

INSPECTION REPORT

**GREEN PARK COMMUNITY PRIMARY &
NURSERY SCHOOL**

Liverpool

LEA area: Sefton

Unique reference number: 104884

Headteacher: Mr G T Hewer

Reporting inspector: Mr O L Thomas, OIN 16041

Dates of inspection: 8 - 10 May 2001

Inspection number: 193262

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 and nursery

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Green Lane
Maghull
Liverpool
Merseyside

Postcode: L31 8BW

Telephone number: 0151 526 2755

Fax number: 0151 531 9062

Appropriate authority: Governing body

Name of Chair of Governors: Mr M Penn

Date of previous inspection: 14/04/1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
16041	O L Thomas	Registered inspector	Science Art and design Equal opportunities Special educational needs	What sort of school is it? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
19344	D W Jones	Lay inspector		Attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
17711	J B Thomas	Team inspector	English History Religious education Foundation Stage	How high are standards? How well are pupils taught?
22578	G Jones	Team inspector	Design and technology Information and communication technology Music	
3108	E Jackson	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography Physical education English as an additional language	How good are the curricular and other opportunities?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school occupies an attractive site overlooking open farmland to the north west of Maghull. There are 223 pupils on roll and an additional 60 children attend the nursery part time. The school's nursery class is a designated resource centre for children with special educational needs within the local authority. The majority of pupils come from the area of private housing adjacent to the school although an increasing number travel from further afield. During recent years the school has drawn additional pupils into the school midway through Key Stage 2. A very small number of pupils are from ethnic minority families. The 7 per cent of pupils eligible for free school meals and 12 per cent identified on the school's register of special educational needs are below national averages. The percentage of pupils with statements of special educational need is above the national average. The attainment of children into the nursery is average to good but by the time they leave the reception class and enter Key Stage 1 pupils' attainment is mainly above average. This school was part of an additional survey commissioned by OFSTED on special educational needs.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Green Park is an effective school which has many strengths, not least in the good academic standards achieved when pupils leave the school, the high quality of care for them, good teaching and strong leadership. The effective planning and implementation of the Foundation Stage Curriculum and the use of assessment to ensure all pupils, but notably the highest attainers reach their full potential, are challenges for the school to address. The school gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils attained good standards in the national tests last year; the work seen in English, mathematics and science shows that high numbers are working at, at least expected levels by the ages of seven and 11.
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and the provision and management of their needs are very good.
- The high quality and effective development planning, the judicious use of funding and the action taken to achieve targets at Key Stages 1 and 2 by the Headteacher and staff.
- Pupils' are ready, willing and enthusiastic workers whose very good behaviour contributes to effective learning.
- The range of extracurricular activities is very valuable in extending pupils' learning.
- The provision and monitoring of pupils' personal development and the levels of care by class teachers are high quality.
- The school has very effective links with parents.

What could be improved

- The management, planning and monitoring of the Foundation Stage Curriculum to achieve consistency and coherence.
- The use of the good assessment procedures to track, guide and target higher attainers' progress and work, more precisely.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in April 1997. Since that time it has sustained the high quality of provision and standards of achievement. Good progress has been made in addressing most of the issues for action outlined by the past inspection. In addition, national initiatives have been successfully adopted.

Given the strong leadership of the Headteacher, subject coordinators of the core subjects and the governors' commitment to supporting the school, its capacity to move forward is good and securely based.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	A	A	B	C
Mathematics	A	B	C	E
Science	A*	A	B	D

Key

very high *
 well above average A
 above average B
 average C
 below average D
 well below average E

**The similar school's comparison is based on the percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals and for Green Park this figure is low. The above gradings are based on average point scores for all levels achieved not just those who attained at the expected Level 4.*

- In Year 2000 the proportion of pupils attaining at the expected Level 4 or above was above national percentages in English and science, it was slightly below in mathematics.
- The school's performance over time has been above the national trend.
- When compared to similar schools the school did not fare so well but it should be noted that the percentage of pupils with special educational needs was high in the 2000 cohort and also a significant minority of pupils had joined the school during Key Stage 2. These factors contributed to fewer pupils attaining at the higher Level 5 and more attaining at Level 3.
- In Key Stage 1 all pupils attained at the expected Level 2 or above in reading, writing and mathematics although none attained at the higher Level 3 in writing.
- The proportion of the current Year 2 and 6 pupils expected to gain Levels 2 or 4 is good, including for mathematics, which was weaker last year and there is evidence that some current pupils in Year 2 write at Level 3. The school has targeted these areas for improvement from last year.
- In the other subjects, pupils attain as expected nationally by the ages of seven and 11 although in physical education the oldest pupils attain good standards.
- Pupils achieve well overall especially those with special educational needs. There is scope to improve achievement in the nursery and for the higher attainers elsewhere in the school through more precise use of assessments and careful tracking of pupil progress.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Excellent. Pupils are enthusiastic and responsive learners.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Polite, courteous and eager to share what they do. A small minority of pupils of all ages is immature and come to school lacking in self-discipline and social skills.
Personal development and relationships	Very good overall. Pupils are happy and cooperative. There is some scope to capitalize further on their skills of initiative and independence
Attendance	Good. The school monitors attendance very well.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	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 good overall. Fifty lessons or parts of lessons were seen. Thirty per cent satisfactory; 52 per cent good; 16 per cent very good and two per cent excellent. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen. Main strengths are the teaching of basic skills of literacy and numeracy, the effective use of cooperative teaching and support staff and the management of pupils. The quality of planning is very good and is detailed and comprehensive in all classes except the nursery. The teaching of English and mathematics are well established and show clear subject knowledge and transmission of skills. Learning is mainly well structured and meets the needs of all pupils generally well. The productivity and pace of work in the reception and Key Stages 1 and 2 is good. The teaching of special educational needs is very good through the school. The very small number of pupils with English as an additional language learn well.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	A good curriculum. Broad, balanced and fully meets statutory requirements. However, the Foundation Stage Curriculum is not yet coherent or consistent in quality although some embryonic work has taken place. Provision for higher attaining pupils is not yet challenging throughout the school.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Relevant, well organised and effectively supported by non-teaching staff.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The very small number is well provided for.

Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. Pupils have a clear framework of conduct, which supports their learning. Activities offer opportunities to develop a broader view of the world and prepare pupils well for the next stage of education.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Pastoral care and monitoring are high quality. Academic monitoring is thorough but overly extensive and burdensome for most teachers; simplicity, rationalization and relevance of use are features for improvement.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the Headteacher and other key staff	Good overall with key individuals giving very good input to impact on standards and achievements. The management of special educational needs, mathematics and English are all of very good quality and well supported by the Headteacher's clarity of purpose and vision for the school. The management of the Foundation Stage has yet to come to fruition.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	All statutory responsibilities are well met. Governors play an active part in school life and are aware of its challenges and successes. Governors have clear criteria for judging best value.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good overall. Very good and careful analysis in Key Stages 1 and 2 supported by insightful analysis of results and action for improvement. The Headteacher and key staff recognize the need to streamline systems to track progress more easily. The targets for the Foundation Stage are relevant and appropriate but have not been actioned or monitored for success rigorously enough.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. The Headteacher is enterprising and ambitious for the improvement of resources and deploys them effectively to support achievement. Some very good recent appointments and allocation of staff have been made.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Over fifty per cent of parents responded to the questionnaire and in most cases over 90 per cent of these were happy with the school's provision.

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How much the children like school. • The progress their children make. • The standards achieved. • The pupils' behaviour. • The school's expectation for hard work. • The leadership and management of the school • The development of pupils' maturity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of homework the children receive. Some request more. None less. • The range of extracurricular activities provided by the school is insufficient.

The extent to which the inspection team agrees with parents' views:

The inspectors agree with the positive views expressed by parents. Where homework is given it is relevant and appropriate. Homework is not compulsory for primary school children and it is a matter for the school to look at the consistency and amount of provision between classes. The range of extracurricular activities is above and beyond what is usually found and staff give freely of their time.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. In Year 2000 national tests the proportion of pupils attaining at the expected Level 4 or above was above national percentages in English and science, it was slightly below in mathematics. Pupils achieve well in this school over time. The drive for high standards is at the heart of the school's priorities, planning and its decision making in Key Stages 1 and 2. In comparison to similar schools, based on the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals, the school did not fare so well. In English, results were average, in mathematics the school results were well below others, and below in science. This cohort had a significant proportion of pupils with special educational needs and also a significant minority of pupils who had joined the school during Key Stage 2. These factors contributed to fewer pupils attaining at the higher Level 5 and more attaining at Level 3. The school had predicted this downturn in test performance from its own analysis of pupils' performance and had given ample support to raise standards as high as possible.
2. The school's performance overtime has been above the national trend although more recently its results are moving closer to others. This is more to do with other schools raising their standards and also linked to higher proportions of pupils with high levels of special educational needs within Green Park. The school is not complacent and has predicted that all pupils next year will attain at least Level 4. This prediction looks attainable when the work of the current Year 5 is considered and when, the amount of booster and other additional support the Headteacher has planned for is taken into account. The school is aware it has a constant challenge to raise the proportion of pupils attaining at the higher Level 5. However, the tracking of pupils' progress, both for individuals and year groups, is not fully embedded to give a succinct picture of success and challenges ahead in order to predict accurate targets year on year. There is a good start by the literacy and numeracy coordinators in analysing test results and in monitoring teaching and learning, which has contributed significantly to the good standards.
3. In Key Stage 1 all pupils in Year 2000 attained at the expected Level 2 or above in reading, writing and mathematics although none attained at the higher Level 3 in writing.
4. The inspection finds that for the current Year 2 and 6 the proportions of pupils expected to gain Levels 2 or 4 is higher than usually found, including for mathematics, which was weaker last year and there is evidence that a number of current pupils in Year 2 write at Level 3.
5. Within the work seen pupils attain well in English, mathematics and science although the use and application skills is the weaker element in all subjects. Certainly in English, there is some overuse of worksheets, which require little effort from pupils and hinders their opportunities to exercise their skills of research, recording and organising and communicating information.
6. The school has improved standards in information and communication technology although work on sensing and monitoring are weak because resources are limited. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils attain as expected because they have a good knowledge of keyboard skills, know how to use listening centres and they have had sound access to drawing and painting programs. In Key Stage 2, pupils are beginning to readily use computers to support their everyday work.

7. In the other subjects, standards are in line with national expectations except in physical education where by the end of Key Stage 2 standards are above average and well above in games skills.

8. Children's attainment is average to good on entry to the school and progress is adequate in the nursery but becomes more rapid in the reception class to enable pupils to achieve well and attain good standards overall by the time they enter the National Curriculum at the age of five. Pupils of all abilities mainly achieve well as they move through the school.

9. Pupils who have special educational needs make good progress throughout. All pupils at Stage 2 and above on the special educational needs register have individual plans that include their targets. The pupils' individual educational plans are devised by classteachers in consultation with the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator, (SENCO). Throughout the time that pupils are in the school, the early identification of their special needs and careful monitoring by class teachers and the SENCO contributes to the good progress they make. Arrangements for supporting pupils who have statements of special educational need are effective and ensure they attain standards that are in line with their prior attainments. The small minority of pupils who have English as an additional language have made good progress in their ability to understand and use English to carry out their work. There is scope for the school to challenge the very high attainers even more.

10. The management decisions to ensure that literacy and numeracy are well taught, the quality of most teachers' planning, judicious staffing and its good quality are significant factors in the pupils' positive achievements.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. The pupils' regard for their school is excellent and they have very positive attitudes to their learning. Their behaviour and personal development are very good. Attendance is good.

12. For the pupils, school is a stimulating and constructive experience, where they enjoy attending and studying. They are eager learners who take pleasure in contributing to lessons and the celebration of their success. Their responses are consistent across the key stages and in all areas of the curriculum including extracurricular activity. During a mathematics lesson for pupils in Year 2 they were developing their fluency with tens and units through mental reasoning activities. Their eager enthusiasm and confidence with the concepts gave the lesson pace and enjoyment. In a mathematics lesson for pupils in Year 4 they were active participants in contributing to lesson discussions but worked quietly and without discussion during a session of independent problem solving.

13. The pupils respond to the school's expectation for standards of behaviour and conduct in all areas of their school life. The quality of the learning environment and the development of positive relationships are well supported by the very good behaviour of the pupils. They are lively, enthusiastic children who nevertheless cooperate with expectations for hard work and responsible conduct.

14. The nature of these children is warm and friendly and these good instincts are supported and reinforced by the very good role model provided by all staff at school. The pupils relate well to each other when learning or at play. During lessons they are cooperative and sharing, and during play they are seen to be lively and energetic with no children isolated or marginalised. They do not contemplate bullying and are sufficiently confident and secure in their relationships with staff to seek support should it occur. The small number of pupils from ethnic minority families are well integrated into school life; the pupils are made aware of the broad range of cultures in our society through their studies. They show no instinct for discrimination.

15. All pupils under five years work in a happy, secure environment where even the youngest pupils reveal a developing confidence and independence. They respond well to behaviour management and are learning the rules for sharing and cooperating. Visitors are received warmly and invited to share and celebrate the pupils' work.

16. The high quality of this aspect reflects much of the findings of the previous inspection. Attendance is improved from that found during the inspection in 1997 from satisfactory to good. This has been achieved through effective monitoring. Pupils generally attend on time and lessons start promptly thus allowing maximum time to focus on learning and for them to make progress.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

17. The quality of teaching is good and this shows some improvement since the last inspection. There are many strengths to the teaching and few weaknesses. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen during the inspection. The teaching, support and its impact meet the needs of all pupils and are the reason why pupils learn well. The exception is that the highest attainers are not always sufficiently challenged because assessment is not being used precisely enough to set tasks which demand the most from them. There is also scope to enable pupils to use their skills more frequently and show independence in research and recording. All teachers have secure subject knowledge and the very best teaching is consistently seen in the reception class and in Key Stage 2. Teaching is broadly satisfactory in the nursery but there is a significant weakness in planning; it is minimal, not focused on learning objectives or allied clearly to the stepping stones of the Early Learning Goals. This is in contrast to the rest of the school where all teachers are producing comprehensive and secure plans, which are regularly monitored, effectively identify the subject skills and how they will be assessed and evaluated. In fact there is a case that the detailed planning from reception to Year 6 is at times unnecessarily repetitious and burdensome on teachers conversely with far too little appropriate planning in the nursery. Teachers use a good range of strategies and have high expectations for productivity and behaviour. Lesson introductions are interesting and motivate pupils to listen. Basic skills are well taught particularly in Key Stage 1 enabling pupils to learn how to read, write and compute numbers accurately. Where cooperative teaching takes place or where a class has a job share teaching is still good and pupils are advantaged rather than disadvantaged by the arrangements because they gain from the adult support to explain tasks more closely and monitor them for success. Very good relationships pervade all classrooms.

18. Pupils with special educational needs are very well taught. Their individual educational plans are carefully adhered to and regular assessments of success and areas for further improvement are made. Very good use is made of support staff who are skilled particularly in literacy and numeracy support. Teachers adapt questions, expectations and activities in order to support understanding and progress.

19. In the Foundation Stage teaching is good overall, satisfactory in the nursery with a small amount of good teaching of personal and social skills; it is good with some very good teaching in the reception class. Both classes are well organised but there is scope to make more use of shared areas and to integrate the work more closely. The school has made initial plans to do this but there is no sign of any impact for children. In the nursery, lessons are structured with a balance of supervised and free choice activities. However, too many of the activities are overly structured, for example, when children have to colour in predetermined shapes rather than attempt their own. The activities are well managed and the number of adults ensures that language is suitably developed. The children enjoy the activities and this promotes interest and enthusiasm, gaining their attention and supporting them in the pace of work, concentration and perseverance to task. The nursery nurses make a valuable contribution to the children's learning. In the reception class learning is driven by a clear and intuitive understanding of

how young children learn which is exemplified in the teacher's extensive high quality planning and the range of objectives, questions and activities appropriate to the full range of need in the class. For example, a very good literacy lesson offered enthusiastic and lively teaching, which motivated the children, focused on improving their knowledge of letters, blends and sounds and linked the activity very well with searching for goods in the shop, which began with the sounds. Independent activities had been carefully matched to the range of the need, children with special educational needs were very well supported and routines embedded so that children knew what to do and understood the expectation to settle to task. Non-teaching support was very effective with lower attaining children. The ambience and structure of this class models very well indeed the balance of Early Learning Goals tasks for some children whilst harmonizing successfully with an introduction into the National Curriculum for those who are ready.

20. Teaching in Key Stage 1 is good with examples of very good teaching and a smaller amount, which is satisfactory. Pupils at the beginning of the key stage benefit from the teacher's pleasant but firm manner, clear explanations of tasks and well thought out work, which builds lesson by lesson on new skills. For example, in a mathematics lesson the creative approach of using dice to add numbers captured the pupils' interest and supported their learning in sequencing numbers. Support to pupils with high level special educational needs was very good, offering patience but clarity of expectation for completing tasks. At the end of the Key Stage 1, skilled teachers teach the class, which has more than 30 pupils, and this is of great benefit. For example in a literacy lesson on beginning to identify questions the lead teacher shared the learning objectives, recapped clearly on what the pupils had already covered enthusing them to share their knowledge and consolidate basic skills. The pupils made good progress in learning a range of question words beginning with 'wh' and the creative approach of the teacher in using a listening game to distinguish and match answers with questions enabled assessment of learning and tested pupils' listening skills very well. The support teacher assisted pupils with special educational needs skillfully so as to recognize their efforts, re-explaining the question, encouraging them to contribute and celebrating their achievement. Follow up tasks were relevant and challenging. Pupils made maximum use of time to learn effectively.

21. Teaching in Key Stage 2 is good with higher incidence of very good and some excellent teaching. The quality of planning is very good and supportive to the progress of work over a number of lessons. It is possible for the amount of planning to be reduced without losing the impact on pupils' progress, thus releasing some of the teachers' time. Lessons have pace and the productivity of work in both lessons and scrutiny of work is high exemplifying the teachers' expectations for pupils to experience depth and breadth in their work. Teachers are skilful adapting lessons to pupils' responses. For example, in literacy in Year 3 when the difference in dialect between the teacher and pupils gave rise to some difficulty the teacher's skill in exploring sounds and pronunciation enabled the pupils to extend and deepen their knowledge of language. In Year 4 teaching is regularly of a high standard, creative, motivating, thorough and skilful across the range of subjects driving pupils to extend their knowledge and learning and to be interested and focused on their tasks. Teaching in Year 5 was on occasion excellent; pupils learned about the different styles of authors and the impact of punctuation on expression to create effect. Relationships, preparation of resources, questioning and teacher subject knowledge made for very effective teaching. In Year 6 teaching enables pupils to make best use of what they know; tasks which assess their knowledge in order to improve skills and understanding were clearly explained and individuals given good support. Homework is used effectively to complement class work but not all pupils participate.

22. The good teaching is the main reason for pupils' consistent achievement. The school is well placed to review its planning in order to minimize the burden of paperwork from teachers without losing the impact for pupils and to develop succinct strategies for assessment and tracking pupils'

progress so that teacher time can be used to best effect and tasks relevant to stretch the highest attainers.

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

23. The curriculum is broad and balanced, and fully meets statutory requirements in all aspects, including for collective worship. Teachers' planning for pupils' learning based on the school's policies and schemes of work is almost always thorough and comprehensive. It is clear from the attractive displays of pupils' work round the school that the pupils experience a rich educational diet that covers all the required elements of the curriculum. However, there are weaknesses in the written planning to cover the areas of experience in the Foundation Stage for the youngest pupils, in the nursery.

24. The teachers in the nursery and the reception classes have adopted the national guidance for the Foundation Stage, and plan activities for the children between three and five years of age to achieve the recommended Early Learning Goals. During the inspection, this was most effective in the reception class, where it was clear from the plans and the activities observed that the individual stepping stones of learning within each goal have been catered for, and monitored. Many of the children in the reception class have been introduced to the early stages of the National Curriculum, in line with their attainment, although they do not have ready and regular access to the outdoor play facilities available for the Foundation Stage. From photographs, displays and the layout and activities in the nursery, it is clear that an appropriate range of activities is provided. However, no planning consistent with that in reception was available in the nursery during the inspection, and it is difficult to see how a check could be made on whether the curriculum has been covered appropriately for the whole group, or whether each child had received their full curriculum entitlement or is being stretched to the full.

25. However, the school asserts that it operates an equal opportunities policy that includes every child. Inspection evidence supports this claim. Boys and girls of different backgrounds, and with different levels of attainment, all have full access to the full curriculum. The school's policy for pupils with special educational needs is also implemented well, and these pupils take a full part in the life and work of the school, with some tasks carefully modified to meet their particular needs. There is only one pupil learning English as an additional language, who after two years is now at a good stage of competence. Initially, the school ensured that bilingual support was available to help him make rapid progress.

26. As in most primary schools, a substantial proportion of curriculum time is given to English and mathematics in Key Stages 1 and 2, planned in line with guidance in the national strategies for literacy and numeracy. The school has made good use of the strategies, and the teachers use the recommended patterns for the daily lessons effectively. There are 'Booster' classes to support pupils in Year 6 who are close to achieving expected levels, and 'Springboard' mathematics to help pupils in Year 5 increase their numeracy skills.

27. The school also takes good advantage of the Additional Literacy Support programme in Years 3, 4 and 5, with trained support from a class teacher and a Nursery Nurse. A teacher has also been trained in an Australian mathematics recovery programme, which is used effectively with pupils in Year 1 to increase their mathematical understanding. This raft of initiatives is intended to help pupils to accelerate learning of skills, and the school is currently monitoring and evaluating their effectiveness in raising standards of attainment in English and mathematics.

28. Other subjects are planned to cover the nationally recommended times annually. The school has recently adopted a personal, social and health education policy, which is in a trial stage currently. The school has agreed policies to cover sex and drugs education. The staff have produced a comprehensive overall curriculum plan that gives a good overview of which topics are covered in different subjects at different times of year and in different classes. This enables the Headteacher to see at a glance how the curriculum is due to be delivered, against which to check teachers' weekly plans. The identification of cross-curricular skills such as research, observation, or problem solving are not regular features of the planning.

29. There is a very good range of extension activities to enhance pupils' learning in a number of areas, but particularly in sport. There are many extracurricular clubs covering games such as football, netball, High Fives, rounders, and athletics. As is the case in lessons, all these activities are provided for boys and girls equally, and the many cups and trophies on display in the school entrance witness the high standards achieved, with the school's name regularly engraved as local winners. Older pupils also attend a residential 'Venture Week' accompanied by staff, where 12 different sporting activities are available. The pupils take part in each of these in turn, including archery, trampolining, abseiling and judo. The project files produced at home following this are of high standard in the main, and illustrate the tremendous opportunities for improvement provided for the pupils in both sporting and personal development.

30. There are good links with other local schools, and the local authority advisory staff. The school also has close links with Edge Hill University College to support students training for teaching. There are trained mentors on the staff to support the students, who report that the support they receive is very valuable to them. Parents support the school strongly, and a few help in classes during the day. One grandfather, for instance, manages the school library.

31. In sport, the pupils enjoy opportunities for tennis, cross country running, athletics, football, netball and swimming. In addition there is a broad range of art including recorders, guitar, choir, sewing and art and crafts. Pupils experience drama in their stage productions of plays such as Oliver, The Little Green Fir Tree and The Snowman. The whole school attended the Royal Court Theatre for the production of The Adventures of Robin Hood. The pupils' personal and social development is richly enhanced through the broad range of inter-school competition in which they engage.

32. The overall provision that the school makes for this aspect of the pupils' personal development is very good. Provision for their moral and social development is very good whilst their spiritual and cultural development are good.

33. The good quality of pupils' spiritual values is developed within the curriculum and is supported by the school's environment, which is a strong backcloth for the realisation of a spiritual ethos. Appreciation for art and poetry, the exhilaration of sport and the wonder of scientific experiment are well used by the school to extend insight into spiritual appreciation. Pupils have the opportunity to reflect on the deeper aspects of a spiritual concept through curriculum delivery of religious education. Collective worship is not consistently used to support pupils' spiritual development.

34. The development of pupils' moral values is very good. They are by instinct trustworthy children and this nature is very well supported by the ethos of the school and the role model provided by staff. The school's conventions and its expectations for behaviour are well balanced and accepted readily by the children.

35. The nature of the pupil is to be caring and considerate and this is evident in the quality of the school's environment, which is well maintained and cared for with no sign of damage or graffiti. In

their relationships the children are warm, friendly and supportive with each other and respectful and trusting with adults. They enjoy receiving visitors with whom they will happily share their work. Their social development derives considerable benefit from the range of contacts with other organisations and visits to venues of interest. They readily accept and seek responsibility and their understanding of social values is well supported through the school's programme for personal, social and health education.

36. The pupils gain good insight in cultural values and the wide range of beliefs and customs from around the world. The school's procedures ensure that racism or discrimination of any kind are not tolerated. Within personal development pupils are taught to value each other regardless of their gender, background or ethnic group. All of the valuable work the school does contributes to pupils' understanding that they are growing up in a multicultural world and is preparing them well for it. The holiday destinations of staff are used to introduce the younger children to other cultures. Artefacts and memorabilia are used in conjunction with maps and photographs to bring these other places into the classroom for the children to experience. Older pupils have studied the influence of the Romans on our own culture and in religious education they learn how different cultures worship. Through visits to local and wider venues, for instance the local church or the Liverpool Maritime Museum they gain insight into their own culture.

37. The youngest pupils show good progress with their learning of sharing and working together and they show good levels of behaviour and cooperation. Their introduction to the community has included a visit to Windmill Farm.

38. The school has improved its overall performance in the delivery of these values from the previous inspection.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

39. The quality of the school's provision for child protection and promoting pupils' welfare is overall very good. The school has maintained the high level of care found during the previous inspection. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are excellent. Monitoring procedures for academic performance, personal development, improving attendance and eliminating oppressive behaviour are very good. The provision for educational and personal support and guidance, assessing pupils' attainment and progress and the monitoring and supporting their academic progress are good.

40. The school is in a semi-rural location and it uses this well to enhance its environment for learning and its ethos. It provides a safe, secure and healthy place for pupils to enjoy school supported by a very high level of pastoral care. The school does not tolerate bullying and the pupils do not recognise it as a feature of their school life.

41. Personal, social and health education are a significant feature within the curriculum and this provides for the secure delivery of information and guidance so that the children can begin to make informed choices about their life style. The school invites a number of professional visitors to support this aspect of the pupils' learning.

42. The learning environment for the youngest pupils is lively and varied and provides a safe haven for their activities. They are learning how to be safe and independent supported by a high level of pastoral care.

43. Although the school has improved and increased its procedures for monitoring the attainment of its pupils since the last inspection, its systems are now rather too unwieldy and as a result, the use teachers make of the information is not as good as it could be.
44. The school has put into effect an assessment programme for its children as they start school. It does not yet re-test children at the end of their time in the nursery or at the end of the Foundation Stage in order to check how much progress they have made over that time.
45. It analyses the results of the National Curriculum tests well in order to establish where the strengths and weaknesses of its teaching and learning lie. The school also uses the optional test material in Years 3,4 and 5 in order to check progress at these stages of the pupils' time at school. It does not, however, place these scores, which are all levelled against the standards of the National Curriculum, in an easily read single sheet, in order that class teachers might see, at a glance, the progress their pupils are making over a longer time scale. Equally, class teachers are not recording on the same sheet, their expectations and predictions for the pupils' future achievements in the following year. This would not only give teachers a view of progress over time, but would also make better use of teachers' knowledge of individual pupils in predicting their future likely achievements.
46. The school makes good use of test results in order to ascertain which pupils need extra support. This includes support for pupils with special educational needs, pupils who will receive extra help with English and mathematics in 'Booster' classes, pupils who will receive Additional Literacy Support and pupils who will receive extra mathematics support through the 'Springboard' scheme in Year 5. What it does not yet do well enough is to set demanding enough tasks for those pupils targeted as the higher achieving pupils. These pupils often receive different activities but these are not well enough considered in order to challenge them and allow them to realise their full potential.
47. The school completes very good personal records for its pupils. Although the nursery teachers do not examine the results closely enough in order to note that children enter the school with above average personal and social skills, the progress pupils make in their personal development are well documented throughout the school. Teachers keep observational diaries and extracurricular activities, outside interests and achievements are all noted.
48. The school has recently introduced target setting. Whilst this is a useful innovation, its current format is unlikely to prove useful enough over the longer term. Alongside target setting, class teachers collect a large amount of completed work for each child in the class. None of this work is levelled against the standards of the National Curriculum and cannot therefore be a driving force behind target setting. If work completed in the normal course of lessons were marked more accurately and teachers had a firmer grasp of National Curriculum levels, pupils' own work in their books could be used as the starting point for discussions over target setting.
49. There is too much inconsistency in the marking of work. The best marking is in Year 4, where the teacher's comments serve to point clearly to what pupils need to do in order to make better progress. These comments could easily then be transferred to a target sheet, of which both teacher and pupil could claim ownership. Subject portfolios of schoolwork levelled against the standards of the National Curriculum are not in place and would support teachers in their marking and target setting.
50. Parents are well informed about the progress made by their children and note this in their responses to the questionnaire. They receive information after the baseline tests have been completed and in March and October each year they meet with teachers who prepare well in order to give parents accurate and helpful information. Annual reports are well constructed, give full information and suggest how pupils might make better progress.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

51. The school has made very good provision for links with parents in the quality of information that it provides and in seeking to involve them in the life of the school.
52. Parents confirm that the quality of information they receive from the school in respect of all aspects of school life is very good. Provision for them to gain information on their children's progress from reports and through meetings with teaching staff is also very good.
53. The school is proactive in seeking to involve parents in the pupils' learning both at home and in the classroom. An advice package is provided for parents by the school that includes a home\school agreement and seeks parental support with the child's learning. Also included is guidance for parents on the 'Literacy Hour' and the school's prospectus. Although the 'Friends of Green Park School' is a small group, its contribution to the school is significant through direct support and fund raising. A small number of parents were seen assisting in school during the inspection but overall the contribution of parents in the classroom is limited. In response to pre-inspection enquiry the great majority of parents who responded showed strong satisfaction with the school's provision for the education of their children. Some parents expressed dissatisfaction with the level of homework given and the range of activities provided. The school is well placed to look at the consistency of its provision and the range of after school activities is above and beyond what is usually found.
54. Parents are welcome in the Nursery Unit and are seen talking with staff and settling their children at the start of the school day.
55. Much of the school's provision for links with parents accords closely with the findings of the previous report.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

56. The overall leadership and management of the school in providing clarity of educational vision and direction are good and this has been sustained since the last inspection. Systems for financial management and administration are responsive to perceived needs and targeted effectively on agreed priorities. The impact of this is a key factor in the school's success and its ability to provide a high standard of education. The school's aims are focused on respect and care for individuals and a commitment for high standards regardless of pupils' background or abilities. These aims are generally well met and the ethos is one of high expectation.
57. All staff have clear job descriptions and through judicious use of funding are given appropriate amounts of non-contact time to fulfill their roles, including appropriate monitoring of classroom practice in Key Stage 1 and 2. This strategy has been of particular benefit to the development of the core subjects, significant strides having been made in the provision for Information and communication technology (which was a key issue at the last inspection). In contrast to this good work, monitoring, particularly of planning matched to practice, in the nursery has been given too little senior management attention and has highlighted and compounded the slow start to the full implementation of the Foundation Stage Curriculum resulting in it not being driven forward at the accelerated pace needed to bring the required coherence and continuity to provision.
58. The school's analysis of needs and strategic planning is generally good. The school development plan is well structured, focused on priorities related to pupils' achievements and reviewed systematically by the staff and governors who are well informed and involved in determining the

strategic direction of the school. There is a weakness in the implementation of the plan in relation to necessary improvements required to the Foundation Stage Curriculum to ensure there is coherence and continuity of practice between the nursery and reception class in order to raise unsuitable planning and adequate practice to the high quality found in the reception class.

59. The governing body is well led. The Chair of Governors is actively involved in development planning. Minutes of meetings reveal that governors are well informed of the daily challenges facing the Headteacher and staff and that they ask pertinent questions to hold the school to account to fulfill their role as critical friend. There is an appropriate committee structure, and the governors attend courses to keep themselves up to date with initiatives. Governors fulfill their statutory responsibilities.

60. The implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies has been very well managed. Both coordinators have worked very hard monitoring, analysing and accounting for the progress made in putting the strategies in place. Their colleagues feel well supported and appreciative of their efforts.

61. The management of, and provision for special educational needs are very good and the SENCO is enthusiastic and committed to providing high quality support. Administrative arrangements ensure that procedures are in line with the recommendations of the Code of Practice and that pupils' individual needs are met. Pupils with statements of special educational need receive their entitlement to extra support and resources. There is a good, clearly written policy for special educational needs.

62. The school's provision for financial management is very good, ensuring that its educational priorities are supported through its financial planning. The standards funding is well used to develop and support the skills base for teaching and ensure consistency of delivery. This is evident in the school's development plan, where the allocation of funding for training and resource development is clearly identified in its programme. Records show that training is either completed or ongoing, and the provision of new resources is evident in the classroom. The exception to this is the suitable training of staff in the nursery, particularly the Early Years manager, to enable the Foundation Stage curriculum to be effectively implemented. The delegation of spending for specific areas of the curriculum is appropriate and well monitored. The school uses the central purchasing unit of the Local Education Authority in order to achieve best value and governors have identified criteria to help them make important decisions.

63. The accommodation is very well used overall. Initiatives to provide extra facilities such as the Millennium Suite and the computer room have provided excellent additional space and facilities which impact well on pupils' progress. Teachers use the extended teaching spaces to good effect. The use of outdoor play facilities are restricted to the nursery children and are yet another example of how the Foundation Stage Curriculum is not yet effectively in place for all children. Resources are good overall and support the delivery of all subjects well. Coordinators appreciate that they are able to negotiate areas for funding to enhance and safeguard the delivery of their subjects.

64. Given its staffing, resources and accommodation and the effectiveness of their use along with pupils' good attainment, the effectiveness of the teaching and the strong educational leadership the school gives good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

65. The governors, Headteacher and staff now need to:

Improve the management, planning and monitoring of the Foundation Stage Curriculum to achieve consistency and coherence by ensuring that:

- ~ staff receive appropriate training;
- ~ the medium and short term planning in the nursery clearly identify learning objectives relevant to the stepping stones of the Early Learning Goals and link to the children's stage of development;
- ~ the school plan to integrate the nursery and reception more closely is accelerated;
- ~ the Early Years manager has more experience of teaching and planning across the Foundation Stage;
- ~ senior management monitor with greater rigour the planning and outcomes of learning for success.

Reference to these weaknesses can be found in paragraph no's: 17, 24, 28, 57, 58 and 72

Improve the use of the good assessment procedures to track, guide and target higher attainers' progress and work more precisely by ensuring that:

- ~ the comprehensive procedures are simplified to reduce the burden of paperwork from teachers;
- ~ the outcomes of assessment over time are presented succinctly to give a ready picture to track pupils' progress as they move through the school;
- ~ marking is consistent and places more emphasis on involving pupils, particularly the older ones, to help them learn how they may improve their own work;
- ~ on going assessments are used to present a more accurate view of future targets for individuals and groups of pupils which are then monitored for success;
- ~ the assessments are used to offer more demanding work to the higher attainers.

Reference to these weaknesses can be found in paragraph no's: 22, 43,44,46,48 and 49

Other weaknesses, which the school will want to address, can be found in paragraph no's: 28, 128, 135

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	50
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	20

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2	16	52	30	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	30	223
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	n/a	10

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	4	36

English as an additional language

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	10
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	2

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.3
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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2000	13	20

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	13	13
	Girls	20	20	20
	Total	33	33	33
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (100)	100 (97)	100 (100)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	12	12	13
	Girls	20	20	20
	Total	32	32	33
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	97 (97)	97 (100)	100 (100)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2000	13	14

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	8	12
	Girls	12	11	13
	Total	21	19	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	78 (97)	70 (93)	93 (100)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	12	13
	Girls	13	13	13
	Total	24	25	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	89 (97)	93 (100)	96 (100)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

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

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25.9
Average class size	31.9

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	34

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	30

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	10

Number of pupils per FTE adult	10
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	426,411
Total expenditure	415,858
Expenditure per pupil	1,684
Balance brought forward from previous year	23,833
Balance carried forward to next year	34,386

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	282
Number of questionnaires returned	148

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	72	25	2	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	54	42	1	1	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	66	30	1	1	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	42	44	10	2	2
The teaching is good.	64	34	1	1	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	50	41	6	1	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	74	20	5	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	72	24	1	1	3
The school works closely with parents.	59	34	4	2	1
The school is well led and managed.	70	26	1	1	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	64	32	0	1	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	44	32	7	2	15

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

66. Children attend the nursery part-time for either a morning or afternoon session. On entry to the nursery, standards of attainment are broadly average. Baseline assessments are a fairly recent feature but show that personal and social skills are generally good, reading is weaker but still positive. As a result of the satisfactory curriculum and the good relationships developed between the adults and the children, most children, including those who have special educational needs make sound progress in all areas. By the time they transfer to the reception classes, their attainment remains average. Children in the reception classes, including children who have special educational needs make good and very good progress in all areas especially language and literacy and mathematics. They continue to make good progress in personal development. The children are well motivated and have favourable attitudes to school because of the good relationships and positive management in both classes.

67. Teaching is good overall; it is satisfactory in the nursery and good with very good features in the reception class. The reception class teacher who is temporary has rapidly picked up on children's needs and provision is high quality. Children's progress in all areas of learning is swifter in the reception class because work is planned precisely to meet the range of needs and linked closely with both the Early Learning Goals and the National Curriculum. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage is inconsistent between the two classes. It is broadly satisfactory with some weaknesses in planning and match of work in the nursery and very good in the reception class. The curriculum delivery and planning within the nursery class has not yet fully embraced the breadth and relevance needed to make sure the stepping stones of learning are identified for different groups of children. The provision for special educational needs is very good in both classes; the nursery is a recently set up specialist centre for the local authority Children who have special educational needs are identified early and support staff use appropriate strategies to make sure all pupils have full access to the curriculum. There are good relationships with parents and the induction programme devised in the nursery is comprehensive and supportive to parents and children.

Personal, social and emotional development

68. By the time they have completed the Foundation Stage, most children have made good progress in their personal and emotional development and reach national expectations and beyond in this area. This shows good achievement and reflects the overall good teaching for children by the age of five. The majority of children are eager to come to the nursery and enjoy play activities. This positive attitude continues to develop well into the reception classes. Boys and girls are happy to play together. Relationships are very good and children work well together when they have snack time. Good opportunities are taken at milk-time for adults to encourage children to develop their social skills. They take on responsibilities in the nursery to give out apples and collect in drink cartons. They chat happily and quietly. They have well established routines and understand them. Most can dress themselves properly but some still need help with zips and different types of fasteners. They respond to instructions and questions but a significant minority do not initiate conversation. The high expectations of the teachers to say 'please' and 'thank-you' and their positive reinforcement of acceptable behaviour have a positive impact on children's personal and social development. For example, in the reception class, the teacher is insistent on children tidying up the shop after role-play and they show good levels of self-discipline and cooperation for their age when doing this. There are valuable opportunities for children to learn to concentrate or to persevere with an adult directed activity, for example, in nursery when they have to describe their favourite nighttime activity and in

reception when they are focused and motivated to examine fruits and take their turn in giving their views. The adults are good role models for the children, always treating each other with courtesy and respect. Registration time is a happy event where adults make sure that children benefit from the opportunities to develop friendships and enjoy each other's company with a calm start to the school day.

Communication, language and literacy

69. Children enter the nursery with skills that are average; they make sound progress in the nursery although there are weaknesses in that some work in this class does too little to challenge the children and lacks the necessary structure linked to moving through the stepping stones of learning for children of all abilities; teaching is adequate. When the children leave the reception class they have made good progress in all aspects due to the high quality teaching in this class. Their attainment on entry into Key Stage 1 is better than is usually found. Many speak clearly and confidently either in short phrases or complete sentences. There are sound opportunities for nursery children to develop spoken language as they each take turns to describe what they enjoy doing at night time before going to bed. Reception children talk with their teacher about the texture, smell and shapes of fruits. A variety of role-play situations give the children good opportunities to talk with greater confidence for example, in the shop; this work is linked well to the language of mathematics. Children regularly share books with others and some like to 'read' quietly on their own. By the end of the Foundation Stage, children know the letters of the alphabet and can say a range of initial sounds. They recognise their own names and understand that writing communicates meaning. They know to turn a page from left to right and higher attaining children can read simple sentences using picture clues and their knowledge of initial letters to help them. They are also able to identify rhyming words, for example, when reading 'Gran, Gran', the children learn and read repetitive phrases very quickly. Some use their knowledge of sounds to write shopping lists; lower attainers make words using magnetic letters with support and children learn to study the cover of the group reading book to identify the title and author. Some use this vocabulary readily. Average children are confident to read key words and repeated sentences in their text. Lower attaining children have an enthusiasm for books and enjoy sharing stories and discussing pictures with adults. Children regularly take books home to share with their family and parents are very supportive of the school in encouraging their children to read. By the time the children leave the reception class they are well prepared for the challenges of the National Curriculum and many are already working within it.

Mathematical development

70. By the time they leave the Foundation Stage most children have made good progress and reach at least national expectations in this area of learning. Teaching is sound in the nursery and good in reception. The youngest children learn about numbers by singing and acting out number rhymes. For example, they learn to identify numerals to the number within a set when they sing 'There were nine in the bed...'. Many easily recognize one to five but some struggle with the higher numbers and most did not understand the idea of counting backwards. In the reception class children are given sufficient opportunities to experience mathematics in everyday situations such as the shop. They consolidate their number work recognizing readily numbers zero to ten, recording numbers, match them and count from one to ten without mistakes. Children learn to order numbers, draw pictures to illustrate sets of objects and identify the numeral to match. The teacher at the end of the stage uses every opportunity effectively to develop mathematical skills and this has a positive impact on children's learning. Much of the work in the reception class is already showing good progress within the early stages of the National Curriculum.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

71. Attainment in this area of learning is good, as is teaching. Children have had reasonable experiences when they arrive at the school and the curriculum in both classes builds on this well. In the nursery, for example, children learn about nocturnal animals when comparing day and night. They know that owls, badgers and bats come out at night and will sleep when we are working. They delight in observing a hamster and contributed to the conversation about how he eats and spends his time. They can join small pieces of construction equipment together and build a bed for teddy from large bricks. In reception, they use what they know of the world to talk about 'hot and cold' countries, using their own experiences of holidays. They can identify fruits from 'exotic' countries. There is limited evidence of the use of technology in the nursery but children in the reception have acquired a suitable knowledge of using a mouse and the arrow keys to manipulate pictures on a screen.

Physical development

72. Children attain at least as expected nationally and make overall good progress by the end of the Foundation Stage. Teaching is mainly good. The school has a well equipped and designed outdoor play area; however, its use is largely restricted to children in the nursery. Children have a range of push and pull toys. Children can balance on stilts well, manage trikes well and use the space without bumping into each other. Children in the reception make good progress because of very good teaching when learning to roll and control a ball. Both boys and girls are equally competent. A child with a statement of special educational need is very well supported. Children cut pictures of daily activities from sheets using reasonable skills and colour in sheets of children wearing nightclothes; however, this latter activity does not enable children to explore shape, movement and control well enough. The shapes are too restrictive for their age and competencies and do not build on children's skills well enough. They work quietly when they use construction kits and join the pieces carefully. Teachers provide good opportunities for children to handle small tools such as pencils, paint brushes and scissors. They put these skills to good use when cutting and painting. The school has not considered carefully enough how the very good outdoor space can be used to ensure continuity of learning for all children within the Foundation Stage.

Creative development

73. Children's attainment is at least in line with standards expected when they leave the Foundation Stage and they make sound progress in their learning because of broadly satisfactory teaching. In the nursery children paint at easels and most but not all handle brushes correctly. They can discuss their pictures with adults. In the home corner they prepare breakfast developing relevant language with adults. Other than painting there is little representation of children's free creative work. Although displays are attractive, too much of what is available shows an 'adult hand' within it and lacks the freedom and experimentation young children require to develop skills. In the nursery children listen carefully to link a musical sound to an instrument, compare musical sounds and gain tremendous enjoyment from making music. In the reception class children tap, clap and snap their fingers to music. They play maracas and explore and experiment with sounds, responding well to the mood of the music. Children enjoy imaginative role-play in the home corner and shop. Adults join in with the children and help to promote language.

ENGLISH

74. Pupils' performance in the national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 was above what was found nationally in the Year 2000 and when compared to similar schools the results were average. Over time the school's results have been above the national trend. The proportion of pupils attaining at the expected Level 4 is higher than usually found in the work seen during the inspection. However, the school's targets for the percentages of pupils expected to achieve Level 5 is overly optimistic. This reflects the inspection findings where currently although many assessments and tests are made the school has not yet rationalized its findings into a succinct analysis to track progress quickly and easily in order to set targets. However, the recently appointed coordinator is identifying key areas for improvement as a result of monitoring for example, the introduction of a cursive script from an early age to support presentation, spelling, and note taking and the planning and structuring of stories. The National Literacy Project has been very effectively implemented and booster classes and additional literacy support have all been valuable in helping pupils achieve to their potential.

75. In the national tests for seven year olds in Year 2000 all pupils attained at the expected Level 2 or above although no pupils attained the higher Level 3 in writing. The inspection finds that most pupils are attaining at the expected levels for seven year olds in reading and writing and this year some pupils show the ability to write at the higher than expected Level 3. Most pupils attain well in speaking and listening across the school.

76. Pupils achieve well. The curriculum is broad and the pace and productivity of work in both key stages is good. The range of work is well in line with national requirements and enables the school to fully meet its obligations for the delivery of English. The National Literacy Strategy has been very effectively adopted. There is very good analysis of the subject's strengths and weaknesses by the coordinator who has recently taken over the role and is building very well on the work of the previous postholder. It is this very good management and the thorough monitoring of the subject, which have contributed to the good standards.

77. Pupils' language and communication skills are generally good when they enter the reception class and by the beginning of Key Stage 1 the pupils' vocabulary and confidence in speaking aloud and contributing to discussions is above what is usually found. In Year 1 pupils engage in discussion to contrast and compare story settings. They show eagerness to answer questions and share what they know. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have above average speaking skills overall although some pupils are reticent speakers when addressing an audience. They show good ability to repeat 'tongue twisters' and contribute very well to discussion on alliteration. In Year 3, pupils profitably use their speaking skills to contribute to a discussion on pronunciation of words. They listen very well to a debate about dialect and are well supported by the teacher in improving their understanding of acceptable regional differences in speech. In Year 4, pupils are enthusiastic to talk about 'pets' by the teacher. In Year 5, speaking and listening are progressed very well when pupils are challenged to offer comments on how an author has used language to create an effect. By the age of 11, pupils' speaking skills are good although this group lacks some confidence in comparison to their younger peers. Pupils have acquired good levels of technical vocabulary about the subject. Listening skills are good by the age of seven and very good by the age of 11.

78. Standards in reading are above average by the age of seven. Many are making good progress especially in their knowledge of letter blends to build new words. The higher attainers can recount with considerable detail the story plot and intervenes at various sectors to give further explanation and

express views on the text. Pupils identify ways to help them read new words; they know to look at the pictures for a clue, look at the size of print to help think how to read the word, say the sounds and read ahead. Pupils by the age of seven are acquiring a good understanding of reading with expression particularly when reading questions. Pupils enjoy reading aloud and many read at home. Pupils, by the age of seven, can readily recognize the author and title, and most know what the index and contents page are and how to use them. Pupils are mainly eager to read and many can say the names of some of their favourite books or stories. Pupils with special educational needs are making good progress in their interest in reading and ability to read simple text with greater fluency. Pupils' reading is soundly sustained into Key Stage 2 and many read at the expected Level 4 by the age of 11. Their understanding is more variable and although most have no difficulty with literal comprehension some are more hesitant with inferring ideas from the text. Most, have a good understanding of how to use a dictionary to search for the meaning of new words. Pupils say they prefer reading storybooks to information texts. Pupils' library skills are sound although at times they are not challenged to use them, because of some overuse of worksheets. Pupils complete book reviews and express their views on stories they have read, making recommendations for others.

79. Standards are average in writing by the end of the key stages but some pupils are attaining above at the end of Key Stage 1 and a small minority are on target to attain above at Key Stage 2. The school has identified writing as a key area for improvement. Pupils are having ample opportunity to make attempts at independent writing, using their phonic knowledge. Little copy writing was seen. Pupils have written collections of stories and included a contents page. Stories show early knowledge of sentence structure and the higher attainers write using quite complex sentences. Very few spellings are incorrect. Handwriting is not consistent across the school and pupils are just beginning to use a cursive script within Key Stage 1, which means that few achieve this target by the age of seven. Pupils write for a broad range of purposes by the age of seven for example, designing a milk shake, sorting sentences to make sense, and labelling work in other subjects. By the age of 11, pupils use the conventions of Standard English suitably in their writing and the attainment of most is above average. The technical skills are in place. Pupils know how writing should be structured; but their ability to plan and plot a story is weaker and recognised by the school as an area for improvement. The output of work is very good through the year. Spelling is mainly accurate and pupils readily check their spellings using dictionaries. There is some over use of worksheets and this restricts pupils' progress in writing to organize their own work.

80. The quality of teaching is good overall. The main strength of the teaching is that teachers have taken the features of the National Literacy Strategy and implemented them very well, although they know how and when it is suitable to adapt the strategy to suit the lesson and the pupils' needs. The introductions to lessons give pupils knowledge and deepen their understanding. For example, the cooperative teaching in Year 2 on question marks was very good; both teachers were relentless in checking that pupils could identify question marks and their planning was detailed to show how they would assess pupils' understanding by giving them an answer and then check on cards for the questions which tested their listening and reading skills. The teachers' modeling of reading gave the pupils a very good idea of how to read and the relationships gave them confidence to 'have a go'. Plenary sessions are mainly used carefully to check understanding and determine the next step of learning. Some excellent teaching was observed in Year 5 where the teacher ensured the pace was challenging, the tasks were motivating and the relationships and structure so well established that the whole lesson had focus to sharpen pupils' understanding and skills of identifying how punctuation can have an effect on fluency. Pupils learn well in both key stages across the subject because teachers' planning is carefully and thoroughly mapping out the knowledge, skills and understanding relevant to pupils' ages.

81. Pupils enjoy literacy sessions and they are responsive to the work offered. In all lessons they showed a good work ethic, concentration and were very well behaved.

82. Assessment is mainly good. Older pupils have begun to have targets set but this is not yet well embedded to help them improve their work. Marking is not entirely consistent. A very good feature is that teachers set literacy targets for pupils. The delivery of English is overall a strong feature of the school but there are areas for improvement particularly in the use of writing in the other subjects. Improvement has been at least satisfactory since the last inspection because of the effective implementation of the National Literacy Strategy.

MATHEMATICS

83. The school has successfully adopted the National Numeracy Strategy, which has had a good effect on the quality of teaching in the subject, particularly in the development of speedy mental recall of number facts, and developing problem-solving strategies orally. As the staff were concerned at the falling trend in Year 6 results, the coordinator analysed the way the pupils tackled the national test paper last year. She found that there were weaknesses in the pupils' approach to questions involving probability, and written problem solving. These have received extra focus this year in lessons and booster classes, and pupils' skills have improved. The SENCO has also been trained in an Australian 'Mathematics Recovery' programme, which she uses to boost the number skills of pupils in Year 1.

84. The quality of teaching is good across the school, improved since the last inspection, and leads to good progress in learning basic number skills and problem-solving strategies by the pupils. The high quality of most of the teachers' lesson planning means that pupils are in the main given tasks and activities which interest and push them to learn and practise new skills. They generally respond well to these lessons, and often show very good attitudes to their work, concentrating hard, making good contributions in whole-class sessions at the beginning and end of the lesson, and working with enthusiasm and enjoyment. They are helped to develop their understanding of their own learning because all the staff make it clear to them what they are supposed to learn in each lesson. It is clear from work in their books that the full subject requirements are taught, and that the pupils make good progress in all the different aspects. There are good examples of the use of ICT, such as when Year 6 pupils program the computer to plot geometric shapes. This aspect is underdeveloped, however, particularly in handling data. There are also good examples of pupils using their mathematical skills and understanding in other subjects such as geography, reading coordinates on maps, and in science, reading scales on measuring instruments such as thermometers.

85. The trend in the school's results in national tests at age 11 has been falling since 1997 against an improving national average. Last year the results were in line with the national average, as at the last inspection, but well below those in similar schools. These results showed below average progress from the same group's test results at age seven. In the school's view, last year's results were affected by the high number of pupils with special educational needs, but even so no pupils achieved results well below what is expected for the age, which is better than the picture nationally. Girls regularly achieve higher results than boys. Last year, the number of pupils achieving the higher than expected Level 5 was below average. This year, 11 year olds attain at the expected level and this is good, and the proportion of pupils working at higher than expected levels is higher than last year, reflecting the sharpened focus in the teaching.

86. During a lesson on fractions taken by the coordinator with most of the Year 6 pupils, whilst the class teacher worked outside with the highest attaining group, the pupils used mathematical vocabulary such as 'lowest common denominator' correctly to explain their thinking. Responding well to the teacher's clearly presented demonstration, the pupils completed tasks at their own level which showed that almost all of them could compare and order fractions such as one quarter, six tenths and four fifths by finding the lowest common denominator. This is as expected for their age. The higher

attaining pupils, meanwhile, used a calculator well to compare and order fractions where the lowest common denominator is hard to find. They could round to three places of decimals accurately in order to complete this task. This work is at higher than expected levels. The lesson also exemplified how the teacher's skills are often used well across the school to provide focused teaching based on their assessment of the pupils' levels of knowledge and understanding.

87. For seven-year-olds, results in the national tests have been maintained at high levels for a number of years. They have improved since the last inspection. Last year they were well above the national average, and above those in similar schools. All pupils attained at least the expected Level 2, and a significant number attained at higher levels. Boys and girls generally achieve at similar levels, but last year girls attained at slightly higher levels than the boys. The current seven-year-old group attains above expected levels, with a significant proportion of pupils capable of working at higher than expected levels.

88. Pupils with special educational needs are taught regularly by the SENCO, who uses a good variety of techniques and practical tasks to stimulate and consolidate the group's skills. The Year 2 group she works with is unusually seven boys, but with the skilled help they receive, they are all working within the expected level. For example, the teacher had strung a number line from zero to 100 at eye level, and the group was challenged to 'peg' each multiple of ten. The pupils responded enthusiastically to this, and even those having most difficulty were successfully encouraged by the teacher and the other pupils to persevere and concentrate hard to correctly locate and mark a number.

89. The higher attaining group in Year 2 is all girls, whose speedy mental problem-solving is of a good level for their age. During a lesson to practise adding or subtracting ten or one from a given number, this group had first to combine two numbers to make the task more complicated. This they did with ease working with numbers up to 100, and when asked to say which numbers were ten more and ten less than, for example, 890, readily gave 900 and 880, showing that they could work in this exercise with numbers up to 1000, high attainment for their age. This group struggled to work out 10 more than 990, but two boys at another table, given the same problem orally, first said that it would be ten hundreds; this would make it 1000. This again is high attainment for the age, and suggests that the teacher could stretch these pupils further.

90. In a Year 1 lesson, the teacher used effective techniques, based on thorough planning, to involve and motivate the pupils. In working with numbers up to 30, ordering numbers and finding for example three more or less than a given number, the teacher encouraged them to point out their answers to the rest of the class on a number square. This kept them all interested, and heightened their perseverance to work out the correct answer.

91. Good cooperation is evident between two part-time teachers in their planning of work for the high attaining Year 3 pupils. Their high standards from last year are being successfully extended and developed this year. Two lessons observed illustrate this. The first, taken by one of the teachers, introduce the pupils to line symmetry. Using good resources, the pupils skillfully checked a variety of plane shapes and other images, using mirrors accurately to check their first view. Higher attaining pupils worked well with a variety of shapes that stretched them, and taxed their understanding. The next day, the second teacher built well on the previous lesson, introducing the term 'reflective symmetry'. The tasks required the pupils to use what they had 'discovered' the previous day to use the mirrors to complete partial shapes to be full shapes with reflective symmetry. After consolidation work, higher attaining pupils were again challenged to extend their thinking, and some of them were severely tested to design a patterned flag with reflective symmetry. This was good teaching, at good pace, leading to good progress towards the targets set for the pupils.

92. The subject has been high profile recently in the school's development, and the coordinator has been effective in leading training sessions, auditing the resources, and securing school-wide agreement and cooperation in the purchase of a new commercial scheme, and other resources. She leads the subject effectively, and monitors whether or not initiatives such as the 'Springboard 5' for Year 5 pupils, booster classes, and the 'Mathematics Recovery' programme are improving pupils' skills. There are good resources available to support pupils' learning, and the staff and pupils use these effectively. Effective steps appear to have been taken to halt the downward trend in the school's results at age 11.

SCIENCE

93. Results for the year 2000 National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 2 showed that standards were above average when compared with schools nationally, but below average when compared with similar schools. Although the national comparison suggests a decline in results, when examined closely they show that the percentage of pupils attaining the expected Level 4 was above the national average, however, results were down graded as there were less than the average percentage reaching the higher Level 5 grade. Over the last four years, the trend in results shows a slight decline for these reasons. Evidence from the current inspection confirms that in the present Year 6, the vast majority will achieve the expected Level 4, with a small number reaching the higher Level 5.

94. The results of teacher assessments at the end of Key Stage 1 showed that 100 per cent of pupils achieved the expected Level 2, putting their scores well above the national average. However, no pupils achieved the higher Level 3, which caused their results to be averaged out to be well below the national average than those of similar schools. Inspection evidence points to current standards being in line with national expectations, with a small number of pupils being capable of achieving the higher Level 3 grade.

95. Throughout the school, pupils make good progress in their knowledge of scientific phenomena and understanding of fair testing and investigative science. Good support is given to pupils with special educational needs who make the same level of progress as other pupils.

96. Evidence from the previous inspection indicated that pupils' attainment exceeded national expectations by the end of both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 and suggests that standards in the subject have fallen.

97. By the end of Key Stage 2, the pupils recognise the need for fair tests and are well versed in making predictions and hypothesising on possible outcomes to investigations. Evidence of this was observed in a lesson where Year 4 pupils were made responsible for devising a 'fair test' to investigate the strength of different magnets, which they did well, with much enthusiasm. In another lesson Year 6 pupils demonstrated a sound knowledge and understanding of food chains, materials and the properties and physical properties including magnetism and electricity. They used scientific vocabulary well, for example, in explaining the role of the consumer and predator. A scrutiny of their books and displays shows that they have been offered a range of opportunities to determine their own line of enquiry across the attainment targets. These positive features of the pupils' learning were highlighted at the last inspection.

98. By the age of seven, pupils are asking questions and are finding answers to their enquiries through a focused programme of investigations, using both first hand experiences and simple secondary sources. They are able to use simple equipment, make observations and record their finding accurately. For example, Year 1 pupils showed a high level of self-discipline when striking, shaking and using other methods to cause instruments to make a sound whilst investigating what happens when

objects vibrate and when Year 2 pupils coped well with manipulating equipment to produce electric circuits.

99. Findings from scrutiny of work show frequent investigative work encourages the pupils' scientific curiosity. Most can make careful observations and record their findings in simple charts and worksheets. They are able to make predictions and draw conclusions. Most form hypotheses based on knowledge gained from earlier experiences. For example, when Year 2 pupils had no problem in predicting whether a battery operated 'Pudgy Pig' would work or not.

100. Pupils of all ages show an eagerness to be involved in the practical scientific activities. Their positive attitudes and very good behaviour, as observed in the lessons, have a good effect on their learning. They concentrate well, work together successfully and make good progress.

101. They respond well to the challenges presented to them, listen carefully to questions and instructions and persevere in searching out information and evidence.

102. The overall quality of teaching is good, with some very good teaching being observed at Key Stage 2. Lessons are well planned, prepared and resourced. The organisation and management of the lessons observed were generally very good. Direct teaching of subject skills, using creative introductions, motivated a keen interest in the pupils, who were eager to engage in determining their own line of enquiry. Most activities produce appropriate challenges for the pupils, including those with special educational needs.

103. Teachers constantly assess pupils' development during lessons, through observation and questioning, using this to make direct teaching points which have a positive effect on their progress.

104. Individual teachers contribute well to the agreed school system for recording the attainment and progress of individual pupils. Recording procedures are good. Teachers highlight health and safety procedures before pupils are required to handle materials and equipment.

105. The subject is well managed; the policy statement and scheme of work provide effective support to individual teachers in planning and preparing their lessons within a well-structured framework of activities. The emphasis on investigative science is fully evidenced within the work presented and achieved throughout the school. Resources are very good and used effectively to broaden the first hand experiences of the pupils. The subject meets National Curriculum requirements and makes a valuable contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

106. Both literacy and numeracy skills are used well by pupils of all ages and abilities to record their investigation from their initial stage through to their findings. Information and communication technology skills are being developed and pupils are growing in confidence in using them to record, analyse and report their findings.

ART AND DESIGN

107. No lessons were observed during the inspection. Based on the evidence of the teachers' planning, pupils' work displayed around the school and discussions with pupils, attainment at the end of both key stages is judged to be in line with national expectations. The evidence indicates that pupils make good progress in the use of a wide variety of techniques and media and suggests teaching is at least satisfactory. These findings show an improvement since the last inspection, when progress was judged to be satisfactory.

108. Young children have used their skills in producing large pictures of fairy tales, colourful wood prints and coloured tissue to illustrate numbers. Older children in Key Stage 1 enjoy talking about their mobile birds, whose plumage applied by printing and other techniques produced a kaleidoscope of colour as it moved in the air. Sketchbooks showed some evidence of line drawings where tone and texture had been used.

109. At Key Stage 2 art is used well to illustrate work in other subjects and to enhance displays of pupils' written work. For example, Iron Man figures covered in silver foil attracted attention to the pupils work well. High quality observational drawings of footwear, in which line, tone and texture had been skillfully used exemplifying the good progress being made in the knowledge and understanding of subject skills and their ability to use them. The pupils also benefit from the input of volunteer, for example, in the work achieved in textile and fabric design carried out by the oldest pupils.

110. The subject is well managed, the policy statement and scheme of work are well informed, and safeguard continuity and progression of skills throughout the school. Resources are good to support the delivery of all aspects of the subject. The work offered to pupils makes a valuable contribution to developing their personal, social, spiritual and cultural awareness. The delivery of the subject meets the requirements of the National Curriculum.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

111. Standards achieved by pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 are in line with national expectations. As no design and technology lessons were observed at the end of Key Stage 2, neither was there any evidence of previously completed work, judgements can only accurately be made that standards are appropriate to the age of the pupils at the end of Year 5. At the last inspection standards were noted as being in line with national expectations.

112. Progress made by pupils during Key Stage 1 is satisfactory, with many learning appropriate skills of cutting, joining and designing. However, at Key Stage 2, progress is less uniform, with some evidence of topics, which support progress of skills, knowledge and understanding, whilst other pupils have less regular access to the subject and as a result the build up of skills is especially difficult to manage.

113. The teaching was good in the lesson seen. Pupils in Year 1 were seen working on a page from a book in which they were designing and constructing a flap in the page which would reveal part of the story. The class teacher had provided a good range of books for pupils to look at and note techniques and ideas. Pupils practised their designs and changed aspects of their drawings as a result of evaluations, before folding and cutting paper. Good reminders were given about health and safety issues and pupils worked with perseverance and commitment to their tasks.

114. Evidence on display in Year 2 shows pupils designing and making glove puppets. The design brief asked for finished items to be bright and cheerful and pupils certainly followed this guide. They sewed edges and gave their puppets bright finishes through the application of felt features.

115. In Year 3 there is evidence of work in food technology with pupils examining healthy meals, designing a 'healthy plate' and understanding the process of sandwich making. A good feature of their work is in the designing and making of a wrapper for a chocolate bar. They research the commercial product carefully noting that the wrapper shows, country of origin, ingredients, trade-mark and use by date. Through the use of a net design they make their own wrappers, which meet the needs of their design brief. Evaluations focus on why it is attractive, what skills have been learned and why it should help sell the product.

116. Work in Year 5 focuses on making a moving picture using cams, pivots and levers. Designs here are of a higher quality, showing front and rear views, lists of materials, labelled diagrams and the tools required. Pupils are seen working on their frames, which would hold the pictures. They use measuring skills, cut their wood accurately and joint their corners giving them extra strengthening support.

117. The school is trialling the nationally recommended scheme of work, for at the last inspection a school scheme was only in draft form. This will serve to give much needed support to some teachers who are less confident in this subject area. Alongside use of a school scheme, the school has an opportunity to make sure that all classes are working at the regular improvement of design and making skills alongside the gathering of knowledge and understanding. The school does not yet have a check list for teachers to make sure that the systematic build up of skills can be guaranteed through the topics they undertake.

GEOGRAPHY

118. Standards are in line with expectations by the end of both key stages. From a discussion with a group of Year 6 pupils, their attainment is broadly average, although one boy's recall of facts and general geographical understanding is of a very high level. They grow in understanding of the influence of place on human activity, and the influence of people on the world. The links between geographical work and environmental understanding are well-drawn, and contribute well to pupils' personal development as young citizens, and their moral, cultural and spiritual understanding.

119. At Key Stage 1, work on such topics as 'Homes' leads to good mapping of where the pupils live on a large local map, and there are posters, maps of the British Isles and the world, and photographs and pictures of significant geographical features, alongside a good variety of musical instruments and other artefacts, from the Gambia and Australia. These displays highlight local crafts and traditions, and contribute well to the pupils' spiritual and cultural development. Good work on display shows how well the pupils have compared where they live with different seaside towns. The current topic, illustrating the progress of 'Barnaby Bear' round the world, is adding excitement and interest to the pupils' learning.

120. At Key Stage 2, Year 3 pupils link history and geography through the study of maps of Roman Britain. They make good progress in their study of the local area by describing features of Maghull, and compare weather patterns here and in Spain. In Year 4, pupils consider their local environment, and how they might improve it, and compare life in their urban village with life in a village and a city in India. Year 5 pupils learn about the oceans of the world, identifying them on a world map accurately, and study the water cycle in 'The Journey of Water'. Year 6 pupils have attended a residential centre in Wales, completing a good project file, which includes a study of slate mines and the coastal region. Many of them have used a good variety of resources to research this topic, including CD-ROM and the Internet. They are engaged currently in a river study, and link their previous knowledge and understanding for studying the water cycle to this new study well.

121. Only one lesson was observed, in Year 2. This was as part of the topic on Barnaby Bear's progress round the world, and focused on the seaside in Australia. The teacher had confident control of the subject, and the pupils. She captured and held their attention by good use of a puppet searching through a bag full of Barnaby's belongings: these all related to a beach holiday, which the pupils all recognised. They showed good understanding of how to stay safe in the sun, and the teacher linked this work well with healthy living. The teacher made it clear that she would not tolerate silly suggestions, and the pupils then focused well on predicting likely objects from the bag. They recognised the coins as Australian dollars, and the teacher used the display of Australian artefacts to

good effect. The pupils made good progress in their learning because the teaching was good. Their attainment was above average as they not only showed awareness of a locality beyond their own, but could explain why this location was as it was. They are beginning to justify their observations of seaside places by offering good explanations, and complete the tasks of writing postcards and making posters well.

122. The school has brought its planning for the subject up-to-date by adapting its own pattern of topics to recent national guidelines. The whole school curriculum plan allows at-a-glance checks of subject coverage, which meets statutory requirements. There are rich displays around the school, illustrating the development and progress of the pupils' understanding and knowledge. The school has also won an 'Eco School' award for the quality of its environmental education. Good links are made through the topics between geography, history and science, and there are good, if understated, opportunities to practise and develop literacy, numeracy, ICT and illustrative drawing skills.

123. The coordinator was absent during the inspection, but it is clear that the subject is in good hands. The pupils experience the full range of subject skills, knowledge and understanding, and through visits in the locality and further a field, develop a good feel for place, its potential and use, and how different places are used for different purposes mainly because of their existing features.

HISTORY

124. Standards are in line with national expectations by the ages of seven and this reflects the findings of the previous inspection. No teaching was seen at Key Stage 2 and only one lesson was seen in Key Stage 1; here pupils' attainment was above expectations in their use of historical vocabulary.

125. In the lesson seen teaching was good. Planning was thorough and specific to subject skills of vocabulary and chronology. The story of 'Old Bear' was used to reinforce the topic of old toys. The teacher emphasised the characteristics of 'old' from the text and the pictures and this was effective in enabling the children to share what they knew and had observed, 'his fur is falling out', 'he gets tired easily' and 'the teddy has lost his eye'. Pupils responded well to the teaching. They were well behaved and interested and quick to offer ideas and responses.

126. From planning, displays and work around the school pupils clearly make progress across the areas of study required by the National Curriculum. For example, in Year 2 pupils have studied famous people including Florence Nightingale, Samuel Pepys and Neil Armstrong. In Key Stage 2, some very good quality work shows in Year 3 that pupils have studied The Romans in some detail; they have made good progress in comparing different versions of the Origins of Rome story. Across the range of ability they are able to retell the story – all words are spelt correctly and the highest attainers have written descriptions in small booklets of Roman toys. A good range of key questions are displayed to prompt pupils' thinking.

127. The coordinator is currently absent but the work, which has ensued since the last inspection, has established a clear programme of improvement; the school now follows the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority scheme of work and resources to ensure its effective implementation have been purchased. Funding has been made available for in-service training. The planning of the subject meets National Curriculum requirements.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

128. Standards in many aspects of the subject are in line with national expectations at both key stages. However, a lack of resources in the area of measuring and sensing, means that currently pupils are not working within this small area of study, although plans are noted to address this issue.

129. The recent creation of a computer suite, together with the retention computers outside all class bases, has made a significant improvement to the access pupils have to Information and Communication Technology (I.C.T.) and has meant that the school has substantially addressed a key issue from the last inspection of 'broadening the pupils' range of experiences and increasing opportunities to apply their skills in other subjects.' Pupils make satisfactory progress in their work and pupils with special education needs make similar progress within class lessons, but sometimes make better progress when either the class assistant or specialist support adult is available.

130. Teaching in the two lessons seen was good. Although little direct teaching of I.C.T. was seen at Key Stage 1, evidence shows that pupils have access to painting programs, in which they create their own pictures of boats and tractors. In a lesson in Year 2, two pupils work on a computer during a Literacy Hour, in which they are learning about alliteration. They work confidently and well together, devising alliterative sentences and putting them on screen, giving good support to both I.C.T. and literacy skills.

131. There is much more evidence of work in I.C.T. at Key Stage 2. Pupils in Year 3 use a 'control' program, which enables them to give instructions to the computer to draw shapes on screen, while pupils in Year 4 gather information from their friends in order that they might create a pie chart showing the favourite boy bands of the class. They use their word processing skills, again linked to work in literacy, to write poems about the coming of the Vikings and later to write out playground rules. Here they change fonts, change the size and colour of lettering in order to make the writing more eye-catching. They are able to use the spellchecker in order to support their spelling skills.

132. Pupils in Year 5 use CD ROM to research information for a number of projects and have recently begun to access information from the Internet. Year 6 pupils support their mathematics work by using calculators. They are seen converting fractions into decimals with accuracy using this method.

133. In the lesson in Year 6, clear direct teaching of skills, resulted in pupils being able to access a powerful presentation package, which allowed them to present information with colour, movement and sound in a multi-media presentation. Pupils worked conscientiously with partners, helping each other and sharing expertise. They have good knowledge and understanding of their work and effective behaviour management allows maximum use to be made of time and resources.

134. The school has provided good opportunities for its teachers to gain knowledge and understanding about the hardware and software they are using and from which they are teaching. Many now have gained in confidence and are making good use of the new facilities. The very good action plan for the subject has provided a most useful map for the development of the subject and as a result progress in the recent past has been good. Whilst the school recognises it still has further work to complete in the subject, its planning shows a clear route for covering this work.

135. Opportunities still remain for further links to be established with other curriculum areas such as history, geography and mathematics, together with the development of the use of measuring and sensing at the end of Key Stage 2.

MUSIC

136. At the last inspection, standards in music were noted as above national expectations. Currently standards are in line with those expectations at Key Stage 1 but not above them. It was not possible to observe any music teaching at Key Stage 2. National initiatives in literacy and numeracy are cited as having had a negative effect on the time allocated to music and the place it currently has on the school curriculum. However, good support from local authority music teachers has had a positive effect on standards when the specialist teacher takes classes. Equally, class teachers are able to sit in lessons and observe techniques and share planning, so that they themselves may learn how to be more effective. Over time this is having a positive effect on the progress made by both teachers and pupils. Pupils with special educational needs are easily absorbed into the lessons seen and make similar progress to the rest of the class.

137. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils have had good access to the Programmes of Study of the National Curriculum. The work seen in the Nursery, taken by the specialist teacher provides children with a good start. In the reception class, although not a specialist teacher, the class teacher provides children with opportunities to listen to music from the wider world, in connection with a story they are reading. They clap and move to the music and are given opportunities to play untuned percussion to the rhythm of the music. They clearly enjoy their experiences, but the teacher's lack of knowledge does mean that the children are not extended in their learning and some pupils are inactive for some periods of the lesson. This teacher has not yet had an opportunity to observe more experienced teachers of music in her class.

138. In Year 1 pupils sing well to the tune 'In the hairy, scary castle'. The class teacher has made a good class resource, a model of the castle, opening doors to reveal different ghoulish characters. Pupils sing about these characters and later experiment with percussion to exemplify the bats, ghosts and skeletons they see. Good use here is made of the resources available.

139. In Year 2, the specialist teacher, who confidently engages the pupils in both singing and playing instruments, takes the lesson. Using a theme of weather, pupils make rain sounds using a wide variety of instruments. They relate well to the teacher's instructions as they gain a good understanding of crescendo and diminuendo.

140. Teaching in the above lessons was never less than satisfactory. In all three good use was made of the school's well-stocked music trolleys. Teachers organise and manage their lessons very well giving maximum time to teaching and learning with a minimum of interruptions. Some opportunities were missed in all lessons for pupils to make their own choice of instruments and learn their names for future reference.

141. A group of about 25 pupils learn to play instruments in school time. They learn violin, flute and clarinet. Whilst this is limited to older pupils, it does give them extra knowledge and understanding within their class lessons.

142. Music has lost some of its status in the school. Whilst pupils still have opportunities to perform at such events as Christmas, Harvest and Easter, and at a 'Singing Day' with other schools, there is little evidence of displays for music, neither does music have a base in the school. Equally, the school does not make use of Information and Communication Technology in the support of composing or researching.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

143. Standards of attainment at the last inspection were in line with expectations at age seven, and above them at age 11. This is still the case in those aspects of the subject observed. No lesson was

seen with Year 6 pupils, although many of them were observed in after-school clubs practising soccer and rounders' skills. The standards by eleven in games are well above average. Almost all the pupils attain the minimum requirement in swimming, and many achieve at higher levels.

144. Pupils experience the full range of the curriculum, with a concentration on gymnastics, dance and games. Older pupils have swimming lessons, and take part in athletics activities in the summer. They also enjoy a very good residential opportunity in Wales, which includes work across different subjects, but which centres on outdoor and adventurous activities such as archery, abseiling, trampolining and fencing. The pupils thoroughly enjoy this, and from their project files clearly gain a great deal in terms of their physical development, but also in their personal development. The quality and range of extracurricular games are very good, and older pupils excel in local sports and swimming competitions. All the activities are equally open to boys and girls.

145. The quality of teaching is satisfactory at Key Stage 1, and it was good in the two lessons seen with the same class at Key Stage 2. Where the teaching was satisfactory, the pupils made reasonable progress in the focus activity, and the good teaching led to good learning. Pupils with special educational needs are fully included, and a very good example occurred when a support assistant sensitively encouraged a pupil with learning and behavioural difficulties to take a full and effective part in a dance lesson. Here, the teacher and support worker combined skilfully to manage the lesson to include this pupil fully, and maintain the pace and flow of the lesson for the rest of the class.

146. In a Year 2 games lesson, the teacher tried to take advantage of the good weather to adapt a lesson planned for indoors. This was to teach the pupils how to play relay style games. Unfortunately, the wind was too strong for the light foam balls the pupils used, which made the degree of control needed beyond their current skill levels. However, they attempted the activity with some concentration, and tried hard to compete in line with the rules explained by the teacher. In the event, the lesson would have been better indoors, when the two teachers would have been able to maintain the competitive nature of the session more effectively.

147. In a Year 1 lesson, the teacher followed the recommended pattern for a gymnastics lesson appropriately. She had good control of the pupils, and skilfully guided them through warm-up and floor practice to increase their confidence in bearing weight safely and imaginatively on different parts of their bodies. The pupils responded well to her high expectations of their control of their movements to gain increased understanding of their own capabilities. When they demonstrated their actions to the rest of the class, other pupils commented perceptively on what they considered the best parts of the demonstrator's work. The teacher made comments to extend and improve their performance. However, in using mats to extend the activity, the teacher unnecessarily restricted the pupils to working solely on the mats, and not exploiting the space around them. Here, the pupils made satisfactory progress, and their behaviour and attitudes to their work were good.

148. In Year 4, games and dance sessions were observed, and both were good lessons. The newly qualified teacher had volunteered to coordinate the subject when appointed to the school, and clearly had good subject understanding. She led a cricket skills lesson well, insisting on high standards of effort and behaviour. The pupils thoroughly understood the lesson objectives, and could state the techniques and skills they were to improve. There were good resources available to help them strike the ball effectively, and the teacher used pupils well to demonstrate particular aspects. However, though the pupils knew what skills they were aiming for, many had not fully achieved them by the end of the lesson. In response to the good teaching they made good progress, and their attainment was as expected for their age. Similarly, the same teacher began a dance lesson superbly, using music as a stimulus for the warm-up, with pupils practising mirror image shapes effectively. Unfortunately, the effect of the warm-up was lost as the pupils sat for over five minutes whilst the teacher discussed the next part of the lesson, developing further a cartoon style dance. The pupils responded very well to

this, and increased the dynamic range and exaggerated feeling of their movements well, cooperating skillfully with their partners. Some of the pupils made up a repeating dance sequence of high level for their age, and the overall attainment here was above average.

149. The school is blessed with good resources to support the subject, particularly the indoor and outdoor spaces. The playgrounds and grounds are excellent features, and they are used well by pupils and staff. The coordinator has achieved a great deal in a short time, and is being supported well by the rest of the staff to continue to improve their skills through the 'Tops' training and resource programme. She has attended many courses to improve her own knowledge and understanding. The school has applied for the Active Mark Award for its PE provision, and she has skilfully overseen the detailed application. She has also involved the local authority adviser in re-establishing staff's skills, with the Headteacher's agreement, and organised that the school host the Football Teacher's Certificate course for the area. Seven of the school's own staff took part in this. The enthusiasm she brings to this role is infectious, and the subject development plan is good.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

150. A limited amount of religious education was observed but this, along with scrutiny of teachers' planning shows that pupils receive a broad and balanced curriculum in line with the requirements of the local agreed syllabus by the ages of seven and 11.

151. Pupils make sound progress, which enables them to achieve suitably in their understanding of church buildings and their purpose, in Key Stage 1. They have improved their knowledge of fixtures and features of the local church for example, the altar, the font and the pulpit. They can name how they are used. For example, 'the water from the font is used to make someone part of the church'. Older Key Stage 1 pupils extend their knowledge about Christian beliefs when having been to the church to talk with the vicar they can record what they know about the use of bread and wine as part of the Eucharist service; they know that the bread represents the Body of Christ and the wine His blood. Work shows that pupils have also studied Judaism and Hinduism and the concept of family within the religions studied. They know about the story of Rama and Sita and can retell it in their own words. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils have enhanced their knowledge and understanding of world religions and have studied Christian buildings in greater depth. For example, in Year 6 pupils have visited an Anglican church and considered its design and purpose and why it is a special place for Christians. They have developed skills of comparing and contrasting a church with a mosque and considering how worship takes place in each. Many pupils reveal a good basic knowledge of the physical features of a church.

152. Not enough teaching was seen to make overall judgements but in the lessons observed it was good. Teachers all showed good subject knowledge and their planning format is detailed. Expectations for participation and attention were common features and all teachers gave good explanations. Pupils cooperated well when asked to discuss aspects for debate and they were responsive in sharing what they knew, had recalled and in asking questions.

153. The effective management of the subject has ensured that in-service training has been undertaken on the local agreed syllabus and that resources have been purchased to support the new RE curriculum. The coordinator has audited the schemes of work, staff planning and teaching and revised the school policy in the light of training and the new syllabus. The subject plan is now to design units of work in conformity with the agreed syllabus and to complement the QCA scheme. Quality of provision has improved since the last inspection.