

# INSPECTION REPORT

**BURSCOUGH LORDSGATE TOWNSHIP C.E.  
PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Lordsgate Drive, Burscough, Ormskirk, L40 7RS

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique reference number: 119481

Headteacher: Mrs S Merry

Reporting inspector: David Law  
20575

Dates of inspection: 19 - 22 March 2001

Inspection number: 194314

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

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## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	4-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Lordsgate Drive Burscough Ormskirk
Postcode:	L40 7RS
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs M Crampton
Date of previous inspection:	05.10.1998

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
20575	David Law	Registered inspector	Mathematics Music Physical education	How high are Standards? a) The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
19343	Marion Howel	Lay inspector		How high are standards? b) Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
21910	Gordon Longton	Team inspector	English Information and communication technology Art and design	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
7938	Tom Handforth	Team inspector	Science Design and technology History Geography Under-fives Special educational needs	

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

This Church of England primary school has 200 pupils on roll. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for a free school meal is 10%, which is broadly average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is 25%, which is broadly in line with the national average; 4% of pupils have Statements of Special Educational Need – this is well above average. Very few pupils have English as an additional language; almost all the pupils are of white UK heritage. Attainment on entry to reception is in the average range; for pupils joining the school in other year groups, it is generally below, but there is variation between cohorts.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

This is a very good school; it is poised to become even better. A committed staff put pupils' needs first; the climate for learning is excellent. Standards of attainment seen during this inspection were never less than satisfactory in any subject. High quality teaching enables pupils of all abilities to make good progress. The school is exceptionally well led and managed; it provides very good value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- The headteacher provides outstanding leadership; the deputy headteacher gives excellent support and subject co-ordinators are very effective
- Teaching is a significant strength and is very good throughout the school
- Pupils have very positive attitudes and are eager to learn; their behaviour is very good
- Assessment is very good; information about pupil progress is used very effectively to plan future learning
- There is very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development
- A high level of care is provided for all pupils and parents hold the school in high regard

#### **What could be improved**

- Standards of attainment in writing, so more pupils, and in particular boys, achieve the higher levels of the National Curriculum at the end of both key stages
- Provision for pupils to learn more about the richness and diversity of cultures other than their own

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

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

School improvement has been rapid since the first inspection in 1997; standards have risen significantly in recent years. The numerous key issues in the school's first inspection report have been addressed with great success. In 1998, a second inspection judged Lordsgate to be a good school; since then, improvement has continued and at a very good rate.

## 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	B	B	D	D
Mathematics	B	B	C	C
Science	C	C	C	C

**Key**

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

Between 1996 and 2000, attainment in English, mathematics and science at the end of Key Stage 2 was above the national trend. Standards were particularly good in 1998 and 1999 in English and mathematics. In 2000, although attainment in English and mathematics was not as good as in the previous two years, it was still better than in 1997. During 2000, a significant number of pupils with below average attainment joined Year 6 from other schools. At the end of Key Stage 1, test results in reading, writing and mathematics were above the national average in the four years up to and including 1999. The 2000 test results for Year 2 remained above average in mathematics, but were average in reading and below average in writing. In 2000, the Year 2 class had a significant proportion of pupils with special educational needs, and boys did less well than girls in reading and writing. Boys also did less well than girls in the 2000 English tests at the end of Key Stage 2. The standard of work seen during this inspection was never less than satisfactory in any subject. At the end of Key Stage 1, English is good; significantly, more pupils are writing at the higher level, and mathematics is very good. At the end of Key Stage 2, English and mathematics are at least sound and have many good features. Science is good throughout the school. There are particular strengths in design and technology, art, history, geography and physical education. Overall, pupils make good progress and achieve well. The school has set appropriately challenging targets for improvement. At the end of the Foundation Stage, standards are at least satisfactory in all areas of learning; standards in personal, social and emotional development are good.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good; pupils are diligent and respect the feelings of others
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good; pupils work and play very well together; there are very good systems for promoting good behaviour
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are very good; the school is a caring community where individuals are valued
Attendance	Very good; well above the national average



## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

The school has dedicated and hard working teachers. The quality of teaching is a significant strength; literacy and numeracy skills are very well taught. The needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, are very effectively met through careful assessment and planning. Teachers have a very good rapport with pupils and are very skilful in questioning and explaining. Expectations are very high. The organisation of pupils and learning resources is very good; lessons proceed at a brisk pace. Teaching assistants give very good support. Overall, 52% of the teaching is very good or better and some of this is outstanding; 87% is good or better and none is less than satisfactory. This high quality teaching promotes very good learning; pupils work with interest, sustained concentration and effort.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good; effectively planned; very good provision for extra-curricular activity and personal, social and health education.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good; work is very well matched to pupils' needs.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good provision for spiritual, moral and social development. The school provides an education based on Christian values; pupils have a proper sense of right and wrong. Provision for cultural development is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good; procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare are of a high standard. There are very good links with parents; their views of the school are extremely positive.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	A strength of the school. An excellent headteacher provides clear educational direction; the contribution of other staff with management responsibilities is of the highest order. There is an excellent team spirit.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good; governors are well informed and understand their responsibilities; they are very supportive of the school and fulfil all their statutory duties.

The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good; there are well-developed systems for self-review. The school knows its strengths and weaknesses; the shared commitment to succeed is excellent.
The strategic use of resources	Good; the school has identified appropriate priorities and has suitable plans for improvement. Staff are well deployed; accommodation and learning resources are satisfactory. Application of the principles of best value is good.

Although the accommodation is satisfactory and well looked after, the lack of additional available space restricts opportunities for group work outside the classroom and means the library is located in a corridor, which inhibits its effective use.

### **PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

<b>What pleases parents most</b>	<b>What parents would like to see improved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feeling comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem</li> <li>• The leadership and management of the school</li> <li>• The expectation that children will work hard and achieve their best</li> <li>• The school's help in enabling children to become mature and responsible</li> <li>• The interesting range of activities outside lessons</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eight parents out of 100 responding to the questionnaire did not agree that the amount of homework was right</li> </ul>

The inspection team agrees with parents' extremely positive views of the school; they feel the amount of homework is appropriate.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and pupils' achievements**

1. On entry to the reception class attainment is broadly average. The majority of children achieve the Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning by the time they reach five years of age. The personal, social and emotional development of children is very good. The majority are confident and readily engage in discussion. Relationships are very good. In communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, and physical and creative development children make good progress and by the age of five standards are at least in line with those expected.
2. At the end of Key Stage 1, the 2000 national tests show that attainment in reading is average, writing is below average and mathematics is above average when compared with all schools nationally. In comparison with schools in similar contexts, although mathematics remains above the average, reading is below average and writing well below. The poorer test attainment in writing is largely because too few pupils achieve the higher level 3 (4% compared to 9% nationally). In contrast, 36% of pupils attain the higher level in mathematics compared to 25% nationally, and this is well above average. In science, teacher assessment shows that compared to all schools nationally, and to schools in similar contexts, pupils' attainment is above average; it is average at the higher level 3.
3. Test results in reading and writing at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2000 were not as good as in previous years but, taking the three years 1998 to 2000 together, the figures show that the performance of pupils was above the national average. In 1998 and 1999, reading and writing test results were well above average. In mathematics tests, between 1998 and 2000, performance was above the national average; it was well above in 1999. Taking the performance of boys over the three years 1998 to 2000, reading and writing fell slightly below the national average. In contrast, girls did better than the national average in reading and writing.
4. At the end of Key Stage 2, the 2000 national tests show that attainment in mathematics and science is average in comparison with all schools nationally and with schools in similar contexts. The English test results in 2000 show that the school is below the national average and below the average in comparison with similar schools. In English, fewer pupils attained the higher level 5 than nationally (17% compared to 29%). In mathematics and science, the proportion of pupils attaining the higher level 5 was average when compared to all schools, but when taking into account comparisons with schools in similar contexts it was below average.
5. At the end of Key Stage 2, test results for all core subjects together were above the national trend over the period 1997 to 2000. In 1998 and 1999, English and mathematics test results were above the national average. Science test results showed a significant improvement between 1999 and 2000 and a rising trend from 1996. There was a sharp rise in English and mathematics attainment between 1997 and 1999. There are some differences in the performance of boys and girls over the three years 1998 to 2000. Overall, the performance of girls exceeds the national average; the performance of boys is in line. Differences are less pronounced than at Key Stage 1. In English, girls' performance in the 2000 national tests was above the average of all girls nationally; the performance of boys was below that of all boys nationally and significantly below that of girls at the school. In previous years this was not as significant, but girls still did better than boys in English. In science and mathematics, although girls do a little better than boys at Key Stage 2 the difference is not significant.

6. Since the first inspection in 1997, attainment in the core subjects has risen sharply at Key Stage 2. At Key Stage 1, in 1996 no pupils reached the higher levels in writing and science; pupils now attain these levels. The 1998 inspection report noted a significant improvement in standards. This was maintained in 1999. The Key Stage 2 results in 2000 were not as good as in 1999, but during this period a significant number of lower attaining pupils entered the school at the end of the key stage. Attainment data supplied by the school shows that over the key stage most pupils make expected or better than expected progress.
7. The school set appropriately challenging end of Key Stage 2 mathematics and English targets for 2000. The mathematics target was met but that for English was not (target 85%; actual 75%); this is largely due to the absence from the English test of pupils expected to attain level 5 and the admission in Year 6 of pupils working below the expected level. The targets for 2001 are suitably challenging. The school is making good progress towards the 2001 targets and is providing additional support to enable pupils to achieve this.
8. The evidence of this inspection is that standards are never less than satisfactory in any subject and that there are significant areas of strength. There is a strong emphasis on literacy and numeracy and basic skills are well taught.
9. Inspection evidence indicates that in speaking and listening, reading and writing at the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils' attainment is above that expected of seven-year-olds. Significantly more pupils than in 2000 are working within and expected to attain level 3 in reading and writing. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils listen carefully and speak clearly; higher attaining pupils are particularly fluent. In reading, higher attaining pupils are confident and most pupils read with a fluency and accuracy appropriate to their age and ability. The use of punctuation and sentence structure is good. In Year 1, pupils make sound gains in their learning of mathematics and standards in Year 2 are very good. Pupils' recall of basic number facts is good; they explain their thinking well and understand what they have to do. Standards of attainment in science are good at the end of the key stage; pupils undertake investigations effectively and understand concepts such as the need for a fair test.
10. At the end of Key Stage 2, standards in English and mathematics are at least in line with those expected of eleven-year-olds and there are also good features. Pupils in Year 6 attain high standards in their speaking. Across the key stage, pupils make satisfactory progress in their reading and writing. Literacy skills are used well to support other subjects of the curriculum. Pupils make good progress in mathematics across the key stage. They make good use of mental calculation strategies that they have been taught and have a good recall of basic number facts. Pupils' attainment in science is good; they develop well in their measuring and recording skills.
11. By the end of both key stages, pupils attain satisfactory standards in information and communications technology. At Key Stage 1, they can load, save and print using a range of functions and at Key Stage 2, make appropriate use of the Internet, spread sheets and CD-ROM. Good standards are achieved in art and design, design and technology, history, geography and physical education. In music, standards are at least satisfactory and there are particular strengths in singing.
12. Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) receive very good support and make good progress in relation to their prior attainment. Individual education plans are clear, detailed and regularly reviewed. The very good support enables pupils to understand what they have to do and as a result they are able to learn new things. Where pupils with SEN are taught as part of the whole class, teachers are very good at drawing them into the learning and teaching assistants are used effectively to provide specific and timely support. When SEN pupils are taught in smaller groups, the tasks they are asked to do are well matched

to their ability and relevant to what they need to know and understand to move forward. The assessment of pupils with SEN is very good and teachers keep accurate and useful records of what pupils have learnt and where their strengths and weaknesses lie.

13. Overall, pupils' achievement is good. They are productive and work with effort and concentration. Pupils have a good understanding of what they are expected to do and teachers' high expectations challenge them to think, explain and acquire new knowledge. Teacher assessments and optional tests show that pupils of all abilities make good progress in relation to their prior attainment. The school has undertaken various tests to show the value added from one year to the next and across a key stage. These also show that most pupils make expected or better than expected progress. Very good curriculum planning and subject leadership contribute a great deal to enabling pupils to achieve well, as does the consistently good quality of the teaching across a range of subjects. Taking account of last year's test results in English, and trends over time, the task for the school now is to improve standards in English with a particular emphasis on writing and the achievement of boys and higher attainers.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

14. Pupils have very good attitudes to their work and learning. They are very well behaved at all times and there are very good relationships throughout the school. These aspects are very strong features of the school and contribute to its strengths.
15. Pupils show a keen interest in their lessons. They respond well to their teachers and are very willing to take an active part in all activities. They settle quickly to their work and display good powers of concentration. They are supportive of one another and work well in pairs or small groups. The extra-curricular opportunities are well supported both during the lunch break and after school.
16. The behaviour of the pupils is very good. They know and understand the school rules, which they consider to be applied fairly and consistently by the teachers. At the start of the school year, each class decides its own class rules and this gives the pupils a better understanding of the reasoning behind the rules. Teachers have high expectations of pupil behaviour and pupils respond well to those expectations. During lessons, the good behaviour occurs with very little apparent input from the teachers. The school is an orderly community with pupils moving around in a sensible manner. The pupils are polite and courteous, offering to open doors or give directions. They are very willing and confident when talking about themselves and their work. They show respect for their books and other school property and help to keep the whole site tidy and free of litter. There have been no exclusions during the last year.
17. Very good relationships exist throughout the school. The teachers have positive relationships with their pupils, who respond well to their teachers. Pupils listen well to the views and opinions of their fellow pupils and willingly offer help when working together. There are very few incidents of bullying but when they do occur, they are dealt with firmly and promptly. Pupils know that their teachers and the headteacher are always ready to listen to any concerns or worries they may have and to offer help.
18. Throughout the school, pupils are given good opportunities to show initiative and take responsibility. All classes appoint monitors for a wide variety of tasks. Year 6 pupils are given a range of duties, including being elected as house captains and carrying out tasks during breaks and lunchtime. There are regular collections for chosen charities. Pupils organise mini-enterprise schemes such as selling items they have made at the arts and crafts club, and the monies raised are donated to the charity.

19. The attendance rate at the school is well above the national average with no unauthorised absences. Pupils arrive at school on time with very few latecomers. Parents are discouraged from taking their children on holiday during term time.

## **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?**

20. High quality teaching is a major strength of the school. In the majority of lessons seen, for the under-fives, and at each key stage, teaching is very good or better. Overall, 52% of teaching is very good or better, 87% is good or better and none is less than satisfactory. At Key Stage 1, 25% of the teaching is excellent, all of it in Year 2. Excellent teaching is also seen in Year 6. Good or better teaching is seen in all classes.
21. This quality of teaching has a significant and positive impact on pupils' learning. Teachers teach very well and as a result pupils are keen to learn, work at a productive pace, show high levels of interest, concentration and effort and consequently make very good gains in their learning. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is strong. Good or better teaching is seen in all subjects of the curriculum. It is particularly strong in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1 and very good in science and design and technology throughout the school. Consistency in the quality of teaching across classes and subjects is a key and highly positive feature. It enables pupils to make consistently good progress.
22. The main strengths of the teaching include:
- very skilful questioning, explanation and exposition
  - high expectations and excellent relationships with pupils so attention is gained and held
  - clear objectives for learning set within a very good framework of curriculum planning
  - thorough systems for assessing and recording pupils' progress
  - the effective teaching of basic skills.
23. In addition, the use of time, resources and support staff is very effective. Teachers' subject knowledge is at least good and often better; it is particularly evident in English in Year 5, mathematics in Year 2 and science in Year 4, but examples exist in other years and subjects.
24. Because good or better teaching is available to all pupils in every year group then all pupils' needs are met. This includes special educational needs, which are catered for effectively through judicious use of skilful support staff; this enables learning to be well matched to the knowledge, skills and understanding pupils require. An appropriate level of challenge is provided for all pupils, including higher attainers. The school gives more able Year 6 pupils an opportunity to be taught as a separate group by employing additional teaching support. Pupils are taken into the school hall for part of one day to receive this additional tuition. Similarly, pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 who require further support to enable them to achieve the expected level in the national tests, are withdrawn for specific lessons.
25. Examples of very good and excellent teaching were seen in the following lessons.
- In the reception class, a musical activity began with children looking at a book of paintings they had made whilst listening to Vivaldi's 'Winter.' The music of Vivaldi was played again as children listened and had opportunity to talk; they were immediately engaged. Once this rapport had been established, the teacher went on to use a variety of short activities covering singing, instrumental work and further listening that resulted in the rapid learning of the mood and effect of sounds that are loud and quiet.

- An English lesson in Year 2 demonstrated very good teacher subject knowledge, and an excellent ability to make the learning stimulating and exciting in a way that pupils found relevant and understandable as they learnt about compound words. The interest and enthusiasm of all pupils was very high; they learnt a great deal.
  - An excellent science lesson in Year 6 covered the notion that different types of soil might have different amounts of air in them. The teacher showed excellent management skills in organising resources, groups of pupils and the time available. As a result, all pupils undertook practical activity thoughtfully and with interest.
  - In a Year 5 English lesson, pupils' understanding of how to enhance their writing with the use of metaphor, simile and other techniques was presented with considerable teacher subject knowledge and drew thoughtfully on pupils' previous learning.
26. At the time of the first inspection, the quality of teaching was a weakness, particularly at Key Stage 2, where a large measure of it was less than satisfactory. The second inspection reported considerable improvement and one-third of teaching was good or better. Improvement has continued; now over half of the teaching is very good or better. This is a very significant achievement of which the school can justifiably be proud.
27. There is very good monitoring of teaching to highlight areas for further improvement. This sustains the good practice that is evident as teachers, led by the headteacher and key staff, share ideas and reflect on what they do to make it even better. For example, the school has rightly identified the need to raise standards in writing and all teachers plan effectively for it and share this with pupils as a key target for them to achieve.

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

28. The school provides a very good range of worthwhile learning opportunities in a broad and balanced curriculum that fulfils all statutory requirements. The curriculum is very well planned to ensure equality of opportunity for all pupils. This is a major driving force in the school's work. Weaknesses in the curriculum from the last inspection have been successfully addressed; all subjects now have a policy and a scheme of work which has been updated to bring them in line with the requirements of the most recent version of the National Curriculum. Teachers' planning ensures that learning objectives are clear and are shared with the pupils at the beginning of lessons. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. The school is careful to offer all pupils, regardless of attainment or ability, suitable learning opportunities within a very good learning environment and this makes an excellent impact on pupils' spiritual, moral and social learning. There are sound arrangements for pupils' sex education and very good provision for health and social education including attention to substance abuse.
29. Appropriate emphasis is placed on teaching English and mathematics. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been very successfully implemented and this has resulted in teachers working hard to improve pupils' attainment in both subjects. In mathematics, very good attention is now given to the development of mathematical language and mental mathematics. In literacy, the school has recognised the need to improve writing and has introduced appropriate strategies to address this. The planning of the curriculum is secure in all other subjects and ensures that pupils' learning is continuous as they move through the school.
30. Both staff and parents are involved in providing a very good range of extra-curricular activities. There is a comprehensive programme of sporting activities that include football, netball, tag rugby, cross-country running, rounders, orienteering and aerobics. There is a school choir, recorders for all levels of ability, art and craft club, drama, and violin tuition by

a peripatetic music teacher. Parents acknowledge and praise the school's efforts in providing such a varied range of interesting activities. Pupils are also given the opportunity to participate in music and drama as they present concerts and plays for parents and friends. The school uses planned educational visits to enhance the curriculum, including visits to museums in Chester and Liverpool and Wigan Pier.

31. The school has very good links with the community. There are close links with the local church. The school has effective links with secondary education and good arrangements are in place to ensure that Year 6 pupils make a smooth transition to Year 7. The school is beginning to develop its links with the wider community through its use of the Internet and e-mail.
32. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is very good.
33. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is very good. There are appropriate opportunities for pupils to develop spiritual awareness within the curriculum and through collective worship. Assemblies are held on a variety of themes planned throughout the year. During the inspection, the theme of the week was Love. Pupils were given examples of love in families and in the family of the school, where pupils care for each other very well. Assemblies have a strong Christian content. Pupils visit a local church and clergy come into school to take part in assemblies and talk to pupils in the classroom. Pupils celebrate the Christian festivals of harvest, Christmas and Easter, and are made aware of celebrations in other faiths. Pupils are given many opportunities to consider the wonders of the natural world through visits to local areas of beauty. The pupils are proud of their contribution toward the newly refurbished school garden and wild life area, which provides a place of tranquillity and peace. Reception children were thrilled to see frogs returning to the garden. The excellent attention given to artistic display throughout the school contributes to spirituality and the school's excellent ethos. Religious education makes a significant contribution to the pupils' spiritual development.
34. The provision for pupils' moral development is very good. The detailed behaviour policy is put into practice consistently both in lessons and around the school. The code of conduct is successfully supported by rules, agreed by the pupils and displayed in the classrooms. All staff encourage positive approaches to behaviour and the school's discipline policy reflects this. Pupils are helped to understand the difference between right and wrong and to see the consequences of their actions on others and themselves. There is a strong emphasis on good behaviour throughout the school. Staff create an orderly environment and help pupils to become responsible members of the community. All adults in the school set a good example to pupils and encourage good relationships. All teachers and learning support assistants provide very good support to pupils with special educational needs, many of these pupils join the school in Key Stage 2 and make good progress as they settle in their new environment. Collective worship makes a valuable contribution to pupils' moral values and attitudes.
35. The provision for pupils' social development is very good. Social skills are developed successfully during lessons, break and lunch times. The staff have worked hard to build up an awareness of the school as a community where each member is valued and works for the common good. Pupils are expected to care for their surroundings and to take responsibility for classroom equipment. Pupils of all ages are encouraged to work in pairs and small groups, and to undertake special responsibilities. From an early age pupils help as monitors in classrooms. Many opportunities are provided for pupils to show initiative in dealing with others, by, for example, managing the tuck shop and helping in Key Stage 1 at lunchtime. The school arranges two residential visits each year for pupils in Years 5 and 6. These provide pupils with opportunities to develop their independence and personal social skills through a range of challenging and exciting activities.



36. The provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory overall. Pupils are presented with many aspects of European culture through displays around the school. All pupils are encouraged to appreciate and celebrate their own culture through the work of artists and through listening to and appreciating music and taking part in cultural events. The school provides a good range of cultural experiences through visits to places of interest. The literacy hour is successfully introducing pupils to a range of authors from around the world. In art lessons, pupils look at the work of famous artists and attempt to produce paintings in the same style as, for instance, Matisse, Rousseau and Turner. Classrooms and other areas provide stimulating displays of artists' work as well as celebrating the pupils' own work. Through history lessons, pupils appreciate how life and culture has changed. The school's development of the pupils' understanding of the richness and diversity of other cultures is not as well developed as that of their own cultural tradition. In geography, pupils compare their lifestyle with that of pupils in a village in India. A friend of the school who has visited India talks to pupils and provides opportunities for them to dress in the national costume of India. The school monitors the library and resources provision to ensure fair representation of different groups. Although the school is working hard to promote the pupils' awareness of other cultures, this is not yet as strong as provision for spiritual, moral and social development.

### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

37. The school provides a caring and positive learning environment where pupils are known and valued as individuals.
38. There are effective policies and procedures in place relating to health and safety matters and child protection. All staff know these and training has taken place. All records are kept appropriately and in accordance with the policies. Pupils are well supervised during breaks. The school has produced a booklet, which clearly explains the lunchtime procedures. This includes ideas for games the pupils may wish to play. Teachers play an important role in supporting their pupils' personal development. They place strong emphasis on building the pupils' self-esteem and confidence. The teachers at the local high school note their success in this area. Pupils are well prepared for the transfer to their next school. There are close links with this school and pupils are given many opportunities to visit and take part in lessons. The communication of information between the two schools is effective. The school's behaviour policy is very effective, with rewards and sanctions being used to encourage high standards. There is an excellent anti-bullying policy and the pupils are confident that the very few incidents that do occur will be dealt with quickly.
39. The school has recently won an award for promoting healthy living. This programme has included work about fitness, diet, road safety and the environment. All pupils enjoyed the programme, which helped to enrich their learning.
40. Attendance and punctuality are very well monitored. Registers are correctly marked and any absences are followed up promptly.
41. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are very good, as is the use of the information gained to plan the curriculum. There is a suitable assessment as children join the reception class and they are then assessed appropriately in relation to the Early Learning Goals. The progress of pupils is carefully tracked, particularly in the core subjects of the National Curriculum. Assessment is an integral part of teaching and learning. All teachers keep detailed and relevant records of pupils' progress. These are used to plan effectively for pupils' needs; for example, teachers record how well pupils are covering the key objectives for numeracy. Teachers are very good at establishing a consensus about the different levels of attainment in the subjects in the National Curriculum. Useful samples are kept of pupils' work and these are annotated with appropriate notes to identify what has

been learnt. There is extensive recording of attainment data to show how well pupils are performing in the national tests and to measure pupils' progress from year to year and across the key stage. Subject co-ordinators, assessment co-ordinators and senior managers use this information very well to identify trends, strengths and areas for improvement. For example, the school has identified the need to improve pupils' attainment in writing and in problem solving skills. Targets for improvement are shared with pupils so they know the things they need to do better. The school monitors the attainment of different groups. The identification of pupils with special educational needs (SEN) is particularly effective. Pupils are then placed appropriately on the SEN register and very good support provided to meet their needs. Similarly, comparisons are made between the attainment of boys and girls and pupils who transfer from other schools.

42. The school's educational and personal support and guidance in raising pupils' achievements is very good. Praise is used effectively in lessons to recognise pupils' achievements. Marking is very good and indicates to pupils what they need to do to improve. Teachers discuss with pupils what they have done well and they set individual, group and whole school targets for pupils to do even better. These targets, which focus very well on literacy and numeracy, are also shared with parents who feel well informed about their children's achievements and progress. Reports to parents on pupils' progress are of excellent quality. Where appropriate, pupils are set targets for improving their behaviour.

#### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

43. Parents are very supportive of the school. The returned questionnaires show that the parents are particularly happy with the way the school is led and managed and the high expectations the teachers have of the children. They are very satisfied with the teaching and the behaviour in the school. The inspectors share the parents' positive views. A very few concerns were raised about the amount of homework set and the information parents receive about their children's progress. The inspectors found that the homework set was very good and that parents are provided with excellent annual reports and very good opportunities throughout the year to meet the teachers.
44. At the start of each school year, parents are invited to a "meet the teachers" evening when they are provided with information about new class routines and the topics to be studied. There is an annual parents' meeting and the teachers are also available at any time to talk to parents. Regular newsletters are sent home and these keep parents informed of staff news and forthcoming events. The school encourages parents to attend the class assemblies and church services. The older pupils are supplied with home/school diaries, which provide parents with an additional means of communication with the teacher. There is an active parent teacher and friends association, which organises social and fundraising events. These are well supported by both parents and staff and provide valuable additional funds for the school. Parents, grandparents and other adults from the community regularly help in the classrooms, on school trips and other activities.
45. The support the school receives from the parents makes a significant contribution to the pupils' learning.

#### **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

46. At the time of the first inspection in 1997, a key issue for improvement was the leadership and management provided by the governing body, senior managers and subject co-ordinators. By the time of the last inspection in 1998, there had been very significant improvement. This has continued and now leadership and management are key strengths

of the school. This, together with the quality of teaching, does most to make Lordsgate a very good school. The climate for learning at the school is excellent; there is a strong desire to continue to improve.

47. The headteacher provides outstanding leadership with the drive, initiative and determination to create a very successful school. She has established a hard working and committed team of staff, is highly regarded by parents and governors and provides clear educational direction. Excellent support is given by the deputy headteacher and key staff; head and deputy share a common sense of purpose and put pupils' achievement first. They know what is happening in classrooms; teaching and learning are at the heart of what they do.
48. A key strength is that the headteacher encourages staff to seek continual improvement by reflecting critically on what they do. Also, there are very effective systems to review and evaluate the work of the school. Teaching is monitored, curriculum planning is checked and pupils' results are recorded, analysed and evaluated. The information is used effectively to inform the priorities for development and set targets for improvement. This is illustrated by the excellent improvement shown since the school was first inspected. There are appropriate systems for the performance management of teachers; the induction of newly qualified teachers is very good and meets all the necessary requirements. The school has gained Investors in People status and the Basic Skills Quality Mark. This is an example of its ability and willingness not only to seek improvement but to have it verified from outside the school.
49. The school uses the strengths of its best teachers to influence the rest. Staff with responsibilities receive delegated tasks appropriate to the school's improvement priorities; they are very clear what they have to do. Co-ordinators develop the curriculum and monitor its effectiveness; they support other teachers by sharing best practice to help them improve; they lead training to increase subject knowledge and order and allocate resources and plan for improvement.
50. Planning for improvement is secure. The school development plan (SDP) includes priorities that are relevant. It is a corporate document, owned by the school; all staff, as appropriate, make a contribution to writing it. A key objective is to raise attainment in literacy; this is recognised throughout the school and excellent strategies are in place to achieve the aim. Although the SDP has criteria against which its success might be measured, these could be sharper with the inclusion of a range of key numerical targets for pupils' attainment. This would be easily accomplished as the school has excellent attainment data on which it could draw.
51. The governing body has a good understanding of the strengths of the school and the challenges it faces. They meet all statutory responsibilities and properly hold the school to account for its performance and improvements. Governors work closely with senior management; there are suitable committee structures. The governing body appraises the work of the headteacher and sets performance targets according to agreed policy. Governors take responsibility for finding out about the school. As well as receiving reports from the headteacher, they visit the school to find out about what goes on, for example in special educational needs, literacy, numeracy and other subjects. The priorities for development they are pursuing are the right ones.
52. The school's capacity to succeed and improve is excellent. Careful management of the budget supports appropriate priorities. For example, the school has recently invested in improving facilities for ICT and in improving teachers' subject knowledge through training in ICT. Proper use is made of specific grants. For example a small schools' grant is supporting additional teaching for higher attaining pupils. The school has agreed financial regulations to secure the proper administration of the delegated budget and other funds.

Overall, very good use is made of available financial resources; spending is linked well to relevant priorities. Spending decisions have a clear rationale. The principles of best value are applied effectively.

53. Staffing and learning resources are broadly sufficient. Education support staff are very well deployed and make a valuable contribution to classroom learning, particularly when working with pupils who have special educational needs. Teachers and support staff make very good use of resources for learning. Investment has been made to support relevant and important curriculum priorities, such as numeracy and ICT. For example, taking into account recent spending on ICT equipment, the school has improved the ratio of computers to pupils to bring it closer to the average.
54. Overall, the accommodation is satisfactory. There has been recent spending to upgrade toilet facilities. The building is clean and is very well looked after by the school caretaker. Teachers use the available space well, for example they make good use of corridor space to house computers, but there is little available teaching space beyond the classrooms that might be used for group work. The Key Stage 2 library is reasonably well stocked and efficiently organised, but its location on the corridor inhibits its effective use. The under-fives have no designated space for outdoor play. This, despite the creativity and skill of teaching and education support staff in making good the shortfall, restricts provision for the Early Learning Goals for physical development.

## **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

55. To further improve this very good school, the governing body should include the following specific matters as key issues in its post-inspection action plan:
- 1: Raise standards of attainment in writing by:
- making this the first priority in the school development plan, and including sharp numerical targets showing the proportion of pupils expected to reach levels 2 and 3 at Key Stage 1 and levels 4 and 5 at Key Stage 2;
  - continuing to implement teaching and learning strategies to target pupils who, without support, might not attain the expected or higher level;
  - monitoring the progress being made by individuals and groups of pupils towards the achievement of the targets for raising standards;
  - developing liaison with other schools to share best practice in improving standards in writing.
- (See paragraphs 66-72)
- 2: Improve provision for pupils' cultural development by:
- drawing more widely on opportunities to include reference to the traditions of other cultures within the curriculum;
  - establishing links with schools where there are pupils with a different cultural heritage and tradition, where possible using the Internet as a means of contact.
- (See paragraph 36)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

46

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

37

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
9	43	35	13	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)	0	200
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	20

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	8
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	49

#### English as an additional language

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

#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	19
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	7

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.9
National comparative data	4.3

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0
National comparative data	0.3

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	12	25

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	8	7	10
	Girls	12	12	12
	Total	20	19	22
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	80 (90)	76 (93)	88 (97)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	7	9	12
	Girls	12	12	12
	Total	19	21	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	76 (90)	84 (97)	96 (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	20	16	36

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	13	14	18
	Girls	14	13	15
	Total	27	27	33
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	75 (88)	75 (81)	92 (88)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	12	14
	Girls	13	13	13
	Total	23	25	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	64 (75)	69 (69)	75 (81)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	80 (75)

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

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	1
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	199
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)	8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25
Average class size	29

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	150

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	99-00
	£
Total income	313942
Total expenditure	302231
Expenditure per pupil	1616
Balance brought forward from previous year	36350
Balance carried forward to next year	48061

## **Results of the survey of parents and carers**

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	199
Number of questionnaires returned	100

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	61	37	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	60	37	3	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	64	35	1	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	44	48	8	0	0
The teaching is good.	63	35	1	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	43	48	6	1	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	82	14	3	1	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	75	25	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	56	36	5	1	2
The school is well led and managed.	76	24	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	69	29	1	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	67	29	3	1	0



## **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**

56. On entry into the reception class the full ability range is represented and children's attainment is in line with the levels expected of most under-fives. On entry to compulsory education soon after becoming five the majority of children have reached the early learning goals for five year olds in all areas of learning with the higher attaining children working within the early stages of the National Curriculum. Teachers and support staff work very effectively as a team. Children make good progress, particularly in their personal and social development. The curriculum is very well planned and meets children's learning needs. Provision for regular outdoor play is limited, but the school has plans to rectify this when the finances allow. The school has improved standards since the previous inspection and is well placed to continue to provide children with a very good start to their education.

#### **Personal, social and emotional development**

57. The personal, social and emotional development of the children is very good. Standards are above average by the age of five. Children demonstrate their growing independence as they work during group and individual activities, for example, when operating the reading programmes on the computers. Children show sensitivity to others as they listen to views and opinions during class discussions. The majority of children are confident, readily engaging in discussions about their work. Relationships are very good. The children are polite and respectful to their teachers and other helpers in the classroom. Children are friendly, self-assured and behave very well; they follow the classroom rules, know the difference between right and wrong and are aware of the impact of their behaviour on others.
58. Classroom resources are used carefully. For example, hand lenses are used appropriately to look at patterns on wallpaper in a mathematical lesson. Children show a sense of wonder when looking at new things. They sit quietly in assembly to hear a story and respond with respect during a short prayer. Children can concentrate on their tasks and activities for extended periods, either when listening carefully to a book during a literacy lesson. or when cutting out shapes for their winter collage group project. They change without fuss for their physical education lessons and move about the school with a developing sense of confidence. Teaching is very good, as every opportunity is taken to develop the children's' skills. All adults provide the children with a very good example in personal and social skills.

#### **Communication, language and literacy**

59. In communication, language and literacy, standards are average by the age of five. Children make good progress in developing their speaking and listening skills. They listen to their teacher and others during shared stories. Vocabulary skills are good as children talk about things they might need to put on a shopping list. Children talk confidently about their own shopping experiences. Listening skills are developed well as children listen intently to taped stories or to instructions given them on their pattern finding tour of the school as pattern detectives. When reading they recognise many familiar words. They know how books are organised and that authors write stories in books. Favourite stories and rhymes are revisited and enjoyed. Children know the difference between story books, information books and simple dictionaries. Early writing skills are very well promoted as children practise writing; for example, dates, shopping lists and spellings to be learnt. Teaching in this area of learning is very good. All adults are competent in teaching basic

skills in literacy and do not miss opportunities which arise to promote the understanding of phonics.

### **Mathematical development**

60. Children make good progress in their mathematical development and standards are average by the age of five. Children read and write numbers to twenty and can fill in the missing spaces on a number line. Higher attaining children can work out the rule governing choices in a simple number game, for example, only numbers five and below are chosen from those supplied. They are also aware of odd and even numbers. Their studies of patterns in the environment showed that they could recognise simple two-dimensional and some three-dimensional shapes. They use their increasing understanding of mathematical language to understand the difference between, for example, smaller, bigger, above, behind, below and beside. Good progress is made in the knowledge, skills and understanding of mathematics because the teaching is very good. Activities are well prepared, challenging and often linked to real life experiences. Support assistants give clear instructions and provide valuable help to the children.

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

61. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world are developed well and they attain standards that are at least average by the age of five. Children begin to understand and appreciate the natural world as they plant seeds and care for them. They know that animals and insects are living creatures that need special care and attention. They learn about the seasons and changes; for example, in the weather, for which they also have a computer programme which can print out simple weather maps, which they devise on screen using the mouse. In groups they look at the effects of salt on ice blocks and extend their scientific knowledge and vocabulary. They begin studies of their school's layout and their local neighbourhood. Early information technology skills are developed as children independently use the computers for accessing their reading scheme stories. They move forwards and backwards through the story and listen to the words to check their understanding of the text. Teaching is very good. Through appropriate topics the children gain knowledge and skills which provide a good foundation for future work in science, history and geography.

### **Physical development**

62. Children make good progress in their physical development and standards are average by the age of five. When using the indoor hall, children use the space well and are aware of how to move to keep themselves and other children safe. They respond quickly to instructions and show enjoyment when moving. Children use scissors skilfully and are given many opportunities to cut out, glue, paint and crayon to develop their handling skills. Construction kits, jigsaws and shape games are handled carefully and appropriately. Teaching is very good and enables children to make good progress.

### **Creative development**

63. Standards in creative development are average by the age of five. Children's creative skills develop well as they make collages and two-dimensional and three-dimensional pictures to show the changing seasons. They learn to mix colours and that different shades suggest feelings, for example, blue for cold winter pictures, yellow for spring sunshine or the cheerful colours of the Benjamin Bunny flowers. Teaching in this area of learning is very good. Many and varied activities are provided which encourage the development of creativity.

64. The teaching of under fives is very good. There is a secure knowledge of how young children learn and develop, resulting in carefully planned activities which build on their current knowledge and then challenge and extend their learning. Children's progress is monitored by frequent assessment, which is used to help in planning future lessons. Expectations of both work and behaviour are high and children respond well, producing good quality work. A high priority is given to the teaching of basic skills in literacy and numeracy, with particular emphasis on developing good speaking and listening skills.
65. Support assistants are used very effectively. They are well briefed by the teacher and they give very good support for children with special educational needs and to small groups working on activities. This careful use of support enables all children to make good progress. The teacher provides good leadership and direction to the early years curriculum and has ensured that it embraces the new government guidelines. Relationships in the classroom are very warm and caring and children respond to this by behaving well and working hard. Relationships with parents are effective.

## **ENGLISH**

66. The end of Key Stage 1 tests in the four years up to and including 1999 show attainment in reading and writing to be above average. In 2000, test results were not as good. Attainment in reading was in line with the national average, but writing was below. In comparison with schools in similar contexts, reading was below average and writing well below. The performance of boys was a little below average, but girls were above. Too few pupils achieved the higher level 3 in writing (4% compared to 9% nationally). Also, the Year 2 class in 2000 contained a significant proportion of pupils with special educational needs in relation to English. Inspection evidence indicates that at the end of Key Stage 1 standards of attainment are good. In particular, standards in writing are much better than in 2000 and above national expectations, with over four times as many pupils on course to achieve level 3.
67. At the end of Key Stage 2, test results in 1998 and 1999, were above the national average. There was a sharp rise in attainment between 1997 and 1999, much greater than the rise nationally. In 2000, test results were below the national average and below the average in comparison with similar schools. Fewer pupils attained the higher level 5 than nationally (17% compared to 29%). Girls' performance in the 2000 national tests was above the average of all girls nationally; the performance of boys was below that of all boys nationally and significantly below that of girls at the school. The Key Stage 2 cohort in 2000 contained a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs, most of whom joined the school either late in Key Stage 2 or in Year 6. The trend in improvement in the school's results over the last four years has been above the national average. Inspection evidence is that attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is at least sound and with good features. The school has targeted the need to raise attainment in writing as a key priority. Inspection evidence indicates that more pupils than in 2000 are working at the higher level 5 in both reading and writing.
68. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs are well supported in their learning and make good progress in relation to their individual education plans. The school set an appropriately challenging target of 85% level 4 and above for the end of Key Stage 2 in 2000. The target was not met because of the absence during the English tests of pupils expected to reach level 5 and the admission of pupils into Year 6 who were working well below the expected level 4.
69. Pupils' confidence in speaking, listening and expressing their ideas develops well as they move through the school. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' speaking and listening is good. They answer questions accurately and articulately and listen carefully and speak

clearly, varying the tone of their voices in conversation. They converse easily about different subjects. Teachers provide good opportunity for pupils to develop their speaking skills; they are adept at drawing in the more reluctant pupils. At the end of a lesson in Year 2, pupils enjoyed listening to each group explain what they had been doing in the lesson. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils attain high standards in their speech. High attaining pupils are particularly fluent and have developed a strong and mature vocabulary. During the inspection this was ably demonstrated in discussion with inspectors around the tables at lunchtime. A group of Year 6 pupils enjoyed acting excerpts from their Christmas production of Alice in Wonderland, remembering the words and speaking with confidence. Average and low ability pupils speak clearly in conversation. Pupils talk aloud confidently in class discussions and many converse in a way that easily holds the listener's attention. This was noticeable in a Year 6 art lesson when pupils discussed paintings by Turner they had discovered on the Internet.

70. By the end of Key Stage 1, standards in reading are good. Pupils have good word recognition skills and a well-developed knowledge of how books work. Their phonic skills are good and they use them effectively to read words they do not at first recognise. Most pupils are confident readers; they enjoy talking about the books they have read. Lower attaining pupils read with good degrees of accuracy in relation to their ability. Teachers and classroom assistants give particularly good support to these pupils; this has a good impact on their interest in reading and on their reading skills. The school tries hard to encourage parents to assist their children in learning to read by regular practice with them at home. At the end of Key Stage 2, standards of attainment in reading are good. Teachers have worked hard to improve standards in reading since the last inspection when standards in Key Stage 2 were unsatisfactory. Pupils in all year groups make good progress; higher attaining pupils are very confident readers. For example, pupils in Year 6 had read all the Harry Potter books and could discuss them in great detail. Although most pupils can explain how to find a book in the school library, pupils' opportunities to use the library for research purposes and individual study are underdeveloped due to the school's shortage of space. The school hopes to relocate the library from its present position in the narrow corridor.
71. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment in writing is good. Significantly more pupils are working at the higher level 3 than in 2000; nearly all pupils are working at or above the expected level. Year 2 pupils learn how to use commas, placing them in the correct places in sentences provided by the teacher and making up some of their own. Their teacher makes the lesson exciting and this sustains the pupils' interest throughout the lesson. All pupils know that sentences start with a capital letter and end with a full stop. The more able pupils can include speech marks correctly in their writing. Year 1 pupils use photographs of themselves in their baby clothes and describe what they are wearing. As pupils look at photographs of baby clothes their parents and grandparents wore, they begin to understand the passage of time and literacy makes a good link with history. Their teacher has a very good rapport with her pupils and this makes them want to do their best to please her.
72. At the end of Key Stage 2, writing is in line with that expected of eleven-year-olds. Teachers provide interesting tasks, which motivate pupils. Pupils in Year 3 write instructions to make a pop-up card and practise their writing skills by turning a story into a play. In Year 4, pupils contrast settings across a range of stories. The teacher and classroom assistants give very good support to the rather large number of pupils with special educational needs who make good progress in their learning. Year 5 pupils identify similarities and differences in different versions of the same story. The class teacher creates a very good learning atmosphere, which encourages pupils to offer answers. In Year 6, the teacher attempts to improve the pupils' narrative skills by creating suspense in a story. All pupils are keen to join in the discussion and many suggest good ideas to improve the writing. The teacher has high expectations and challenges the pupils to

improve their work. Due to the good rapport the teacher and support staff have with the pupils and the pupils' own determination to improve, the target set by the teacher was achieved by most pupils and good progress was made in the lesson. The use of the pupils' literacy skills in other areas of the curriculum is good. For example, in their history lesson Year 3 pupils write about life in ancient Greece and Year 4 contrast life in Burscough with that in India in their geography studies. Most pupils spell accurately, using a range of strategies. Handwriting of the more able pupils is clear and legible; that of other pupils needs to improve and the school is working effectively to achieve this.

73. The development of the National Literacy Strategy throughout the school is very good. The school has rightly made improving pupils' writing a key priority, recognising the need to raise attainment in this area. The strategies that have been introduced are having a positive impact; for example, as seen in the work of pupils in Year 2. Pupils work hard during the literacy hour to improve their vocabulary and knowledge of grammar. Pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to work are very good. Pupils enjoy the challenge of new language and work hard to apply their learning to written tasks. They easily recall what they have learned previously. When writing, pupils generally concentrate well and sustain this until the end of the lesson. Pupils' enthusiasm and good behaviour are significant factors in promoting the good progress in many lessons. There is a very pleasant caring attitude in all classes. Often, when pupils give good answers or read their work out to the class, pupils break out into spontaneous applause.
74. The quality of teaching has many strengths. In the majority of lessons it is good or better and it is never less than satisfactory. In two lessons, one in Year 4 and one in Year 3, the quality of teaching was good, in three, one in Year 6 and two in Year 5, it was very good. In the two lessons seen in Year 2 it was excellent. Good quality teaching makes an important contribution to pupils' learning. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of English; the teacher's subject knowledge in Year 5 is particularly good. Teachers have embraced the structure of the National Literacy Strategy very well. In their planning, learning aims are clear and shared with pupils at the beginning of every lesson. As a result, pupils are aware of what is expected of them; this is very well done in Year 2. Lessons are well paced with very good use made of all available time. This is particularly true of plenary sessions at the end of the lessons, during which all teachers use questioning skills effectively to consolidate and assess pupils' learning. Again, this is an excellent feature of Year 2. Pupils appreciate the opportunity to hear what other groups have been doing. A clear and comprehensive policy is in place. Homework is provided on a regular basis and most pupils are keen to complete it. For example, during the inspection Year 6 pupils were set the task of preparing for a debate about school dinners. The coordinator has worked hard in her leadership of the subject. She monitors planning and the pupils' work. Monitoring of teaching is also carried out and the link governor for literacy has been most supportive. The school allocated sufficient amounts of money to ensure that good resources were in place to support the introduction of the National Literacy Strategy. The school intends to improve the selection of books in the library when funds are available. Assessment is carefully carried out and used very effectively to plan the future curriculum. The subject makes a good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

## **MATHEMATICS**

75. The 2000 end of Key Stage 1 National Curriculum tests show attainment to be above the average of all schools nationally and above that of schools in similar contexts. The proportion of pupils attaining the higher level 3 was well above average. In 1998 and 1999, the school's test results were also above or well above average, the overall trend between these years was similar to that nationally. During the inspection, the standard of work seen in Year 2 was very good. Most pupils are on line to achieve the expected level for seven-

year-olds; a significant number are on course to exceed this. A major contribution to these good and very good results is the high quality of teaching at the end of the key stage.

76. In 2000, at the end of Key Stage 2, national test results at the expected level 4 were average, both in relation to all and to similar schools. At the higher level 5, attainment was average in relation to all schools nationally, but below that of schools in similar contexts. Between 1997 and 1999, attainment rose sharply, much more than the trend nationally, and exceeded the average for all schools. From 1999 to 2000, attainment fell slightly, but during this time a significant number of lower attaining pupils entered the year group. Evidence supplied by the school shows that most pupils who had attended throughout the key stage did as well or better than expected. During the inspection, the standard of work seen in Year 6 was at least satisfactory and, in some lessons, it was good. More pupils than in 2000 are set to achieve the level expected of eleven-year-olds; the proportion of pupils that might attain the higher level is also likely to improve.
77. At the end of Key Stage 1, girls perform better than boys. By the end of Key Stage 2, this gap has narrowed and is not significant. Pupils with special educational needs make progress that is at least good and in some lessons, when adult support is available, it is very good.
78. Pupils in Year 1 make sound gains in learning and cover an appropriate level of work. They count reliably and understand the operations of addition and subtraction. They use mental strategies that they have been taught in order to solve problems. Most pupils have a secure grasp of odd and even numbers and can explain number sequences. Higher attaining pupils make good progress and cover more difficult work such as place value and the use of standard measures.
79. In Year 2, the quality of learning is very good and pupils make very good progress. At times, in some lessons learning is rapid and could not be bettered; this is due to the high quality of teacher-pupil interaction. They count confidently in fives and notice patterns quickly. Pupils' knowledge of doubles and halves is very good; some higher attaining pupils are able to use this knowledge to make quite complex deductions, including finding one half of 148. In one lesson, pupils gained a very good understanding of division as sharing; some knew that the inverse of this operation is multiplication. Pupils are encouraged to explain their thinking and to reason; this good practice enables them to understand what they do.
80. In Year 3, pupils achieve well and make good progress. They cover an appropriate range of work with a very good balance between different aspects of mathematics. In one lesson, pupils quickly learnt how to solve two-part problems and were confident in working with multiples of 100. Pupils know that  $36 + 9$  is equal to  $(36 + 10) - 1$ ; they use this to solve similar calculations. In this same lesson, pupils with special educational needs made very good progress; the teacher skilfully involved them in the lesson. The higher attaining pupils were given the challenge of adding pairs of two digit numbers.
81. In Year 4, standards are broadly in line with those expected for pupils of this age. In the one lesson seen good progress was made; pupils displayed a good knowledge of the multiplication tables for 4 and 8 and could explain patterns and number relationships appropriately. Work was suitably matched to the wide range of ability in this class, where about one-third of pupils are on the register of special educational needs (SEN). The SEN pupils made particularly good progress because of very good support from the teaching assistant and careful planning by the teacher.
82. Pupils in Year 5 make good progress. As in all classes, work is in line with the objectives of the National Numeracy Strategy, and pupils are rapidly acquiring good problem solving

skills. In one lesson, they showed quick recall of multiplication and division facts for the nine times table and in another demonstrated an ability to work in a logical way.

83. Pupils in Year 6 make very good use of mental calculation strategies that they have been taught. They are good at explaining their thinking; this is continually emphasised as a key skill by the teacher. Pupils are very good at calculating percentages mentally and doubling and halving quite complex numbers, including fractions. The quality and pace of learning is never less than good and often very good; this is linked to the very good teaching. This is contributing to the raising of standards at the end of the key stage.
84. The last inspection in 1998 found standards to be sound and improving, particularly in number and mental calculation. This improving trend has continued at an excellent pace. Raising standards in mathematics was a key issue from the school's first inspection in 1997, when standards were found to be less than satisfactory, largely because of poor and unchallenging teaching. The transformation since then is remarkable. Mathematics teaching is strong; standards are never less than satisfactory at both key stages and are frequently better than this. Pupils of all abilities achieve well.
85. Throughout the school, pupils have very positive attitudes to mathematics; they are eager to learn and prepared to rise to challenges with confidence. They are diligent and apply themselves very well to the tasks they are asked to do. Pupils show a well-developed ability to persevere in the face of difficulty; this holds them in good stead when investigating mathematical problems, as exemplified in a Year 6 lesson on area. Pupils behave very well and when required work co-operatively.
86. The most significant factor in promoting good progress and positive attitudes is the consistent delivery of high quality teaching across both key stages. There is no unsatisfactory teaching; 89% is good or better and 33% is very good. The very good teaching has many strengths. Teachers are able to establish a positive rapport with pupils; this holds their attention and secures excellent relationships. Lessons are very well organised; the pace of learning is brisk and adult support and teaching resources are very effectively deployed. Lessons are efficiently organised into three key parts and begin with stimulating oral activities to encourage mental strategies and quick recall of basic number facts. This involves all pupils in calculating in their heads, counting and explaining. During this part of the lesson, teachers carefully explain what pupils are expected to learn, drawing on a very effective range of teaching skills to include questioning and demonstration. In Year 2, the mathematics co-ordinator is particularly adept at this skilful teaching and shows very good subject knowledge, but similar strengths are evident in all classes. During the main part of the lessons, groups of pupils are well organised and tasks are well matched to their abilities – pupils are challenged or have opportunity to consolidate as appropriate to their needs. Teachers are very good at focussing their attention where it is most needed to support pupils in moving forward to new learning. Whole class teaching is seen in all parts of the lesson; it is good throughout the school and very good at the end of both key stages. The assessment of pupils' learning is very good and has many excellent features. Marking is effective in showing pupils what they must do to improve; this is very strong in Year 3. Assessment is used to inform the planning of work; curriculum planning is thorough and relevant. Learning objectives are very clear and taken from the national Framework for Mathematics; they are effectively communicated to pupils during lessons and are used to set pupils targets for improvement.
87. A key factor in promoting strong teaching is the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy, now in its second year. The school now has excellent systems for the teaching and learning of mathematics. This includes: detailed curriculum planning, very effective record keeping and assessment, consistent approaches to teaching mental calculation, thorough monitoring to check that improvement is sustained, the sharing of good practice amongst teachers and teaching assistants and well planned in-service training for all staff

to improve subject knowledge. The mathematics co-ordinator does an excellent job. She exemplifies best practice in her own teaching and has led the introduction of the numeracy strategy to great effect. As a result of this the teaching of basic numeracy skills is strong throughout the school. Pupils have good opportunities to use these skills in other subjects of the curriculum such as science, design and technology and information technology, for example when using spreadsheets to calculate the area of rectangles in Year 6. The school is well positioned to raise standards even further and to build on the current successes.

## **SCIENCE**

88. For pupils aged seven, the 2000 results based on teacher assessments show the proportion of pupils reaching level 2 to be above average, whilst that of pupils at level 3 is close to average.
89. The results of the national tests for eleven-year-olds in 2000 show that pupils' attainment was average, both in comparison with all schools nationally and with schools in similar contexts. With respect to the number of pupils exceeding the expected level the school's results were also close to the national average. The test results at the end of Key Stage 2 improved markedly between 1996 and 1998. Since then they have followed the gradual increase in line with the national trend, so that in 2000 the school achieved its highest ever percentage of pupils at or above the expected level for eleven-year-olds.
90. Observations during the inspection showed that attainment in science is above average at eleven and seven. No significant differences were noted between the attainment of boys and girls. Since the last inspection provision for the subject has improved. The main factors in this improvement have been more emphasis on investigative work, the achievement of consistently high standards of teaching across the school and the continued development of the science policy, scheme and resources. The science coordinator has analysed both national and school based results to find areas for improvement. Procedures for assessment and target setting have also been improved.
91. Pupils in Year 1 learn about themselves, the parts of their bodies and also begin simple experiments observing characteristic of materials and sorting them out in a simple scientific classification. In Year 2, they broaden their work with, for example, the study of magnetism. They are introduced to more complicated experiments, making simple predictions, and the concept of fairness in testing. They record results in simple tables and many of them are working independently in groups.
92. In Year 3, pupils study light and sound, their origins and sources, and in Year 4 electricity and magnetism and some interesting experimental work on testing the hardness of rocks together with a more detailed concept of fair testing. The lesson seen was particularly well resourced and organised. The teacher ensured that all pupils were included and those with special educational needs were fully involved. In Year 5, pupils investigated the quantity of air trapped in various types of soils. Pupils' suggestions on how to measure the air and organise their written records were sensible and of good scientific quality. Year 6 pupils cover a similar topic because of the two year nature of the science programme, but they were given more independence in the investigations; worked in pairs rather than large groups and had extension work at a higher level to complete.
93. Learning across both key stages is good. Pupils enjoy the subject, are careful in handling the resources and other equipment and work well within groups or in the classes as a whole. The overall standard of teaching is very good and of consistent quality across the school. This has a beneficial effect on learning and on pupils' attitudes towards the subject. The planning of lessons is detailed and provides a good mixture of explanation by the



teacher and practical work. Pupils with special educational needs are given work suited to their abilities, always linked to the whole class curriculum, and supported well by teachers and teaching assistants. They make good progress in their learning. Positive features are the good quality of these assistants and their full briefing and involvement in the lesson. Teachers provide a logical sequence of work by following the agreed scheme. The subject knowledge of teachers is good overall and this results in clear explanations, a good use of scientific vocabulary and a brisk pace of lessons. Assessment is regularly carried out; the results are recorded and used effectively to inform future planning. All teachers have appropriately high expectations of pupil behaviour and standards of work.

94. The subject co-ordinator provides good quality leadership and supports colleagues well. Together they have revised the policy and scheme of work for the subject and reviewed resources. Teaching is regularly monitored by the co-ordinator and senior staff as also is the pupils' work. Analysis of test results, performance data and the school's own frequent assessments are regularly undertaken by the co-ordinator to identify areas for improvement. These are included in the annual action plan for the subject and ultimately into the school development plan which has a strong focus on science in 2001/2. The resources for science are in good order, sufficient, catalogued and well stored. In lessons they are effectively used with an appropriate emphasis on safe practices, for example, the wearing of gloves by all pupils and staff handling the soil samples in Year 5 and Year 6. The school has created a wildlife garden, carefully designed to provide activities and resources. It is well used to enrich the science programme and other curricular areas.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

95. Many improvements have been made to the teaching of art since the previous inspection. During the current inspection, displays of work in classrooms and corridors, a scrutiny of pupils' art work in their sketch books and observations of art lessons indicate that most pupils attain above the levels expected for their age. At the end of Key Stage 1, standards of attainment are good. All pupils, including those with special educational needs make good progress. Pupils are given opportunities to take part in a good range of creative activities. In Year 2, pupils use a variety of different media and tools to good effect for creative expression and they enjoy their learning. They study the styles of a range of artists such as Klint, Matisse, Rousseau and Van Gogh and have a good knowledge of this work. They appraise the artists' styles and techniques and then apply this well to their own work. Pupils are very proud of their achievements. This was evident when pupils in Year 2 were showing their three-dimensional collage work made out of junk material.
96. At the end of Key Stage 2, standards of attainment are good. Pupils in Year 3 transfer designs they created in the previous lesson onto the final paper ready for transfer to cloth as part of a project to make a quilt. As they move through the school pupils become more skilled at mixing paint. Year 4 pupils learn to mix warm and cold colours before painting sunflowers in the style of Van Gogh. In Year 5, they create designs in the style of Kandinsky, having mixed the paint to the exact shade that they wished to use. Year 6 build effectively on this, painting scenes in the style of Turner, having observed some of his paintings on the Internet. Painting and observational skills are good; their knowledge of the artist's work is also good. Pupils in Year 6 evaluate their work effectively and comment thoughtfully on how it can be improved.
97. The pupils work with enthusiasm and take pride in discussing their work. They are keen and eager to begin tasks and demonstrate care and attention to detail. They sustain their concentration for long periods and always behave well. Work is always finished and presentation is good. Many older pupils discuss their work constructively and value the opinions of others.

98. The teaching in the art lessons observed was good in one lesson and very good in the other. This is a big improvement from the previous inspection. Teachers are secure in their subject knowledge and understanding of the subject and have high expectations of pupils. They plan effectively, often integrating art activities into other subjects, but also providing opportunities for pupils to develop skills and creativity. The teachers introduce activities well, sharing lesson objectives with pupils. Class monitors provide valuable assistance, helping teachers prepare resources before each art lesson.
99. There is a clear scheme of work that provides good guidance for the staff in promoting a systematic programme of skill development throughout the school. Satisfactory arrangements are made for the assessment of pupils' work. Sketchbooks provide a good indication of pupils' progress as they are passed on from year to year.
100. The school has a satisfactory range of materials for art, which are stored effectively and are easily accessible to all staff. Teachers use materials with care, and appropriate attention is given to safety when pupils are using tools.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

101. Standards in design and technology are above average at the ages of seven and eleven respectively. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Evidence of standards was obtained from lesson observations, including Year 2 and Year 6, a scrutiny of pupils' work and photographic and other records kept by the coordinator.
102. Pupils throughout Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, including those with special educational needs, achieve good progress in their learning. In Year 1, pupils examine and create designs for coats and make simple lever operated toys, whilst in Year 2 pupils were seen designing a puppet for a given purpose and using their knowledge and skills of joining methods to assemble their creation. Both year groups are also taught to safely use cutting and other tools. In Year 3, models operated by pneumatic systems are made and evaluated against agreed design criteria. Year 4 pupils study packaging and, when designing and building a star for a Christmas play, they used a battery powered electrical circuit to make it twinkle. Year 5 and Year 6 pupils design and build more sophisticated projects, for example, carousels powered by electrical motors and also incorporating electronic controls to vary the direction and speed of rotation. Year 6 pupils look in depth at the design and manufacturing processes focussing on slipper design and construction in the lesson seen during the inspection. Across each key stage pupils develop well their ability to evaluate articles in terms of their practical use, design, strength and colour. They understand that the potential user is an important consideration when designing anything.
103. In all classes, pupils demonstrate an enthusiasm for the subject and take a pride in what they produce. They are willing to keep trying if at first their work does not meet the criteria outlined for the task. A strong feature of the lessons observed was the way in which pupils willingly cooperated with, and helped each other.
104. Teaching is overall of very good quality and sometimes excellent. It strongly supports and enhances the pupils' acquisition of skills and knowledge. Teachers plan in detail, with tasks that are well organised and resourced and linked to clear learning objectives displayed for the pupils to see. Teachers arouse interest and enthusiasm, demonstrate effectively the techniques to be used and make good use of materials. Lessons provide very good learning experiences for the pupils and they are encouraged to work independently and develop their own ideas. The ways in which teachers plan together and use the scheme of work, coordinator support and guidance to ensure that each lesson has a very clear framework covering the elements of the design and technology curriculum, is a strong and

consistent feature of the school's teaching of this subject and promotes the good standards achieved.

105. There are links to other curricular areas, for example, the Year 6 slipper topic utilises pupils' knowledge of materials acquired in science lessons and in all classes the discussions and written evaluations concerning the projects enhance pupils' literacy.
106. The subject coordinator provides a clear lead and strong support to colleagues. Teaching is monitored by herself and senior staff. The subject's policy and scheme of work have been revised to incorporate the latest government guidelines. Resources are sufficient, well stored and there is an appropriate emphasis on their safe usage in lessons.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

107. From the lesson observations, discussions with pupils and teachers, examination of pupils' work and school displays, the inspection findings show attainment in geography is above average at the ages of seven and eleven. This is an improvement on the previous inspection. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in acquiring skills and knowledge over time.
108. In Year 1, pupils know about the seasons, they keep simple weather records, start to become familiar with maps of the British Isles and begin to acquire elementary mapping skills using their locality as a basis for map construction. They also widen their geographical vocabulary and knowledge of other areas of the British Isles by using the book, Katie Morag and the Two Grandmothers, as a stimulus for comparing their experiences of the local area with the Scottish Highlands. Pupils in Year 2 develop their mapping skills further and make more detailed comparisons of Burscough, Ormskirk and the Scottish Highlands. In Year 3 pupils consider environmental issues such as litter or noise and their impact on the school and use good quality trail guides produced by the coordinator to examine Burscough in depth. Year 4 pupils examine the factors governing the origins of settlements, compare and contrast Ormskirk and Southport and look at the wider world by studying the similarities and differences between Gudur in India and Burscough.
109. The water cycle and the physical features of rivers are studied in Year 5 and in Year 6 because of the two year cycle of the geography curriculum. This ensures that when mixed age classes occur all pupils have their full geographical entitlement without repetitive activities. The Year 6 pupils undertake more detailed surveys and experimental work. Both year groups visit Hothersall Lodge and conduct experimental work on river flow and examine river cross sections at first hand.
110. In both key stages progress in learning is good. Teaching, from lesson observations, pupils' demonstrated knowledge and skills and written work, is of good quality across the key stages. Classes are well prepared and managed. Teachers know the subject well and use their own enthusiasm to raise pupils' level of knowledge, understanding, interest and involvement. Resources are well used to enhance the quality of lessons taught and promote the subject's vocabulary and skills.
111. The coordinator provides good quality leadership and support to colleagues. Together, with advice from the local education authority, they have updated the subject's policy and scheme of work to match the needs of the pupils and the latest government guidelines. Enrichment for the subject is supplied by arranged visits; for example, to Southport, and by the high quality materials the coordinator has prepared. These include trail guides covering the school and Burscough and also portfolios of material to guide and support both local

and environmental investigations. Teaching and pupils' work is also regularly monitored by senior staff and this helps to maintain the good standards seen.

112. There are cross-curricular links with other subject areas; for instance, the study of rocks seen in Year 4 science and the links made to those formed in river systems. Resources for the subject are sufficient and well catalogued for ease of access.

## **HISTORY**

113. Inspection findings from observing lessons, discussions with teachers and pupils and examining pupils' work, both in books and on display, show that pupils' work is above average for seven and eleven-year-olds and progress in learning is good for most pupils, including those with special educational needs at each key stage. This is an improvement in standards since the previous inspection.
114. Pupils in Year 1 develop a good sense of the order in which events in history occur and enquiry skills through studying time, the calendar and the seasons together with the events of their own lives from birth onwards. These are linked into a very high quality family tree display showing their families over two or more generations and naming the relationships between the branches. A pupil's grandparent visited the class to describe and demonstrate toys from the past. Pupils showed great interest and examined them carefully. The subsequent discussion extended their historical knowledge and vocabulary significantly. In Year 2, this theme is broadened to include how families lived in times past and the kinds of houses, food and appliances, which formed part of their lives. A visitor also provided a richly rewarding experience for the pupils who, by their courtesy, attentive listening and asking appropriate questions, ensured that they greatly enhanced their knowledge of family life and conditions during the Second World War.
115. Year 3 pupils learn about life in Ancient Greece. They visited a Liverpool museum to examine primary evidence and the lesson observed showed that they could recall many details of that society, its artefacts and some links, down the ages, to ourselves. The two-year curriculum cycle, to ensure pupils in mixed age classes, when present, do not repeat work, means that Year 4 pupils also study Ancient Greece and have the visit. However, their depth of study and variety of skills taught are greater. In Year 5 and Year 6, pupils learn about life in Tudor times. They study the family links of the Tudor monarchs, their reigns and some other famous people of the period. The records of hearth taxes in local villages, the interpretation of period handwriting and historical artefacts enrich their studies and relate them to the pupils' awareness of these places and items today. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Pupils enjoy their lessons and when spoken to readily recalled work done previously.
116. Teaching is of good quality overall and sometimes very good. Strong positive features are teacher enthusiasm, good subject knowledge, effective use of visits and well-chosen visitors. Lessons are prepared well, planned in detail and often link with other curricular areas; for example, the work in Year 6 describing elements in the life of William Shakespeare and the Globe Theatre.
117. The newly appointed coordinator provides support to colleagues and is involved in monitoring, with senior colleagues, both the planning and teaching of the subject. Together with colleagues and the LEA advisory service, she has updated the subject's policy and ensured that the scheme of work for history matches the latest government guidelines. Resources are well catalogued and stored. They are sufficient and are often supplemented by loans from the museum and library services of the local authority, as well as teachers' and parents' own collections.

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

118. Evidence was obtained from observing pupils using the computers during class lessons, an analysis of their work, teachers' plans and pupils' records. Pupils attain satisfactory standards by the end of both key stages. Overall, there has been sound improvement since the last inspection.
119. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment is satisfactory. They develop satisfactory levels of mouse control and keyboard skills. They know the main functions on the keyboard and use the mouse to control a programme. They can load, save and print using a range of programmes. They use appropriate specific subject vocabulary, such as "mouse" and "keyboard". Pupils in Year 1 use computers to practise addition of money, they add the cost of items shown on the screen and select the appropriate coins to provide the correct change. They have a range of opportunities to develop word-processing skills by writing pieces of prose. They use capital letters, the delete key, full stops and the space bar appropriately. Year 2 pupils create pictures and use different colours to good effect. Pupils have learned to control a robot and make use of listening centres in their literacy lessons.
120. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment is satisfactory. They build appropriately on their previous experience, continuing to develop their computer skills. Pupils can use the computers efficiently for word-processing, employing a range of fonts and graphical styles. They show good progress in Year 6 as they make spread sheets to investigate the perimeter of different shapes, working in a logical manner as they follow instructions on the screen. Higher attaining pupils quickly learn how to apply the relevant mathematical formula to their work. Pupils use CD-ROMs to find information; for example, about Ancient Greece in history lessons and India in their geography work. Pupils in Year 6 are able to use the Internet to research information; for example, on the work of the artist Turner.
121. Pupils have good attitudes and enjoy working on computers and do so sensibly. They show keen interest and concentrate well. Pupils with computers at home enjoy using them and some pupils use them to practise skills they have learned at school. This makes a significant contribution to the standards gained.
122. Teachers in both key stages plan work effectively to ensure that pupils meet a wide range of aspects of information and communication technology. Pupils learn from one another as they sit in pairs or small groups at the computers or listening centres, but the school does not have accommodation for a computer suite and this restricts opportunity for whole class teaching.
123. Teachers and teaching assistants were observed teaching pupils in small groups during other lessons; the quality of this support was good. One lesson with a whole class was seen in Year 3, and the quality of teaching was good. Teachers have improved their subject knowledge since the time of the last inspection and further training is planned. This enables them to offer good explanations and to effectively sort out problems as they arise. Teachers share learning objectives with pupils to enable them to be clear about what they are expected to achieve. Teachers give clear demonstrations with well-sequenced instructions. They develop basic skills effectively by breaking down the learning into different parts and then providing time for all pupils to consolidate their skills. Teachers make good use of the available resources to maximise pupils' learning. The school has recently ordered additional resources and this will bring the quality of provision up to that expected for this size of school.
124. The coordinator has taken over responsibility for the subject at the beginning of the academic year. She is knowledgeable and enthusiastic and has already made a positive

impact on the subject. She has devised systems for self-assessment and a list of skills suitable for each age group. The school is in the process of implementing these systems.

## **MUSIC**

125. Standards of attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 are satisfactory overall and there are some good features. No lessons were seen in Year 2 and it is not possible to make a judgement on attainment at the end of Key Stage 1. In the one lesson seen at Key Stage 2 pupils, including those with special educational needs, made good progress in their use of compositional skills. At the school's first inspection in 1997 music was unsatisfactory at Key Stage 2. The school has made good progress since then.
126. The one lesson seen at Key Stage 1 was in Year 1. Here learning proceeds at a good pace as pupils are taught about long and short sounds. They follow and repeat a given rhythm well, for example through clapping and tapping. Pupils are quick to understand the use of simple notation to represent the sounds they make. They gain a good understanding of the duration of a sound in relation to symbols and use a range of percussion instruments with reasonable skill and certainly with enthusiasm.
127. In Year 6, pupils work in unison to build up a texture of sound by the use of voice; increasing and decreasing volume appropriately on a given signal from the teacher. There is very effective use of a range of instruments, including keyboard and tape recorder, to compose pieces related to given stimulus words, such as excited and nervous. Pupils show good compositional skills in producing sound to evoke the feelings associated with these key words and they record their ideas in a systematic way, building well on their understanding of notation.
128. In both the lessons seen, the quality of teaching was good. Lessons are well organised: objectives are clear and shared with pupils at the start so they know what they are expected to learn. Teachers have very good class management skills and lessons are brisk and purposeful; this engages pupils' attention. A key strength is that teachers provide pupils with opportunity to work co-operatively so, for example in Year 6, they have to justify their composition to others and evaluate what they have done. Pupils listen very well. Behaviour is very good; pupils are enthusiastic and work productively.
129. The school has a good policy statement and there is a scheme of work that sets out what will be learnt by pupils of different ages. Resources are sufficient in quantity, range and quality; pupils are careful to look after instruments. This represents a very significant improvement since the first inspection. Musical activity is a very positive feature of school life. Assemblies make good use of music and pupils have opportunity to play a range of instruments as an extra-curricular activity, including recorder and violin. There is a school choir. They were heard singing beautifully during the inspection; at times during the year they take their singing into the community, for example, performing to senior citizens. In assemblies, pupils sing with clarity and good intonation. Children are encouraged to take part in productions; parents speak very positively about these opportunities and clearly value them highly. Another good feature is the use made of music to support other areas of the curriculum such as ICT, dance, history, geography and art.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

130. Overall, standards are good at the end of both key stages. Pupils make good progress; in the best lessons, the rate of learning is quick and they make very good progress. This marks a significant improvement from the first inspection. At Key Stage 1, pupils move confidently and safely about the hall during gymnastics. They run, jump and balance with care and with a good degree of skill. They evaluate what they do to make it better. Pupils in Year 3 work well co-operatively when practising games skills; they understand the need for

rules. During a very good gymnastics lesson in Year 4, pupils improve the control, balance and fluency of their movement. All pupils are involved very well and learning is very good; a particular strength is the skill used by the teacher to draw in pupils with special educational needs who make very good progress as a result. In a Year 5 dance lesson, pupils are able to put together a series of movements, such as hop, skip and jump, to form a fluent sequence. They work well to evaluate, refine and improve the quality of their dance. Pupils in Year 6 are very successful in developing the key skills required for effective teamwork, such as passing, finding and moving into space and shooting at targets with accuracy. Pupils show good levels of skill in terms of positional sense, the use of the ball and an ability to work for each other. The school provides a full range of team games where these skills can be further refined. For example, pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 were seen playing football and netball – even snow showers did nothing to dampen their enthusiasm. Other extra-curricular activities in physical education include cricket, rounders, and judo.

131. Teaching is good. A Year 4 lesson was very good. All teachers are well organised and have clear objectives for their lessons. They skilfully involve all pupils and have good control of behaviour by establishing excellent relationships. They are very good at getting pupils to work co-operatively and to follow instructions and rules. All lessons begin with an appropriate warm-up activity. The pace is always brisk and pupils put plenty of energy into their work and concentrate well. Teachers demonstrate well; in one lesson in Year 4 the teacher performed a cartwheel and pupils responded with genuine applause. All teachers emphasise the need for safety. Pupils respond very well to the teaching and are very well behaved and hard working.
132. The school is working towards the 'Active Mark', an award which involves an external assessment of the quality of the curriculum. The curriculum is well planned and there is a suitable progression for the acquisition of key skills. An action plan sets out how the curriculum will be monitored to ensure the planned objectives are taught. The school provides an extensive range of extra-curricular activities in physical education to include football, netball, cricket, rounders, and judo. The co-ordinator leads the subject well and has provided demonstration lessons for colleagues to observe. A nominated governor has responsibility for liaison with the school in respect of the subject and there are strong links with the community.