

INSPECTION REPORT

HALSNEAD COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Prescot

LEA area: Knowsley

Unique reference number: 104426

Headteacher: Mr C J Rowling

Reporting inspector: Mrs L Brackstone
21872

Dates of inspection: 8th – 10th October 2001

Inspection number: 195054

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Driveway Whiston Prescot Merseyside L35 3TT
Telephone number:	(0151) 4778130
Fax number:	(0151) 4778131
E-mail address:	enquire@halsnead.demon.co.uk
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr T Sutton
Date of previous inspection:	9 th June 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		
21872	Lorna Brackstone	Registered inspector
19558	Michael Hammond	Lay inspector
24342	Denise Franklin	Team inspector
22577	Lady Margaret Hart	Team inspector

The inspection contractor was:

PPI Group Ltd
7 Hill St
Bristol
BS1 5RW

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Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Halsnead is an urban school situated in Whiston village, which is to the south of Prescott. It is much bigger than other primary schools, with 413 pupils on roll including a nursery, which has 104 places available. The numbers of boys and girls on roll are similar. Forty per cent of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals and this is above the national average. No pupils use English as an additional language. Twenty-one per cent of pupils are identified as having special educational needs, including some with statements, and this is broadly in line with national averages. The percentage of pupils with statements is one per cent and is broadly in line with the national average. The vast majority of pupils are of white UK heritage. Four pupils are of black Caribbean heritage. Pupils come from a mixture of local authority and private housing. There are above average levels of unemployment and disadvantage in the area. There are currently 78 children in the Foundation Stage, including 18 part-timers in the Nursery and 30 children in each of the two Reception classes. There are 12 other classes, accommodating pupils from Years 1 to 6. This includes two classes per year group. The management of the school consists of the headteacher, deputy headteacher, two assistant headteachers and the Foundation Stage co-ordinator. One assistant headteacher manages Years 1 and 2 whilst the other has responsibility for Years 3 and 4. Children start the nursery with poor levels of skills, particularly in speaking and listening.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Halsnead is an excellent school that provides the highest quality education for all its pupils. The children start in the Nursery when they are three with standards that are well below those nationally expected for this age. However, by the age of 11 they have achieved very good standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. This is as a result of excellent teaching and exceptional leadership and management by the headteacher and key staff. The school provides excellent value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils make excellent progress and, by the age of 11, have achieved very high standards in English, mathematics and science.
- The overall quality of teaching and learning is excellent.
- Pupils of all ages have exceptional attitudes to learning. Their behaviour is excellent and they are highly motivated.
- The leadership and management of the headteacher and his senior staff are excellent.
- The school's performance is monitored and evaluated to the highest standard.
- All available resources are used exceptionally well and best value is always sought.
- The school provides a very good range of learning opportunities.
- The school takes very good care of its pupils and personal development is a very strong feature.

What could be improved

- The school has no weaknesses.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in June 1997 and has made excellent progress since then. The adoption of nationally recommended schemes of work has ensured that there is a consistent progression of knowledge and skills throughout the school. Higher achievers are clearly identified in the planning and successfully attain the advanced levels in the standardised tests. Assessment is an integral part of the school day and is used very effectively to target both groups and individuals for

specific tasks. The number of support staff is good and they ensure that all pupils are not only fully included in lessons but are also given every possible opportunity to make the best possible progress. In the previous inspection, standards in all core subjects were average. However, they have improved significantly and are now above average at the end of Year 2 and very high at the end of Year 6. The quality of teaching was satisfactory overall but it is now excellent because of the consistent monitoring and evaluation that take place throughout the school. Expenditure is very tightly linked to the school development plan and excellent use is now made of resources. The previous inspection judged the leadership and management of the headteacher to be satisfactory. However, it is quite evident from the exceptional quality of teaching and learning and the very good standards of the pupils' work that it is now of excellent quality. The school is strongly committed to improving further and has an excellent capacity to succeed.

STANDARDS

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

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

Key

very high A*

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

Inspection evidence shows pupils make excellent progress and, by Year 6, have achieved very high standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Children start Nursery at the age of three with poorly developed skills in all areas of learning and speaking and listening skills are particularly weak. However, by the end of Year 6 standards are very high. In the Year 2000 National Curriculum tests, the performance of pupils in English, mathematics and science were very high in comparison to all other schools. When compared with similar schools, they were in the highest five per cent. These standards have been maintained and are reflected in the unconfirmed results of Year 2001. Very good progress is made in Nursery and Reception and standards in all areas of learning are broadly in line with nationally expected levels by the time they are ready to start Year 1 of the National Curriculum. Very good progress is also made in Years 1 and 2. This is confirmed in the National Curriculum tests of Year 2000 where standards in reading and mathematics were well above the average. Standards in the teacher assessment tests in science were also above average but standards in writing were in line with the national average. When compared to results in similar schools, the performance of pupils in reading and mathematics was in the highest five per cent. Results in writing were well above those in comparison to similar schools. The good standards in reading, mathematics and science have been maintained whilst results in writing have improved in the most recent unconfirmed test results of Year 2001. The very high standards in English, mathematics and science have a positive impact on the standards of other subjects. For example, by Year 6 standards are consistently very good in history, geography and religious education. Very high standards are also achieved in information and communication technology. This is because it is used exceptionally well by all staff to promote learning across the curriculum.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Excellent. Pupils' attitudes are exceptional. They are very well motivated and keen to succeed. All pupils display high levels of enthusiasm.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Excellent. Pupils' behaviour is exceptional both in lessons and around the school. Playtimes are calm, with pupils taking responsibility for their own actions.
Personal development and relationships	Excellent. The pupils are polite, considerate and friendly. There are outstanding levels of mutual respect amongst pupils and between pupils and their teachers.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Attendance levels are close to the national average and most pupils are punctual.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Very good	Very good	Excellent

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 overall quality of teaching and learning is of excellent quality. During the inspection, 24 lessons or part lessons were observed. Five of these lessons were of good quality, 12 were of very good quality and 7 were excellent. All teachers are outstanding professionals and excellent role models who provide a high quality-learning environment for their pupils. Their subject knowledge is very good and the basic skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology are taught very well. Teachers have high expectations of behaviour and achievement. Questioning skills are used exceptionally well and this ensures that pupils are continually challenged. Excellent use is made of praise and pupils are encouraged to be involved in their own learning. Teachers and support staff work very closely together and are clearly focused on providing high quality learning. Very good use is made of time and lessons move at a very effective pace.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. The Foundation Stage curriculum is of high quality and has been planned to ensure that all children in both the Nursery and Reception have consistent experiences that are rich in practical activities. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 receive a high quality curriculum that is well balanced and meets all their needs very appropriately.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Pupils with special educational needs are fully integrated into all aspects of school life and have equal access to the curriculum. Individual educational plans clearly identify specific objectives, which are carefully monitored by both class teachers and the special educational needs co-ordinator.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. Provision for moral and social development is excellent. Pupils clearly know the difference between right and wrong and are encouraged to grow and develop as members of a community that goes beyond the school. Provision for spiritual and cultural development is very good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good. The self-confidence of all children is very well developed from the time that they start the Nursery. Pupils are valued as individuals and they are expected to do their best.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Excellent. The headteacher has a very clear vision for the school and is fully committed to promoting the highest standards. His senior management team are very experienced and provide exceptional support.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. Statutory requirements are appropriately met. Governors have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and support the headteacher well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Excellent. Performance data from national tests are carefully analysed and very clear targets are set for improvement. Monitoring procedures are rigorous and include very effective methods to achieve accurate evaluations.
The strategic use of resources	Excellent. Strategic planning is excellent and all available resources are used very well. The use of information and communication technology is exceptional. Best value is always sought and this is clearly evident through the excellent procedures of monitoring and evaluating.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school has high expectations for all pupils. • The quality of teaching is good. • It is well led and managed. • Their children like coming to school. • They feel comfortable approaching the school with questions or problems. • They make good progress. • Behaviour is good in school. • The school helps their children to become mature and responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of activities outside of lessons. • The right amount of homework.

The inspection team supports all the positive views of the parents but are unable to agree with the negative views. Inspectors feel that the amount of homework given and the range of extra-curricular activities provided are appropriate for the age of the pupils.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

Pupils make excellent progress in school and, by the end of Year 6, they have achieved very high standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science.

1. Halsnead successfully creates an exceptional learning environment where all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make outstanding progress. Children start the Nursery at the age of three with poorly developed skills in all areas of learning. Speaking and listening skills are particularly weak. Very good progress is made in both the Nursery and Reception classes and standards in all areas of learning are broadly in line with nationally agreed levels by the time that they are ready to start Year 1 of the National Curriculum. Pupils maintain this very good progress and this is confirmed by the National Curriculum test results of 2000 at the end of Year 2, when well above average standards in reading and mathematics were achieved. Standards in the teacher assessment tests in science were also above average. Standards in writing were in line with the national average. These good standards in reading, mathematics and science have been maintained and results in writing have improved in the most recent unconfirmed test results of Year 2001. When compared to results in similar schools, the performance of pupils in reading and mathematics was in the highest five per cent. Results in writing were well above those in similar schools. Pupils continue to make very good progress and, by the time that they are at the end of Year 6, they have achieved very good standards in English, mathematics and science. When compared with similar schools, standards in English, mathematics and science were in the highest five per cent of the National Curriculum test results of Year 2000. The unconfirmed results of Year 2001 reflect a similar pattern.
2. By the end of Year 2, pupils are able to write confidently for a wide variety of purposes, which include story-writing, descriptive work, the setting out of instructions and historical accounts. They use full stops and capital letters accurately to create appropriate sentences and many of the pupils understand the correct use of speech and exclamation marks. These are used very well to enliven their work in all areas of the curriculum and make creative stories full of interest and appeal. In mathematics they are confident with numbers up to 100 and add and subtract accurately. They have a clear understanding of the two, five and ten times tables. Pupils work confidently with halves and quarter fractions and this has a positive impact on their ability to tell the time accurately. They recognise two and three-dimensional shapes and make good use of centimetre measures to work out the length of a variety of different materials. In science, the pupils have a good understanding of the need to eat healthy foods and the importance of looking after teeth. They compare man-made materials with those created naturally and are able to label accurately the parts of a plant. The pupils have good understanding of circuits and use their knowledge of electricity to discuss possible hazards at home. Their mathematical and scientific knowledge are used well to promote learning across the curriculum and pupils discuss their findings confidently, responding positively to each other's suggestions.
3. By the end of Year 6, pupils use very successfully a wide range of writing styles and techniques. They clearly understand the differences between formal and informal letter writing and record interviews and diary entries in an appropriate format. Creative writing is of a very high quality with pupils making excellent use of descriptive vocabulary, direct speech and exclamation marks. For example, one pupil captured the mood of a particular piece of writing by referring to a character 'stumbling down the twisted street'. Their writing is consistently very neat and final pieces of work are presented very well. In mathematics the pupils use addition, subtraction, multiplication and division accurately to solve problems. They use fractions and decimals well to describe proportions and carefully check their findings with a calculator. Higher achievers work comfortably with negative numbers and work confidently with angles. All pupils are able to solve simple problems and seek solutions by trying out a variety of different ideas. For example, one Year 6 class solved a problem that involved the ratio 1:2. By the end of the lesson they were all able to work out how many red and blue beads would be required to make 60 using this ratio of 1:2. In science, pupils very confidently describe the separation of mixtures by sieving, filtering, and evaporating. They carefully illustrate electrical circuits, which are complete with switches and accurate use of other symbols. The pupils use their scientific knowledge very well to work

out solutions to problems. For example, they find ways to gain fresh drinking water when marooned on a desert island.

4. The very good results in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science have a positive impact on the standards of other subjects. For example, by Year 6 standards are consistently very good in history, geography and religious education. Very high standards are also achieved in information and communication technology because it is used exceptionally well to promote learning across the curriculum.
5. The standards achieved by the pupils in all the core subjects of English, mathematics and science have improved significantly since the last inspection when they were satisfactory overall at the end of Years 2 and 6.

The overall quality of teaching and learning are excellent.

6. During the inspection, 24 lessons or part lessons were observed. Five of these lessons were of good quality, twelve were of very good quality and seven were excellent. This, coupled with evidence from pupils' previous work and planning throughout the school, indicates that the overall quality of teaching and learning is of excellent quality. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection when the quality of teaching was satisfactory. All teachers are outstanding professionals who provide a high quality learning environment for their pupils. Teachers provide excellent role models; they work very closely together as a team and have mutual respect for each other. For example, two classes often work together on particular themes. This was evident when the two Year 5 classes were involved in a dance project. In this session, one teacher led the dance whilst her colleague's skills were employed operating the video equipment. The mutual support between these two teachers was very evident and most certainly had a very positive impact on the work of the pupils who were also required to work co-operatively and in collaboration within their own groups.
7. Teachers and support staff also work very closely together in classrooms and are well focused on providing the highest quality learning. It is quite clear that they really enjoy working with the pupils and are fully involved in all parts of school life. For example, the teachers willingly partake in lunch duties and their high profile during this time has a very positive impact on the quality of the pupils' behaviour. Excellent quality relationships are enjoyed between staff and pupils at all times in the school day and this has a very good impact on the quality of learning.
8. Teachers have very high expectations of behaviour and achievement. The pupils are made fully aware of what is considered acceptable behaviour. Excellent use is made of praise to encourage positive attitudes to work and poor behaviour is not tolerated. Teachers provide clear objectives for each lesson and pupils develop a good understanding of their own learning when these are reviewed at the end of each session. For instance, in an excellent Year 6 numeracy lesson, the teacher asked if the pupils 'felt that they were getting there'? They were able to assess for themselves the progress that they had made.
9. The subject knowledge of the teachers is very good throughout the school and the basic skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) are taught very well. For example, in a Year 2 literacy lesson, the teacher very skilfully chose a poem about 'Rainy nights' that would appeal to the class. She used this poem very well as a way to extend their vocabulary and introduce the concept of rhyming words. Throughout the school very good use is made resources such as well-produced large books for all the class to share and electronic boards that are linked to computers. Very good use is also made of time and lessons always move at a very effective pace. This is achieved successfully through the skilful use of time limits and deadlines. This was evident in a Year 6 literacy session where pupils were made aware of the time that they had available to write a poem. They were also made aware of the need to review it with their class before presenting their efforts to their peers in the other parallel year group class. Teachers make excellent use of all adults within the classrooms. This includes very skilful use of nursery nurses in the Foundation Stage and support staff expertly targeting groups in Years 1 to 6. For instance, a nursery nurse was skilfully deployed making detailed observations of individual pupils during the plenary session of a literacy lesson. In addition to this, excellent use is made of the three 'Graduate Trainee Teachers' who provide high quality

support in their designated classes. For example, in a Year 2 literacy session the teacher made effective use of the 'Graduate Trainee Teacher' to demonstrate high frequency words in the shared text. In a Year 3 class a 'Graduate Trainee Teacher' successfully supported lower achieving pupils by helping them find right angles in the classroom and this ensured that they were fully included in the lesson.

10. All teachers use their questioning skills exceptionally well and this ensures that the pupils are continually challenged. Staff have an excellent knowledge of their pupils and ensure that they are fully involved in the sessions. This was particularly evident in a Year 3 lesson where pupils were learning how to write play scripts. The teacher introduced the lesson by sharing a conversation based on the story of Rumpelstiltskin and used high quality language to portray the conversation. The spontaneous applause made it clear that all pupils were totally immersed in the content of this excellent lesson. Pupils appreciate the continual high quality verbal feedback they receive throughout the school. Very good use is made of marking in Years 1 to 6 to inspire and support the pupils further in their learning. Homework is regularly given and is used well to recap on previous learning.

Pupils of all ages have exceptional attitudes to learning. Their behaviour is excellent and they are highly motivated.

11. The quality of life in the school is excellent and there is a happy and purposeful atmosphere, which makes pupils want to come to school. Pupils' attitudes to work are excellent and this has a significant impact on their progress. They are very well motivated and keen to succeed. Throughout the school, the pupils settle quickly in lessons, they are conscientious and work hard. They take a full and active part in the activities and display high levels of enthusiasm. They produce very good amounts of neatly presented work. They are very independent in their learning and work in small groups out of their teacher's vision because they are trustworthy. Pupils listen enthusiastically to the views of others and willingly share resources.
12. The pupils' behaviour is excellent. This is the result of a consistent and thoughtful approach to behaviour management by the headteacher, his leadership team and all staff. Consistently good behaviour is acknowledged. For example, in a Year 4 religious education lesson the pupils eagerly received house points for good behaviour. Incidents of misbehaviour are dealt with swiftly and sensitively. Parents confirm that behaviour is of a good standard. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their own actions and to conform to the school's high expectations of behaviour. Playtimes are generally calm, social occasions where pupils take part together in activities and dialogues with each other. The headteacher is a regular visitor to the playground and his presence has a very positive impact on behaviour.
13. From the time that they start the Nursery, the children are encouraged to treat one another with consideration, politeness, friendliness and care. Positive values and attitudes are promoted through all aspects of the school's life and work. There are outstanding levels of mutual respect amongst pupils and between pupils and their teachers.

The leadership and management of the headteacher and his senior staff are excellent

14. One of the main reasons for the success of the school is the outstanding leadership of the headteacher. He has a very clear vision for the school and is fully committed to promoting the highest standards from both his staff and pupils. The upward trend in the standards achieved by its pupils is just one way in which the school has been successful in fulfilling its aims.
15. The headteacher has very skilfully managed to build an excellent leadership team around him who willingly take responsibility and lead by example. His senior management team are very experienced and provide exceptional support. The deputy headteacher is exceptionally talented and brought with her considerable experience from working within the local education authority. She has a substantial influence on the teaching and learning within the school and provides high quality support and motivation to staff and pupils. The assistant headteacher for Years 1 and 2 has also brought with her a wealth of experience from her part-time advisory work within the local

education authority. The deputy headteacher and the two assistant headteachers are successful mentors to trainee teachers who are recognised by local teacher training institutions as exceptional professionals. The two assistant headteachers have worked together to devise a training plan for 'Graduate Trainee Teachers' and its successful application has ensured the placement of three students during the current academic year. This has ensured additional staffing, funding for the school and continuing professional development for all staff as they work together with these new colleagues. In addition, the school takes student teachers from two local Universities and is highly regarded as providing excellent quality placements. The Foundation Stage Manager has been involved in the planning and assessing of a course for the training of teacher support assistants. This has a very positive impact on the quality of the support staff at Halsnead. She also has particular expertise in early education and has very successfully implemented the new Foundation Stage curriculum in both the Nursery and Foundation Stage.

The school's performance is monitored and evaluated to the highest standard.

16. One of the reasons why the monitoring and evaluation process is so successful at Halsnead is because everyone has a very good idea of what needs to be done. This is because the process of development planning is shared throughout the school. Performance data from the National Curriculum tests and assessment information are carefully analysed. Strengths and weaknesses are rapidly identified and very clear targets are set for improvement. Monitoring procedures are rigorous and are achieved in a wide variety of ways. This involves subject leaders, classroom teachers, governors and the headteacher. The quality of teaching is formally monitored by the headteacher on a fortnightly basis and priority given to the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. During these visits, notes are made of discussions held with groups of pupils, pupils' work is reviewed and the planning is monitored. Discussions are also held with all adults involved in the class and then the outcomes shared with individual teachers.
17. Very good use is made of new technology to develop further systems of monitoring and evaluating. This has been possible through the development of the school's television network and this has ensured that a highly effective method of monitoring is in place. Teachers video their own performances and those of the pupils. Although access to the videotapes is only in agreement with the teachers involved, because of the high professionalism of the staff they are frequently willing to share their outcomes. Discussions have led to overall agreements on evaluations and these have then been formalised into the next identified steps in professional development days. For example, team teaching and the formalisation of procedures and policies have been highlighted as priorities for development since self-assessment by video was introduced.
18. Informal monitoring also takes place through staff working alongside colleagues and with targeted groups of pupils. Core subject leaders and the special educational needs co-ordinator also monitor planning and are released regularly from class to observe specific aspects of their subject.

All available resources are used exceptionally well and best value is always sought.

19. Halsnead is highly effective because it makes maximum use of all available resources and the budget is systematically linked to improvements that will benefit the pupils. For instance, an exceptional feature of the school is the way in which ICT is used to promote the very high standards evident in the school. The headteacher works very closely with the ICT advisor for the local education authority and is always in the forefront of any new initiatives. This has a very beneficial impact on the quality of learning. For example, Halsnead is very effectively piloting an Internet system for the sole use of Knowsley schools. All classes are networked to the system and this provides straightforward access to all the available learning materials for all pupils. ICT is an integral part of the daily life at school in all subjects of the curriculum. For example, investigations in mathematics and science are successfully illustrated in graph form. Activities for English, such as letter writing, are presented in a very wide variety of differing formats. Pupils very confidently use CD ROMs to gain their required information for their topics in history, geography and religious education. Very good use is also made of musical programs that work alongside keyboards. Older pupils make excellent use of the available technology to

create presentations on different subjects. For example, during the inspection four Year 5 pupils very confidently used a well-known computer program for a presentation about the Victorian way of life. In physical education lessons all pupils work comfortably with the presence of a video camera and use this very well to evaluate their own work. Teachers make excellent use of communication equipment such as overhead projectors and electronic boards, which are linked to computer programs. This ensures that all pupils have access to the screen on view and enables them to take part fully in the lesson.

20. The headteacher has exceptional skills in strategic planning and uses all available resources in the very best way. Excellent use is made of specific grants. For example, a very successful ICT club for pupils after school was nationally funded, which was made particularly effective by the insistence of the headteacher that all parents must attend the last fifteen minutes of each session.
21. The partnerships with the local training institutions have a very beneficial impact on the life of the school. Trainee students bring with them a wealth of new ideas which the staff eagerly explore and develop. In return, the headteacher is able to invest carefully in the future of the school by having immediate access to very good teachers of the future. For example, the most recently appointed staff were students at Halsnead prior to qualifying and all emphasise the very high quality support and guidance they received.
22. Best value is always sought in all purchases and the school continually strives to ensure that it is providing the pupils with the very best possible education. This is clearly evident through the excellent procedures to monitor and evaluate all systems in school. For instance, the school rigorously compares the performance of its pupils to those within the local education authority and also uses very well national statistics to evaluate improvements over time. The current budget shows a large carry over figure from the previous year but this can be explained by the failure of building contractors to meet deadlines. As a result, the work scheduled for completion in the previous financial year has continued into the following one.

The school provides a very good range of learning opportunities throughout the school.

23. The school provides a very good curriculum from which all are able to benefit. The curriculum for children in the Nursery and Reception classes is firmly based on the new Foundation Stage, which is a nationally recommended programme of study for this age group. It successfully meets all the children's needs, including those who have been identified as having special educational needs. All staff have been involved in the planning of the curriculum for this age group and work very closely together to ensure that skills are progressively developed. The curriculum in both Years 1 and 2 and from Years 3 to 6 is very well balanced. It meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education and provides pupils with a thorough range of experiences. Pupils with special educational needs are fully integrated into all aspects and have equal access to the curriculum. This curriculum is enriched by high quality educational visits such as residential opportunities and outings to Whiston village, museums and other places of interest. Visitors from the local community also enhance the curriculum. For example, the school makes very good use of the local health visitor, the community police and theatre groups. Specialist football tuition is offered out of school and staff provide clubs such as guitar, drama, recorders, art, chess and ICT both in and after school. As a result, they leave the school mature, confident and responsible. A minority of parents expressed some concern about the lack of extra-curricular activities available but the inspection team are unable to support this view.

The school takes very good care of its pupils and personal development is a very strong feature.

24. Provision for spiritual development is successfully promoted through well planned acts of daily worship and special links with a local church. Many of the daily class lessons also display very strong features of spirituality. For example, a very special moment was created in a Year 6 literacy lesson when the class was encouraged to reflect upon a poem, which had been written by a former pupil of the school. In a Year 5 dance session, two classes were encouraged to reflect upon their own work through the very good use of a video recorder.

25. Pupils clearly know the difference between right and wrong and are keen to please. For example, the community policeman speaks very highly of the honesty and truthfulness of the Halsnead pupils. The pupils are expected to behave well, be kind and caring and work hard from the time that they start the Nursery. These expectations follow them through school and pupils show good levels of self-discipline. Pupils quickly learn to be sensitive to each other's needs and learn from the very good role models that adults provide. They help friends, teachers or inspectors wherever possible. For example, older pupils look after younger children during dinnertime and this helps the younger ones settle into school routines. Pupils are helped to gain confidence and are encouraged to seek help when necessary. Pupils enjoy the friendships and relationships they have with adults and with each other, for example, in the very successful school council meeting. In this session the school council representatives met the headteacher and the local Lady Mayor and were fully involved in a lively debate about toilet improvements.
26. Pupils learn about, experience and reflect on the richness and diversity of cultures and communities. Good provision is ensured through a wide range of visits that are offered by the school and from the visitors to the school. For instance, Year 5 pupils have corresponded with Ghurkha soldiers and have received a visit from a Nepalese Youth co-ordinator. During this visit, the pupils made their guest very welcome by learning a greeting in the language and manner of their guest. In religious education they also learn to appreciate a number of different faiths and this gives them a good insight into the customs of others.
27. In an environment where people really care for each other, the pupils are encouraged to grow and develop as members of a community that goes beyond the school. This is evident through their work with the Merseyside Police when they are actively involved in good citizenship programmes, pupil welfare and community relations. For example, through excellent liaison sessions with the community policeman, they are encouraged to reflect on the nuisance of ball games on the local streets and the respectful care needed for the older residents of the local environment. The school has also been involved in projects further afield such as a humanitarian aid relief project for Transylvania.
28. The self-confidence of all children is developed from the time that they start the Nursery. Teachers sensitively make pupils aware of their strengths and weaknesses in their learning and engage in positive discussion with them. Pupils are valued as individuals and are continually encouraged by their teachers. The school expects pupils to do their best and the success of all the pupils is celebrated and valued.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

29. This school has no weaknesses.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

30. The school has no weaknesses.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	24
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	10

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	7	12	5	0	0	0	0
Percentage	29	50	21	0	0	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than four percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	18	395
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	155

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	6
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	5	83

English as an additional language

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	10
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	7

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.16
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.48
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2000	29	22	51

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	24	25	28
	Girls	22	20	22
	Total	46	45	50
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	90 (92)	88 (86)	98 (93)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	25	28	27
	Girls	21	22	22
	Total	46	50	49
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	90 (92)	98 (93)	96 (95)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2000	28	29	57

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	22	23	26
	Girls	28	27	28
	Total	50	50	54
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	88 (68)	88 (64)	95 (94)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	21	23	26
	Girls	28	27	28
	Total	49	51	54
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	86 (68)	89 (86)	95 (94)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	4
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	384
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)	16
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.6
Average class size	28.1

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	225

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18
Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	70
Number of pupils per FTE adult	11.7

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000/01
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	£
Total income	826,543
Total expenditure	784,029
Expenditure per pupil	1,800
Balance brought forward from previous year	35,301
Balance carried forward to next year	77,815

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	1
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	1

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	413
Number of questionnaires returned	306

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	68	27	3	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	60	34	1	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	59	35	3	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	27	34	21	4	5
The teaching is good.	74	22	0	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	43	41	10	2	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	70	25	3	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	74	23	1	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	52	35	7	1	5
The school is well led and managed.	72	24	2	1	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	64	29	2	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	25	28	22	8	15