmental issues, such as the loss of rain forests and local pollution. In their letters to prominent people, they showed particularly high levels of environmental concern and were able to suggest ways in which the environment could be protected.
- 117 The teaching in both subjects is good and often very good. The lessons are carefully planned and the teachers use contexts which are very well matched to the pupils' ages. For example, in Year 1, very imaginative use is made of 'Barnaby Bear' to develop the pupils' knowledge and awareness about different places as he accompanies them on their travels and reports back to the class on where he has been. In a Year 2 lesson about Sri Lanka, the teacher brought the learning to life by the use of Sri Lankan products and artefacts and in a Year 6 lesson, the teacher used her own holiday photographs of glaciers to stimulate interest. In Year 3, the pupils made rapid strides in their learning about Roman roads by watching an imaginative demonstration of how the roads were built, using layering. All these devices were very successful in promoting very good levels of motivation and learning. The teachers in all classes have good levels of subject knowledge and use questioning very effectively to check on previous learning and stimulate new

learning. The pupils are encouraged to explain their ideas and this stimulates them to give thoughtful, extended answers to questions. The teachers use effective class management strategies and deal with inappropriate behaviour promptly and effectively. The teaching usually maintains high levels of pupil involvement, especially in whole class discussion and research. However, there were instances, both in lessons and in pupils' books, where the excessive use of commercial worksheets limited the level of challenge in the pupils' written responses. In some lessons, insufficient time was allowed for pupils to finish the task set and there was a lack of urgency in the pupils' attitudes to completing their work.

- 118 Both subjects are very well managed and supported by very good schemes of work that provide a secure structure for developing the appropriate knowledge and study skills. Satisfactory provision is in place for the co-ordinators to monitor the teachers' planning and the standards achieved in each subject. However, the systems for assessing and tracking the pupils' progress are newly established and not yet fully effective. The use of ICT has not been satisfactorily established in either subject and opportunities for its use are not noted in the schemes of work. The other resources for the subject are generally adequate and well used. However, there were several instances during the inspection when pupils had to share text books and atlases, and this inhibited their individual progress. Their visits, to places such as Colomendy and Ned Nook, give the pupils much first hand learning experience and make a very valuable contribution to their progress in both subjects.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

- 119 By the time pupils reach the ages of seven and 11, standards are broadly in line with the national expectations. This represents a significant improvement since the last inspection, when standards were unsatisfactory at both key stages. Throughout the school, pupils at all levels of attainment, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in relation to their prior attainment.
- 120 The youngest pupils develop increasing confidence in using the mouse and keyboard. By the age of seven, pupils generate text and add simple graphics. This was evident when pupils in Year 2 accessed a variety of shapes and colours, before labelling and saving their work onto their individual disks. Good teaching helped them to master the skills of "click and drag" to access and position a particular shape in the appropriate position. Pupils begin to use ICT for data-handling, producing simple graphs to represent the results of class surveys, for example. Pupils also develop sound early knowledge of control technology, demonstrating an ability to programme the roamer robotic toy to travel various distances and change directions.
- 121 In Years 3 to 6, well planned lessons enable the pupils to build progressively on previous learning. In word-processing, they retrieve and refine their work, and make appropriate adjustments to the size and style of print and the layout of their work to suite the needs of particular tasks. They confidently incorporate graphic images to enhance their work. In a class of older pupils, for example, pupils engaged in a task to produce an adjective poster as part of work linked to English. They confidently inserted a border and a variety of animals and plants before inserting appropriate adjectives to describe them. Pupils show appropriate skills in entering, amending and retrieving information from CD-Roms and the Internet, and recognise the importance of precision in framing their research questions. During the course of the year, pupils extend their control skills using the Logo programme, and are able to enter a set of instructions to programme a screen image to produce some quite complex geometrical shapes.

- 122 In some classes, there are good examples of the imaginative use of ICT to support learning in other subjects. However this is not a consistent feature in the learning. Curriculum planning in subjects such as mathematics, science, history and geography, for example, does not identify regular opportunities for ICT to be used in a purposeful way to support learning.
- 123 The quality of teaching has improved considerably since the last inspection and is now of a good standard. All of the lessons observed were good. Teachers are increasingly confident in the subject, and benefit greatly from clear guidance about the areas to be covered during ICT lessons. However, some remain uncertain about the best ways of using ICT to support work in various subjects. Access to the computer suite is enabling teachers to introduce new ICT skills effectively to classes or large groups of pupils. Explanations are provided in a clear manner, and good questioning skills enable the teachers to check that pupils have understood what has been taught. Class management is a very strong feature, promoting very good behaviour and the best use of time. Pupils enjoy their work in ICT and show a mature sense of responsibility when working at workstations. They draw well on prior learning and show confidence in learning through trial and error. The valuable contribution of support staff and voluntary helpers helps to achieve a good level of intervention in the work of pupils, particularly those who require regular help. Teachers make good provision for all pupils, meeting the needs of boys and girls and pupils of different abilities. On-going assessment of pupils' progress is used effectively during lessons. However, the current procedures for monitoring and recording pupils' progress over time are not effective and need further attention.

MUSIC

- 124 By the time pupils reach the ages of seven and 11, standards are in line with the national expectations. In some aspects of the work, notably in singing and instrumental work, standards are above average. The pupils enjoy music lessons and are keen to participate. The vast majority, including those with special educational needs, make at least satisfactory progress. Good progress is made by the pupils who sing in the choir and by those who play brass instruments.
- 125 By Year 2, the pupils demonstrate increasing control of dynamics, rhythm and pitch in singing. For example, in one class they were introduced to a song called 'Mama Paqueta', a carnival song from Brazil. They quickly captured the rhythm and sang tunefully showing a growing awareness of how to perform as part of a group. Good quality evaluation by their teacher enabled the pupils to practise and refine their singing, so that by the end of the lesson much progress had been made in singing a challenging song with increased accuracy.
- 126 Throughout the school, the pupils sing confidently a growing repertoire of songs and hymns. For example, in a class of older pupils, good quality teaching helped them to understand the structure of a round. They knew how to give shape to their singing by breathing at the end of a phrase and produced some delightful singing of a round in two parts as the lesson progressed. In assemblies, the pupils' singing is clear and sensitive. It demonstrates a sense of spirituality and peacefulness as the pupils show progress in their use of dynamics.
- 127 Many of the older pupils benefit greatly from extra-curricular musical activities including choir and instrumental tuition. Those who learn the recorder make good

progress in playing from staff notation. Recently, the school choir gained first place in the Liverpool Primary School Music Festival.

- 128 Many pupils who show an aptitude for playing an instrument are helped to progress through the teaching of visiting specialists. During the inspection a few of the pupils demonstrated their growing skills by playing their instruments in assembly. Correct breathing and accurate fingering resulted in music which captured the special reverence of the occasion.
- 129 The teaching is of a consistently good quality and reflects the subject expertise of the staff who specialise in teaching music. Lessons are well prepared and taught at a brisk pace. Good class management is a strong feature which promotes very good behaviour in lessons. At present, not all teachers teach music to their own class. However, the intention to develop staff expertise is helped by the arrangement for some staff to be released to observe the specialist teachers in the classroom.
- 130 Music is well co-ordinated and the programme of work meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. Since the last inspection, standards have been maintained, and the appointment of an additional music specialist has resulted in teaching which is of a consistently good standard.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- 131 By the time pupils reach the ages of seven and 11, overall standards are in line with the national expectations and similar to those evident at the time of the last inspection. Pupils at all levels of ability make good progress in relation to their prior attainment.
- 132 The current requirement to use the school hall to accommodate a class is restricting provision in the subject. The use of the church hall in the Millennium Centre is enabling the school to make alternative arrangements for dance. However, the loss of access to gymnastics equipment in the school hall, means that the school is unable to teach gymnastics at present. Consequently, an important aspect of the statutory requirements for physical education at both key stages is currently not being met. The governing body hopes that a new classroom will be in place in time for pupils to resume gymnastics before the end of the academic year.
- 133 In dance, younger pupils make good use of space to move in different directions and at varying speed. They respond well to their teachers' guidance and to taped music, and use movements imaginatively, changing rhythm effectively to communicate ideas and feelings. Older pupils demonstrate an increasing range of movement patterns and respond imaginatively to a variety of stimuli and accompaniment.
- 134 In games, pupils at both key stages develop their skills through practice, and apply them in competitive situations. They show good skills in striking, catching, fielding and throwing, and in finding and using space during team games. Many pupils benefit greatly from participation in soccer and netball extra-curricular clubs, which provide opportunities for competing against other schools. The school seeks to compensate for the lack of a school field by arranging visits to playing fields at certain times in the year.
- 135 In swimming, nearly all pupils complete at least 25 metres unaided, before leaving the school at the end of Year 6, and some pupils achieve higher standards. The programme of work also includes athletics, in which the standards achieved by many pupils are enhanced through participation in cross-country and athletics after-school clubs. Annual

visits to the Colomendy Environmental centre includes opportunities for pupils to engage in outdoor and adventurous activities.

- 136 From Year 1 to Year 6, the quality of teaching and learning is generally good. During the inspection, all of the lessons observed were at least satisfactory and two thirds were good. Lessons are well thought out and achieve a good balance between teacher direction and purposeful activities. Throughout the school, good class management and sensible intervention by teachers in the work of individuals are positive features in the teaching, promoting hard work by the pupils and encouraging them to make good use of the time available to practise their skills. Teachers successfully ensure that all pupils have access to all aspects of the subject, apart from gymnastics at present. Boys and girls at different levels of ability are appropriately involved and extended. Pupils at both key stages derive great enjoyment from their work in all aspects of physical education, and respond enthusiastically in all lessons. Younger pupils change into appropriate dress quickly and without fuss and move sensibly through the school to the hall. Older pupils take a pride in their performance and show a strong desire to improve the quality of their performance. Behaviour is consistently of a very good standard at both key stages.