

INSPECTION REPORT

ST JOHN'S CE AIDED PRIMARY SCHOOL

Waterloo, Liverpool

LEA area: Sefton

Unique reference number: 104920

Headteacher: Mrs S M Lyonette

Reporting inspector: Mr D S Roberts
1743

Dates of inspection: 24 – 27 June 2002

Inspection number: 195395

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Denmark Street Waterloo Liverpool
Postcode:	L22 9RG
Telephone number:	0151 928 5685
Fax number:	0151 928 2390
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Revd G Cuff
Date of previous inspection:	June 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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

The inspection contractor was:

Nord Anglia School Inspection Services

Strathblane House
Ashfield Road
Cheadle
Stockport
SK8 1BB

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London WC2B 6SE

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St John's Church of England School is smaller than the average sized primary school, and currently provides full-time education for 162 pupils ranging from four to 11 years of age. The proportion of pupils entitled to receive free school meals is slightly above the national average. The attainment levels of children entering the Reception Class, at the Foundation Stage, fluctuate a little from one year to the next, but are currently similar to those found nationally. A significant number of pupils join the school at times other than the normal point of entry. They often replace those from families who move away from the area to alternative accommodation in other parts of the local authority. At present, 18 per cent of the pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs, which is below the national average. Eighteen pupils, including one with a statement of special educational needs, are at stages 3-5, and their requirements include those for specific and moderate learning difficulties, and speech, communication, visual and hearing impairment. Currently, nearly four per cent of pupils are from families belonging to minority ethnic groups. The same proportion speak English as an additional language, which is higher than in most schools.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school, which has many very strong features. It provides a high level of care for its pupils and makes very good provision for their personal and social development. The teaching is predominantly good and sometimes of high quality. It is particularly effective in the core subjects of English and mathematics and in information and communication technology (ICT). This enables the great majority of pupils to make good progress in developing key skills during their time in the school. The headteacher, governors and staff co-operate very successfully to create a welcoming and supportive atmosphere, where the Christian ethos is strongly emphasised. The school is led and managed very effectively, and provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- By the time they reach the end of Year 6, pupils achieve high standards in speaking and listening, reading, mathematics, science and ICT.
- Pupils demonstrate very good attitudes towards the school, and their behaviour is of a good standard.
- The teaching is predominantly good and sometimes of high quality.
- Very good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs.
- The school is highly successful in promoting the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The quality of leadership and management is very good.

What could be improved

- Standards of handwriting and presentation in pupils' work across the curriculum.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made very good progress since the last inspection in 1997.

During the four years up to Year 2001, the school's rate of improvement was consistent with the national trend. Compared to figures published in the last report, the proportion of pupils reaching or exceeding Level 4, at the end of Year 6, has increased from 61 per cent to 78 per cent in English, from 72 per cent

to 81 per cent in mathematics, and from 67 per cent to 94 per cent in science. In addition, there has been a significant increase in the proportion of pupils exceeding the national standard, which reflects the growing attention given by the school to challenging and extending higher attaining pupils.

Considerable work has been devoted to improving provision and teaching in ICT, which is reflected in the above average standards achieved by the pupils. The most important factors in achieving improvements in standards have been the high calibre leadership, provided by the headteacher, and better teaching. The proportion of lessons judged to be at least satisfactory has increased from 86 per cent, in the 1997 inspection, to 100 per cent, and the proportion judged to be very good from seven per cent to 23 per cent.

All of the key issues listed in the last report have been addressed successfully. In addition to raising standards and improving the quality of teaching, the school has introduced very effective arrangements for assessing pupils' progress. Policies and schemes of work have been produced for all subjects although there is scope for greater consistency in implementing the programme of work for geography and history. These initiatives have been successful in helping pupils to achieve at least appropriate standards in all subjects. The school is now well placed to continue improving by building on its many strengths and addressing the areas for improvement identified in this report.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	D	D	B	A
Mathematics	E	E	B	A
Science	E	C	C	A

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

The table shows that in the Year 2001 the pupils' performance in English and mathematics was above average for pupils in all schools, and well above average for those in schools with similar characteristics. In science, their performance was similar to the national average, but well above the average for pupils in similar schools.

Inspection evidence indicates that children at the Foundation Stage, in the Reception class, make good progress, and most achieve the early learning goals in all areas of the curriculum before entering Year 1. By the end of Year 2, pupils achieve standards which are appropriate for their age in speaking and listening, reading, writing, mathematics and science. This is a better picture than the 2001 national test results but consistent with the results of the tests for 2002, which were taken recently.

Inspection evidence indicates that, by the end of Year 6, pupils achieve above average standards in speaking and listening, reading, mathematics and science. Although pupils generally achieve appropriate standards in written English, their work is often spoilt by untidy handwriting and poor presentation. The inspection picture for English and mathematics at Key Stage 2 is broadly consistent with the 2001 national test results. In science, inspection findings are better than the 2001 results, but consistent with the results of the most recent national tests, although comparative information is not yet available.

Throughout the school, pupils achieve at least satisfactory standards in all other subjects. They exceed the national expectation in ICT, and some of the work produced in art and design and design and

technology is of a high quality. In physical education, the great majority of pupils swim at least 25

metres unaided before leaving the school at the end of Year 6, and many perform at a higher level. At both key stages, pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets identified in their individual education plans.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils demonstrate very good attitudes towards the school. They show interest and enthusiasm, respond well to challenging tasks and are keen to take part in all school activities.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is of a good standard throughout the school, and outstanding in assemblies and at the swimming baths.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils show confidence and a mature sense of responsibility; they demonstrate this when working independently and in groups. They show respect for other people's values and beliefs.
Attendance	Very good. Well above the national average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Throughout the school, the teaching is predominantly good and sometimes of high quality. The good teaching of children at the Foundation Stage, in the Reception class, helps them to settle quickly and make good progress towards the early learning goals in all areas of the curriculum. From Year 1 to Year 6, the teaching is good in most subjects, and particularly effective in the core subjects of English, mathematics and ICT. Teachers follow closely the guidance provided by the national strategies for literacy and numeracy. They challenge pupils effectively and help them to make good progress. This, together with the high quality of teaching in ICT, means that pupils are given a good grounding in the key skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT. Other subjects are generally taught effectively, enabling pupils to make at least satisfactory progress, but there is a tendency for some teachers to accept untidy handwriting and poor standards of presentation by the pupils. Throughout the school, the high standard of provision made by teachers and support staff for pupils with special educational needs is a strong feature of the teaching, which enables the pupils in this category to make good progress towards the targets identified in their individual education plans.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a good curriculum for children at all stages of their education. The development of literacy and numeracy skills is strongly emphasised. Very good provision is made for extra-curricular activities. There is some scope for improving the range of learning opportunities in history and geography.

Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good provision throughout the school. The work of support staff has a very positive effect on pupils' progress. Specific and measurable targets in individual education plans help to support pupils' progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good provision is made in all of these areas through well-planned assemblies and in work across the curriculum. Positive adult role models and good opportunities for pupils to participate in extra-curricular activities contribute significantly towards the rapid progress made by pupils in their personal development. Very good provision is made for pupils' cultural development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	A very good level of care is provided for the pupils. There are very good procedures for monitoring pupils' academic progress and their personal development, and for ensuring child protection and welfare.

A good partnership has been developed with parents, the great majority of whom would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or problems.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The quality of leadership and management is very good. The headteacher and deputy headteacher work together very effectively and liaise closely with the governing body to provide good direction for the work of the school. They are well supported by the senior management team, subject co-ordinators and all staff. These are important factors in creating a purposeful and positive ethos for learning.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors very successfully ensure that all statutory requirements are met appropriately. They show a perceptive understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good use is made of local and national comparative information to evaluate and set targets for improvement in English and mathematics which are appropriately challenging.
The strategic use of resources	Money is spent wisely on relevant educational priorities. All resources are managed very efficiently. The school is appropriately staffed and well resourced. The governors apply best value principles very effectively.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The children like school. • The children make good progress. • Children receive the right amount of homework. • The teaching is good. • Parents would feel comfortable in approaching the school with questions or problems • The school is helping their children to become mature and responsible. • The school is well led and managed. • The school provides an interesting range of learning activities outside the classroom. 	<p>A significant minority:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • would like the school to work more closely with them; • would like more information about their children's progress.

The inspectors agree with parents' positive views about the school. They find that the school has good procedures for keeping parents informed about pupils' progress and that the arrangements for working closely with parents are similar to those found in most schools.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

- 1 The attainment levels of children on entry to the Reception class, at the Foundation Stage, are generally similar to those found nationally. However, there is some fluctuation in ability levels from one year to the next, and standards in recent years have sometimes been below the average found nationally. Pupils at all levels of attainment make generally good and at times very good progress during their time in the school, and by the time they reach the end of Year 6, overall standards are above levels expected for the pupils' age.
- 2 Inspection evidence indicates that children at the Foundation Stage, in the Reception class, generally make good progress and achieve the early learning goals in all areas of the curriculum by the time they enter Year 1.
- 3 Inspection evidence for the end Key Stage 1, when pupils are in Year 2, indicates that standards in speaking and listening, reading, writing, mathematics and science are similar to those found nationally. This is a considerably better picture than the National Curriculum test results for 2001, which showed overall standards at Key Stage 1 to be well below the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. However, inspection findings are consistent with the results of the most recent National Curriculum tests, taken in May 2002, although comparative information is not yet available. The fluctuation in pupils' performance from one year to the next is partly due to the varying ability levels of different year groups, and largely due to steps taken by the school to improve standards.
- 4 Inspection findings for the end of Key Stage 2, when pupils are in Year 6, indicate that standards are above the average found nationally in speaking and listening, reading, mathematics and science, and similar to those found nationally in writing. This is a broadly similar picture to the 2001 National Curriculum tests, which found overall standards in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6 to be above the national average, and well above the average for schools with similar characteristics. Standards in science are better than the National Curriculum tests for 2001, but similar to the results of the most recent national tests taken in 2002.
- 5 Key Stage 2 national test results, for the four years up to 2001, indicate a rate of improvement, in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, which is in line with the national trend. During the same period, there was no significant variation in the performance of pupils in terms of gender.
- 6 In English, the great majority of pupils, at both key stages, make very good progress in speaking and listening. By the age of seven, the majority are confident speakers, eager to answer questions and to talk and evaluate their work. Older pupils, at Key Stage 2, use their skills very effectively to express ideas and offer answers to questions asked by their teachers. Their increasing ability to vary expression, in order to engage the listener, and to pay close attention to what others say, are strong features in their learning. Throughout the school, pupils make very good progress in extending their skills in reading and, by the end of Year 6, reach standards which are generally above

the levels expected for their age. Younger pupils acquire a good understanding of phonics and key words, and this helps most to become generally accurate readers by the age of seven, with some reading with increasing fluency. Older pupils read an increasing range of books, and pupils at all levels of ability continue to make good progress. By Year 6, most read confidently with good expression, and many higher attaining pupils read challenging books and talk confidently about events and characters in the stories they have read.

- 7 In writing, although pupils make generally good progress, standards at the end of Year 6 are not as high as they are in speaking and listening and reading, and the pupils work is often spoilt by poor handwriting. Throughout the school pupils make good progress in extending their skills in written English, progressively improving their ability to write in sentences which extend logically, and learning to spell with growing accuracy. Older pupils make good use of new skills acquired during literacy lessons to write in an increasingly interesting way for a variety of purposes. However, their writing is too often spoilt by untidy handwriting and poor presentation of their work. The school has recognised the need to improve standards of handwriting as a priority for attention.
- 8 In mathematics, pupils at all levels of attainment, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in developing their numeracy skills at Key Stage 1. They count reliably and read, write and order numbers to a 100 with increasing accuracy and confidence. By Year 2, most pupils use an appropriate range of strategies effectively to solve simple problems involving number, money and measures. By Year 6, pupils demonstrate a good understanding of the extension of the number system. This is reflected in their grasp of negative numbers and in their knowledge of the relationship between fractions, decimals and percentages. In work on shape, space and measures, Year 6 pupils demonstrate a good understanding of perimeters, area and volume and know how to use simple formulae when calculating solutions to problems. They show good accuracy in measuring angles, including those that are acute and obtuse, to the nearest degree. In work on handling data, older pupils show a good understanding of the use of measures of average, and make accurate use of terms such as "mode", "median", "mean" and "range" in relevant problem solving contexts.
- 9 In science, pupils at all levels of ability, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in relation to their prior attainment. By the end of Year 2, standards are similar to those found nationally and a significant minority of pupils achieve levels which are above those appropriate for their age. By the end of Year 6, standards are above those expected for the pupils' age. The pupils acquire a good fund of knowledge and understanding through an appropriate range of appropriately challenging tasks. They demonstrate a progressive increase in their knowledge and understanding in their studies of life processes and living things, materials and their properties and the physical processes. By the age of eleven, pupils have extended considerably their range of scientific knowledge and made appropriate progress in developing their skills in scientific enquiry.
- 10 In information and communication technology (ICT), standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are above those expected for the pupils' age. The pupils benefit from a well-planned curriculum and teaching which is often of high quality, and make particularly good progress in the areas concerned with communicating and handling ICT.

- 11 Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets set in their individual education plans. They benefit greatly from the setting of work which is appropriately challenging, and from the very good levels of support which they receive from class teachers and support staff. The arrangements to identify and support pupils who are particularly gifted in different areas of the curriculum, are a particularly strong feature in the school, which help pupils in this category to work towards their potential.
- 12 The school's determination to meet the particular needs of all pupils in terms of gender, race, background and ability, enables those in all of these categories to make consistently good progress in relation to their prior attainment. The progress of pupils for whom English is an additional language is monitored carefully, and class teachers and support staff provide valuable support to enable these pupils to make good progress.
- 13 Throughout the school, pupils achieve standards which are at least appropriate for their age in all other subjects, and some of the work produced in art and design and design and technology is of high quality. In physical education, nearly all pupils are able to swim 25 metres or more unaided, before leaving the school at the end of Year 6, and a significant number achieve higher standards.
- 14 By the end of Year 6, standards of literacy and numeracy are generally above those expected for pupils' age, although in some classes pupils' work is spoilt by careless handwriting and untidy presentation. Throughout the school, the highly successful implementation of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy has a very positive impact on pupils' achievements.
- 15 The governors set appropriately challenging targets for improvements in English and mathematics for future years, which take full account of the varying ability levels of different cohorts of pupils.
- 16 Since the last inspection, the school has made good progress in improving standards. Compared with figures published in the last inspection report, the proportion of pupils achieving or exceeding Level 4 by the end of Key Stage 2 has increased from 61 per cent to 78 per cent in English, from 72 per cent to 81 per cent in mathematics and from 67 per cent to 94 per cent in science. More significantly, the proportion of pupils exceeding the national expectations has improved considerably in all three of the core subjects. In addition, the school has been able to raise significantly the standards achieved by pupils in ICT, and enable pupils to achieve appropriate standards for their age in all subjects.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

- 17 The pupils demonstrate very good attitudes towards the school and this has a positive effect on their learning. Behaviour throughout the school is good overall, and during the inspection there were examples of excellent behaviour, notably in a whole school assembly and during a Year 4 visit to the swimming baths. Relationships at all levels are good. The pupils are courteous to one another and to all the adults who work with them. The good level of respect they have for other peoples' opinions and feelings was exemplified in a Year 5 'circle time' lesson which focused on the theme "What it means to be different". The pupils were confident in expressing their views

as to how being different affects the ways in which people are treated, and they spoke openly about how they had felt on occasions when they themselves were treated unkindly for being different in some way. The class was very well behaved and listened sensitively to one another's contributions. Exclusions are rare and only imposed after all other reasonable means of improving an individual pupil's behaviour have been tried. During the past year there have been three exclusions, two fixed period and one permanent, all involving the same pupil.

- 18 The vast majority of the pupils enjoy their work and behave well in lessons. They listen attentively and are keen to answer questions and contribute to class discussion. Their willingness to work co-operatively with a partner or as part of a group is a very good feature in their learning. In physical education lessons, they respond promptly to instructions and are eager to give of their best. They work sensibly in practical lessons, for example in design and technology and science. In a Year 1 science lesson, the pupils worked diligently to make a simple electrical circuit and were filled with joy and wonder when the bulb lit up as a result of their own efforts. Pupils in Year 6 showed sensitivity and a sense of awe as they watched a dramatised version, on television, of the events of World War II, depicting bombing raids and the use of air raid shelters. This was part of a music lesson on songs from that period in history, which made a good contribution to the pupils' cultural and emotional development.
- 19 Behaviour in the playground is good. The pupils play together amicably with the equipment which is provided for them. Older pupils organise their own team games and younger pupils enjoy using the excellent adventure playground area, under the supervision of a lunchtime supervisor. Since the last inspection the pupils have been given many more opportunities to take responsibility. The Year 6 pupils support younger children in the playground by showing them how to play hopscotch and use other playground markings. Inside school, at lunchtime, the pupils help their teachers by sharpening pencils, cleaning the table tops and sorting out class libraries and various other learning resources. The pupils enjoy helping in ways such as these and are keen to volunteer on a day to day basis. There are more structured activities for Year 5 and Year 6 pupils, for example distributing class registers and preparing the hall for assembly, which help them to develop a sense of responsibility and an understanding of what it means to be part of a caring community. The pupils contribute to the wider community through their continued support for various charities. Pupils in Year 6 correspond with children of their own age in a Ugandan orphanage and by doing so are learning about a Christian community whose way of life is very different from their own.
- 20 All year groups are represented on the school's Eco committee, which considers environmental issues inside school and in the wider world. This year the focus has been on the problems associated with litter. In school the pupils have made a concerted effort to keep the building neat and tidy and the grounds free from litter. Throughout the building there are useful notices reminding pupils and staff to conserve water and energy. These are important issues which have not only resulted in an exceptionally clean and tidy school but have also helped the pupils to develop a good appreciation of the importance of caring for the natural world.
- 21 The pupils' attendance rate has made steady improvement since the time of the last inspection. Attendance is now very good and well above the national average.

Punctuality is good and has shown marked improvement this term as a result of the school's first day response to unexplained absence. The rate of unauthorised absence is very low, and below the national average for primary schools.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

- 22 The quality of teaching and learning is predominantly good and sometimes of high quality. The teaching in 71 per cent of the lessons observed was judged to be at least good and 23 per cent very good. There were no unsatisfactory lessons. Throughout the school, there is a close match between the quality of teaching and learning.
- 23 The quality of teaching for children at the Foundation Stage is generally good. All of the lessons observed were at least satisfactory and 80 per cent were good. The teaching gives high priority to promoting the children's personal, social and emotional development. Children are helped to settle quickly, to develop confidence in expressing themselves and to work sensibly and happily with others. This enables children to take increasing advantage of the range of learning opportunities presented to them and to contribute with growing confidence during whole-group sessions. The teaching is effective in promoting good progress by the great majority of children towards the early learning goals in all areas of learning.
- 24 At Key Stage 1, in classes for pupils in Year 1 and Year 2, the quality of teaching is generally good. All of the lessons observed were judged to be at least satisfactory and 60 per cent were good. The quality of teaching at Key Stage 2, in classes for pupils in Years 3 to 6, is also good. In 72 per cent of lessons the teaching was at least good and it was very good or better in 34 per cent of lessons. The teaching of English and mathematics is nearly always of at least good quality. The highly successful implementation of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy is an important factor in the good progress made by pupils at both key stages in developing their literacy and numeracy skills.
- 25 In English, the teaching is of good quality at Key Stage 1 and generally very good at Key Stage 2, where three quarters of the lessons observed were of high quality. At both key stages, the lessons are carefully planned to meet the needs of pupils at all levels of attainment. Class teachers and support staff co-operate very effectively to make very good provision for pupils with special educational needs, and this enables pupils to make good progress towards the targets set in their individual education plans. Teachers have a very secure knowledge of the subject and a good understanding of how pupils learn.
- 26 Literacy lessons are planned very effectively and follow closely the structure of the National Literacy Strategy. This enables pupils to develop their skills progressively as they get older. Much thought is given to the choice of suitable reading materials to introduce literacy lessons. The imaginative selection of texts, and lively enthusiastic teaching, helps to capture pupils' attention, stimulate interest and extend their thinking. These features were particularly apparent in classes for older pupils. In Year 5, for example, the teacher consistently challenged pupils to identify ways in which the author of the poem being used for the introductory text had used alliterations and onomatopoeia to bring the poem to life. In Year 6, the teacher used the overhead projector to display the opening paragraphs from two stories by the same author, and

then challenged the pupils to identify similar features and techniques used by the author in both opening paragraphs. This enabled the pupils to recognise techniques used regularly by the author to capture the interest of the reader from an early stage.

- 27 The teaching of English is particularly successful in helping pupils to make consistently good progress in extending their speaking and listening and reading skills. It is also effective in promoting good progress in most aspects of pupils' writing, helping pupils to vary their style when writing for different purposes. However, the teaching of handwriting is less effective. Although some teachers are successful in promoting good standards of handwriting, others are less effective, and this is reflected in the untidy work produced by too many pupils.
- 28 Group targets for improvement in aspects of English, such as improving writing skills, have been successfully introduced and are having a positive effect on pupils' progress. In all aspects of English, the arrangements for assessing pupils' progress are very good. Pupils' work is marked regularly and there are some very good examples of how teachers' comments help pupils to improve their work.
- 29 The teaching of mathematics is generally of good quality. All of the lessons observed were at least satisfactory and over 70 per cent were very good. Lessons are well planned and the content is generally interesting and relevant, providing pupils, at all levels of ability, with varied and challenging experiences. The high calibre support provided by classroom assistants is a significant factor in supporting the pupils' learning. Throughout the school, the teaching is generally bright and lively. Group work is well managed and the pupils put much intellectual effort into their work. Well-organised lessons help the pupils to acquire appropriate skills, knowledge and understanding of mathematics. Pupils are interested in their work and generally concentrate hard on the tasks they are set.
- 30 In science, the quality of teaching is generally satisfactory and often good at Key Stage 2, where 50 per cent of lessons were judged to be of good quality. Lesson planning is a strong feature in the teaching. It makes good provision for challenging pupils at all levels of ability. The development of pupils' enquiry skills is appropriately emphasised. A particularly good feature in the teaching is the way in which pupils are encouraged and given time to explain their thinking. Practical investigative work is well organised, and teachers' expectations of what pupils are expected to achieve are made clear by the use of targets and the sharing of lesson objectives. The teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to the pupils' learning by giving high quality support. In some lessons teachers put insufficient emphasis on the need for good presentation of work by the pupils.
- 31 In ICT, teaching is never less than good and generally of very good quality. In 60 per cent of the lessons observed the teaching was of high quality. This enables pupils to make very good progress during their time in the school. Teachers are confident and secure in their subject knowledge, and their planning is of high quality. It challenges pupils very effectively in all elements of the subject, and enables them to make confident use of the good facilities available in ICT and achieve standards which are above those expected for their age by the time they reach the end of Year 6.
- 32 Throughout the curriculum, teachers make very good provision for pupils at all levels of attainment and respond effectively to the differing needs of boys and girls and pupils from different ethnic minority groups and backgrounds. The teaching of pupils with

special educational needs is good throughout the school. The effective co-operation between teachers and support staff is a strong feature which helps to promote good progress by the pupils in this category. The work of all staff is guided effectively by good quality individual education plans. This enables the pupils to work systematically towards the realistic and manageable targets set for them.

- 33 In other subjects, tasks are pitched at an appropriate level to challenge pupils, and opportunities are generally taken effectively to extend literacy and numeracy skills. In art and design, music and design and technology, the teaching promotes successfully the pupils' creative development. At both key stages, the teaching of physical education is generally effective in helping most pupils to make steady progress in their physical development. Swimming is taught very effectively, enabling nearly all pupils to swim at least 25 metres unaided before leaving the school at the end of Year 6.
- 34 The school has made significant progress in improving the quality of teaching since the full inspection in 1997. The proportion of lessons judged to be satisfactory or better has increased from 86 per cent to 100 per cent, and the proportion judged to be very good or better from seven per cent to 20 per cent. Perceptive leadership by senior managers and co-ordinators, hard work by all staff, and the successful implementation of initiatives, such as the national strategies for literacy and numeracy, have contributed greatly towards better quality teaching throughout the school.

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

- 35 The school provides a good quality curriculum for children at the Foundation Stage, in the Reception class. It is based appropriately on the nationally agreed programme of learning. The work is planned effectively to support the children's progress towards the early learning goals for each area of learning. The curriculum for pupils in Years 1 to 6 is also of good quality and, in most respects, is broad, balanced and relevant. Since the last inspection, much has been done to improve the quality of the curriculum outside of the core subjects. However, there is scope for more consistent implementation of the schemes of work in geography and history to improve the quality and range of the curriculum in both subjects. Since the last inspection the school has established a well resourced computer suite. As a result, the pupils have many more opportunities to develop their ICT skills through interesting and relevant learning experiences. The improvements in the curriculum for literacy and numeracy, since the last inspection, owe much to the highly successful implementation of the national strategies for these areas. In some classes, however, insufficient opportunities are created for pupils to use and apply their increasing mathematical skills in work across the curriculum.
- 36 The teachers give a great deal of their own time to provide the pupils with a well balanced programme of extra-curricular activities. These are popular and well attended. In addition, frequent opportunities are provided for the pupils to take part in a variety of visits in the area and further afield. For example, Year 3 visited Keswick as part of their geographical work on a contrasting locality. Year 6 recently took part in a residential visit to Kingswood in North Wales where they were provided with the opportunity to help build their own school web site. The school also provides the pupils with a variety of opportunities to benefit from the expertise of visitors to the

school. For example, a visiting theatre group presented a play incorporating the issue of bullying. On another occasion, a class of older pupils took part in an Indian dance workshop. Such opportunities serve to enhance and enrich the statutory curriculum.

- 37 The school makes very good provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and has continued to improve this provision since the time of the last inspection. The pupils' spiritual development is promoted very successfully through assemblies, lessons and visits and reflects the strong Christian ethos within the school. Christian principles and values are central to acts of worship, and school assemblies are reverent occasions. The lighting of candles and the use of music played by the pupils, create a calm and spiritual atmosphere in which prayer has meaning. Assemblies celebrate achievement and encourage the pupils to take a pride in personal achievement. In lessons, the teachers provide good role models for their pupils and promote a climate in which there is mutual respect and understanding. They value their pupils' opinions and ideas and encourage them to express personal views and responses in relation to their learning. In Year 2, for example, the pupils showed wonder and delight as the ICT Roamer robotic toy responded to the instructions they had given it, and in Year 1 the pupils experienced a great sense of achievement when they were successful in making bulbs light in a circuit. In Year 6 the pupils conveyed a strong sense of empathy with wartime evacuees and the difficulties they experienced.
- 38 The pupils' moral and social development is integral to school life. The consistent application of school and class rules teaches a strong sense of right and wrong. The Golden File, in which pupils are recorded for following the rules, provides effective reinforcement of the social and moral codes of the school. Lessons provide many opportunities for pupils to learn the importance of social co-operation, such as working in collaborative groups and sharing books and resources. The pupils have many opportunities to carry responsibility, make choices and develop self-reliance. The Eco Schools project provides very good opportunities for pupils to make decisions about how the school environment could be improved and to develop a strong sense of moral responsibility for the environment through their recycling efforts. Older pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for younger pupils in the playground and help to supervise classes during wet playtimes. The pupils support many charities, such as Operation Christmas Child, Children in Need and the NSPCC, and raise substantial sums of money for the benefit of others. Closer to home, the school promotes links with residents of a home for the elderly disabled, with visits at Harvest time and Christmas. Visitors to the school, such as a midwife, a radiographer and the local vicar, provide the pupils with very strong social and moral role models.
- 39 The pupils' cultural development is effectively promoted through visits, links with pupils overseas and activities in school. Musical and theatrical performances, such as a Christmas pantomime, a puppet theatre and a visiting jazz musician provide a rich cultural influence. The school reinforces a strong Christian ethos through activities such as a mock baptism and a Coronation re-enactment. In religious education lessons, the pupils learn about the basic tenets of other world religions, such as Judaism and Islam. Comparisons are drawn with their own Christian beliefs and festivals, and this promotes positive attitudes towards cultural difference and racial harmony. Other lessons, such as art, music and literacy, give opportunities for

pupils to experience the work of artists, composers, writers and poets from many cultures. The pupils' cultural awareness is further promoted through dance, and pupils have the opportunity to take part in local dance festivals. A recent visit to the school by Indian dancers further reinforced the message of dance as a cross-cultural activity. The school made good use of Her Majesty the Queen's recent Golden Jubilee to encourage the celebration of the pupils' own culture during the last fifty years.

- 40 The school is very successful in implementing the governors' policy for equality of opportunity. All of the pupils, irrespective of gender, race, ability or background have equal access to the whole curriculum. The school's commitment to promoting equality of opportunity and developing positive attitudes in the pupils is reflected regularly across the curriculum. Throughout the school, staff frequently seize opportunities to raise the pupils' awareness, often through carefully chosen literacy texts and through other subjects such as art and music.
- 41 The curricular provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Clear procedures are in place for the early identification of pupils who need additional support. The new Code of Practice is being carefully and effectively implemented. The individual education plans provided for the pupils who need them are of good quality and the targets set are realistic and measurable. The progress of the pupils is reviewed each term in full consultation with parents and pupils. Care is taken in lesson plans to ensure that the work provided for pupils is closely matched to their needs, and classroom assistants provide high quality support that enables pupils with special educational needs to make good progress. The detailed assessment records kept by teachers and teaching assistants play a key role in ensuring that the needs of pupils are met fully. One pupil has a statement of special educational needs and the school complies fully with the recommendations contained within the statement. Special educational needs provision is co-ordinated effectively and the overall arrangements comply fully with the Code of Practice.
- 42 The school is very successful in promoting the pupils' personal and social education. A well conceived health education programme is taught throughout the school. This gives appropriate attention to sex education and the dangers of drug misuse. The pupils are taught essential facts and provided with the necessary skills and knowledge to enable them to make informed choices now and in the future. Valuable support and advice is provided by the school nurse. In addition, the programme is enhanced through links with the local pharmacy. This enables groups to visit 'behind the scene' and to benefit at an appropriate level from the expertise of the staff.
- 43 Good provision is made for pupils for whom English is an additional language. Their progress is monitored closely and class teachers co-operate successfully with support staff to ensure that an appropriate level of attention is provided for the pupils.
- 44 Good links are well established with the parish and local community. The vicar makes a valuable contribution to the work of the school through, for example, leading acts of worship and supporting the pupils' learning through specially organised visits to the church. In addition, many of the local shops welcome supervised visits by groups of the pupils. Recently, the Reception class children gained valuable first hand experiences which helped them in their role play activities.

- 45 The school has good links with the local secondary school to which most of the pupils transfer. Good induction procedures are well established and help to make the process of transfer a positive experience for the pupils. For example, Year 5 pupils spend some time at the local high school experiencing a variety of lessons. They get to know some of the teachers and also acquaint themselves with the much larger building. In a recent initiative, one of the teachers of physical education joined in a team teaching project with the Year 6 class. This proved a valuable experience for the pupils who, during the inspection, gained considerable skills associated with cricket. An effective system is in place for the transfer of relevant records and attainment data.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

- 46 The school provides a very good level of care for its pupils and is successful in ensuring their welfare, health and safety. Child protection procedures are thorough, adhering to guidelines set out by the local education authority. The school makes very good provision for pupils with special educational needs and is highly effective in providing equality of access and opportunity for all its pupils, irrespective of race, gender, background or ability.
- 47 Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are very good, and the pupils' attendance rate is well above the national average for primary schools. The importance of regular attendance is emphasised in the prospectus, the governing body's annual report and parents' newsletters. Parents and carers are strongly discouraged from taking family holidays in term time on account of the negative impact this can have on their children's education. Rewards for good attendance include certificates, which are presented to individual pupils at the end of term services in church, and extra playtime for any class achieving full attendance during the week. The school receives good support from the educational welfare service and follows up concerns about poor attendance without delay. With funding from the Education Action Zone initiative, the school follows up any unexplained absence very promptly, wherever possible early in the morning on the first day of absence. This is having the effect of improving punctuality and keeping unauthorised absence to a minimum.
- 48 Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are very good. A carefully planned programme of statutory and non-statutory tests are set throughout the school. The results are analysed carefully, and used effectively to track pupils' progress and set appropriate targets for future attainment. Targets for improvement in literacy and numeracy are set for groups of pupils, and are shared with parents. Teachers' marking is constructive in recognising what pupils have attained and setting appropriate new challenges. Good use is made of information gathered from the assessment of pupils' work to inform the next stage of teaching and learning. Very effective procedures are in place for monitoring and recording pupils' progress in all subjects.
- 49 Procedures for monitoring and supporting the pupils' personal development are very good. The school has strong links with the church and upholds Christian values in all of its work. The vicar comes into school regularly to lead assembly, support religious education lessons and talk to the pupils about his vocation. 'Circle time' takes place in every class at the beginning of the week. This is a time when pupils can talk openly and honestly about their thoughts and feelings on a given topic. It forms a

very important part of the detailed programme of study for personal, social and health education, which is currently under review so as to include citizenship, as a subject, from September 2002.

- 50 The school's arrangements for monitoring and promoting positive behaviour and for eliminating oppressive behaviour are good. Hard work, kindness and helpfulness are rewarded consistently and fairly with a range of rewards, including praise from class teachers, recognition in assembly and an entry in the 'Golden Book' for good attitudes and behaviour. School rules are displayed prominently in classrooms and open areas of the school and provide useful reminders of what constitutes acceptable behaviour. Rules are few in number and designed to encourage pupils to behave sensibly and responsibly inside school and to show respect and consideration for other people. A suitable system of sanctions is in place for dealing with day to day misdemeanours and isolated incidents of more serious misconduct, which are dealt with sensitively, in close consultation with parents.
- 51 Since the last inspection, the school has greatly increased the opportunities for all pupils, from Reception to Year 6, to use their initiative and take responsibility and this aspect of the school is now good. Younger children help to tidy away toys, books and other resources at the end of the lesson and act as monitors for various classroom duties. Older pupils are encouraged to help their teachers prepare for practical lessons, to sort out class libraries for the younger children, to distribute class registers, and to prepare the hall for assembly. Year 6 pupils are expected to support younger pupils' play activities at lunch time and pupils from Year 5 are currently undertaking a play leaders' course to equip them for taking up this responsibility next term.
- 52 The pupils are introduced to the world of work by the many visiting speakers, notably governors and parishioners, who come into school to talk to them about their jobs and businesses. Representatives from the police, the fire service and the health service also visit the school to talk to the pupils about aspects of their health and personal safety. The school has very good links with local secondary schools, which help to ensure a smooth transition, for the pupils, from Year 6 to Year 7.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

- 53 The school has established a good partnership with parents. Parents and carers have positive views about the school and appreciate the way in which it responds to their suggestions and concerns. They find the headteacher and staff very approachable. They feel their children are making good progress and are helped to become mature and responsible. Parents and carers are happy with the amount of homework which is set and pleased with the wide range of extra curricular activities provided for their children outside the classroom. The inspection findings support all these positive views.
- 54 Although a significant minority of the parents and carers indicate that they would like the school to work more closely with them, the inspection finds that the school does work closely with them, and that parents and carers make a positive contribution to their children's learning at school and at home. Parental support for the home-school reading scheme and for homework in general is having a positive impact on the pupils' attainment and progress. The school organises numerous courses for parents and carers, in conjunction with Sefton's Families and Schools Together scheme.

These are popular with parents and a valuable means of enabling them to support their children's learning. A number of parents help inside school, for example by listening to readers, and others support the school by accompanying pupils and staff on educational visits in the locality and further afield. A group of parents run a safe cycling programme, annually, for pupils in Year 6, in conjunction with the local education authority's road safety department. Parents and carers support the religious life of the school by sharing acts of worship in school and in the parish church.

- 55 While the great majority of parents and carers consider the school keeps them well informed in relation to their children's attainment and progress, a significant minority would like more information about their children's progress. Inspection evidence indicates that the arrangements for meeting parents and carers, formally and informally, are very good. A formal parents' evening is held each term and the headteacher and staff are always available to give advice or discuss any day to day concerns. A good feature of the school's provision for children at the Foundation Stage, in the Reception class, is that the headteacher is available most mornings, in the classroom, to talk to parents while they are helping their children select their library books. Pupils' annual written reports are detailed and informative, providing helpful information for parents about their children's attainment and progress and identifying targets for improvement which can be discussed with class teachers at the end of year parents' evening. Parents are encouraged to bring their children to parents' evenings, and the pupils, parents and teachers discuss together the targets which have been set for the future and the success pupils have had in meeting their targets to date. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are closely involved in setting and reviewing their children's targets and in drawing up their individual education plans.
- 56 The overall quality of the information provided for parents and carers is very good. Through the prospectus, the governing body's annual report and regular correspondence the parents are kept well informed with regard to the aims of the school and its policies and procedures. The termly newsletter, produced by Year 5 and Year 6 pupils in the ICT club, is imaginatively presented and gives parents a good insight into the life of the school. A home-school agreement has been introduced since the last inspection. This sets out, very clearly, what the school expects from parents and pupils and what parents and pupils can expect from the school in terms of the curriculum, the ethos of the school and information about attendance, attainment and progress.
- 57 Since the last inspection in 1997, the school has greatly improved the quality of the information provided for parents and carers about teaching and the curriculum. At the beginning of every school year the parents are given a very informative booklet for each of the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. These booklets explain the school's approach to the subject, teaching methods at the different key stages and the school's marking policy. They also contain useful advice as to how parents might support their children's learning in the subject. From September 2002 the booklets will extend to all areas of the curriculum. Individual class booklets provide parents and carers with specific year group information, including homework requirements and the topics to be studied each half term.

- 58 The school has an active Parents' Teachers' and Friends' Association, which raises valuable additional funds for the school, through sponsored events, the annual summer fair and other activities. The association celebrated the Queen's Golden Jubilee by organising a disco for the pupils and presenting each one with a Jubilee medal and certificate to commemorate this very special event.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

- 59 The quality of leadership and management is very good. Perceptive and purposeful leadership by the headteacher, and the strong support provided by the deputy headteacher and senior management team, are important factors in the good progress made by the school since the last inspection. The headteacher works closely and very effectively with senior managers and the governing body to provide clear vision and direction for the work of the school. They are well supported by a hard working staff.
- 60 Governors show a perceptive understanding of the school's strengths and priorities for improvement, and their increasingly purposeful involvement in the work of the school is an important factor in the improvements achieved since the last inspection. Appropriate governing body committees are in place, and they work effectively and successfully to ensure that statutory requirements are met.
- 61 The headteacher and deputy headteacher work closely with co-ordinators for subjects and aspects of the curriculum. This helps to create a team approach and a strong sense of commitment to continuing improvement. Co-ordinators play an important part in producing and updating subject policies and schemes of work which help teachers to set appropriately challenging work for pupils at all levels of attainment. Their work contributes strongly towards the good quality of teaching which now exists. The school is now well placed to continue improving by building on existing strengths and addressing the weaknesses identified in this report.
- 62 The school's mission statement is communicated very effectively to parents through the school prospectus. The school sets out to: "provide a nurturing environment, which enables all pupils to develop to their full potential, by promoting high educational standards; encouraging attitudes of mutual respect and responsibility amongst all members of the school community; building Christian values into the ethos of the school; and fostering links between the home, school, church and community". These aims are consistently reflected in all of the school's work.
- 63 The governing body is very successful in ensuring that the requirements of the Code of Practice for special educational needs are successfully addressed. The governors' work contributes significantly towards the very good provision made by the school for pupils with special educational needs. The school makes good provision for all its pupils, ensuring that all, irrespective of gender, race, background or ability, are included and involved in all aspects of school work.
- 64 Since the last inspection, very effective procedures have been established for monitoring teaching and the curriculum, which form an important part of the school's strategy for performance management. Teachers are keen to improve. Increasing emphasis is placed on self-evaluation, with teachers and support staff being encouraged to take responsibility for their own professional development. The school has focused in particular on monitoring the teaching of literacy and numeracy in recent

years, but has also made considerable progress in improving the teaching of ICT. The headteacher and deputy headteacher visit classrooms regularly to evaluate teaching and the quality of curricular provision, and are sometimes supported by relevant subject co-ordinators. Criteria for evaluation are agreed with class teachers in advance. The feedback from lesson evaluations is considered during interviews with individual teachers, and personal targets for improvement are agreed for the year ahead. The standard and quality of work produced by pupils are monitored at regular intervals by the headteacher and relevant co-ordinators. Increasingly good use is made of information technology to store information and track pupils' progress.

- 65 Responsibilities for co-ordinating subjects and aspects of the curriculum are shared appropriately and defined clearly. Curriculum planning is scrutinised by relevant co-ordinators in order to check balance and provision in their subjects. Senior managers maintain a careful overview to check that the curriculum meets the need of all pupils.
- 66 Since the last inspection, considerable improvements have been made to the school development planning process. The arrangements now enable staff and governors to identify issues for consideration as priorities for development. Co-ordinators for subjects and aspects produce their own action plans which are appropriately fed in to the main school plan. The school plan is well presented, but there is scope for a clearer indication of the cost and resource implications of proposed initiatives. Such information is available in the school, but is not yet included as an integral part of the development plan.
- 67 All of the requirements for staff appraisal are met through the annual personal interviews, which form an important part of the school's performance management procedures. Strong emphasis is placed on the professional development of teaching and non-teaching staff. Teachers, support staff and governors are given opportunities to attend relevant training, and there are appropriate procedures for supporting the induction of newly qualified teachers and staff who are new to the school.
- 68 Very effective use is made of all funding. Good use is made of the element within the school's budget for making provision for pupils with special educational needs. The relatively large amount of money carried forward from the last financial year was to avoid the potentially damaging effect of fluctuating numbers of children entering the Reception class.
- 69 The governors' finance committee liaises closely with the headteacher and the local education authority's finance officer, to oversee financial matters efficiently and effectively. Good use is made of information technology to monitor spending and ensure effective financial support. The recommendations made in the last audit of finance, by the local education authority, have all been implemented. Administration staff are highly effective in supporting the efficient day-to-day running of the school.
- 70 The increasing attention given to monitoring school performance is a good feature in the work of the governing body. The headteacher provides regular information to enable governors and senior management to compare the school's performance with similar schools as well as the national picture. Governors demonstrate a very good awareness of the school's strengths and priorities for improvement.
- 71 Through the work of the finance committee, the governing body seeks to secure best quality and value when purchasing resources and arranging for work to be completed.

Much of this is done in conjunction with the local education authority. Since the last inspection, the successful initiatives to improve the administrative section of the accommodation provide good illustrations of the governing body's success in securing best value and quality on behalf of the school.

- 72 All resources are very well managed. The school has sufficient suitably qualified and experienced teachers to meet the demands of the curriculum for pupils at all stages of their education; they are managed and deployed very effectively. Very good use is made of the range of facilities provided by the accommodation and school grounds. Classrooms are appropriately spacious, the computer suite provides a valuable additional facility and the playing field and attractive school grounds are valuable assets. The school is well resourced to support the delivery of the curriculum for pupils at all stages of their education.
- 73 Standards of cleaning and caretaking are high, and the quality of the internal environment is considerably enhanced by displays of pupils' work which are used effectively to celebrate pupils' achievements, support their learning, and promote enquiry.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

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

- i) improve the standard of pupils' handwriting and presentation of work by:
 - * implementing a policy to achieve a consistent approach in all classes;
 - * monitoring regularly;
 - * providing appropriate training for staff who need additional support in promoting good standards of handwriting by their pupils.

(paragraph references: 7, 27, 92, 123)

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

- * provide regular opportunities for pupils to use and apply their mathematics skills in work across the curriculum, particularly in science;
(paragraph references: 35, 104, 114)
- * improve further the quality and range of learning opportunities provided for pupils in geography and history by:
 - implementing the programmes of work more consistently; and
 - monitoring regularly to ensure that all lessons reflect the intentions of the programmes of work.

(paragraph references: 35, 120, 121, 122, 124)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	44
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	23

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	10	21	13	0	0	0
Percentage	0	23	48	30	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	-	162
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	-	36

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	-	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	-	29

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	6

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	11
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	12

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.7

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0

National comparative data	5.6
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National comparative data	0.5
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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	2001	15	15	30

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	8	12
	Girls	9	11	12
	Total	19	19	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	63 (76)	63 (81)	80 (76)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	12	9
	Girls	9	12	9
	Total	19	24	18
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	63 (81)	80 (76)	60 (76)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2001	20	12	32

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	15	17	19
	Girls	10	9	11
	Total	25	26	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	78 (71)	81 (61)	94 (89)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	14	14	18
	Girls	11	10	11
	Total	25	24	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	78 (75)	75 (64)	91 (82)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	1
Chinese	3
White	142
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	2	1
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)	8.9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18.2
Average class size	23.1

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	5.0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	65

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/02
	£
Total income	433,409
Total expenditure	437,071
Expenditure per pupil	2,402
Balance brought forward from previous year	72,491
Balance carried forward to next year	68,829

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1.0
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1.0
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1.0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	162
Number of questionnaires returned	28

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	36	61	3	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	50	32	10	4	4
Behaviour in the school is good.	43	46	3	4	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	50	32	10	4	4
The teaching is good.	39	57	0	4	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	29	46	18	7	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	57	36	3	0	4
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	46	46	4	0	4
The school works closely with parents.	39	29	21	7	4
The school is well led and managed.	39	46	7	4	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	54	43	0	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	61	36	3	0	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

75 The children at this stage are taught in the Reception class. There is some fluctuation in the general levels of ability of children entering the school from one year to the next. The attainment of children currently in the Reception class is similar to that found nationally.

76 Only 11 children currently attend the Reception class on a full-time basis. All started last September. Although this is an unusually low number, the small class size has increased significantly the level of interaction between adults and children and resulted in good progress by all the children during the year. Most are well on course to attain the nationally agreed early learning goals by the time they enter Year 1.

Personal, social and emotional development

77 This area of the children's learning receives much emphasis and is well planned. Class teaching helps the children to develop a good understanding of acceptable behaviour and what is right and wrong. The children enjoy the experiences offered. They respond positively to the rules and routines that are in place. They generally work co-operatively and share equipment sensibly, although at times there are insufficient opportunities for them to make choices. However, when they are given the opportunity they are confident in selecting and carrying out activities which demand a measure of concentration and perseverance. For example, the children were introduced to a huge aerial photograph of the school locality. As the lesson developed the children were able to choose from a variety of related activities. Some of the children spent much time and effort talking about what they would and wouldn't put on maps they were drawing. They went on to construct some of the buildings using a variety of materials with a good measure of independence and concentration. Good quality of relationships is a strong feature in the Reception class. All staff have a good understanding of the children's needs. They generally provide a range of well-planned opportunities which help the children to develop a sensitivity to their own culture and an awareness of other people's ways of life. Overall, the quality of teaching in this area is good.

Communication, language and literacy

78 The children engage in a variety of interesting activities which help to develop their skills in this area of their learning. Good use is made of 'circle time' to develop the children's speaking and listening skills. They use an increasing vocabulary to talk about their experiences, give opinions and ask questions. They know that they need to listen carefully to take part in this activity and that they are the focus of attention when holding the toy elephant. This is a useful teaching strategy which enables all of the class to take part equally. Although the teaching in this area of learning is generally effective, there is scope for more intervention by adults when children are engaged in activities, such as construction or imaginative play, to promote children's speaking skills. Formal activities directed by the adults help the children to recognise familiar letters, sounds and words. The children enjoy books. They handle them carefully, hold them correctly and know how print and pictures carry meaning. Many of the children are beginning to use well taught phonics to help them write simple

regular words. All can write and spell their name using upper and lower case letters correctly. A good feature of the teaching is the planning of writing opportunities which enable the children to write spontaneously during imaginative activities. For example, the waitress in the classroom seaside café made a list of items requested by the customer before relaying the information to the chef. Good assessment procedures result in early identification of children with special educational needs. Good quality planning and helpful adult interaction enables these children to take a full part in lessons and their progress is monitored carefully. As a result, they make good progress. School records show that the children's test scores in communication, language and literacy have almost doubled over the year.

Mathematical development

- 79 The teaching of mathematics is good, and well-planned and relevant experiences help the children to make good progress. The adaptation of the principles of the National Numeracy Strategy to meet the needs of the Foundation Stage children is very successful. A range of well-chosen activities enable the children to count reliably and many know the numbers before and after all of the numbers to nine. They know how to sort sets of objects by given criteria and can explain their reasons. The teaching emphasises correct mathematical vocabulary. For example, one child remarked, "I need to find another triangular prism for my set", as she reached for a cardboard Toblerone box. The children have a good understanding of size and position. This was evident, for example, in one group sorting containers. They took pride in explaining what they had done and using related vocabulary including 'cylinders', 'pyramids', 'cuboids' and 'cones', accurately and appropriately.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

- 80 The quality of teaching in this area of learning is good. The children are well supported in computer work, and many are confident in manipulating the mouse to achieve their desired intentions on the screen. For example, one child remarked, "Look what I can do", before using the mouse with great dexterity to access appropriate clothing to dress the bear. The children are helped to understand the passage of time through the celebration of birthdays, talking about the days of the week and the changing seasons and looking at photographs. They use these experiences effectively to talk about their own lives and families and are beginning to understand more fully the past and the present. The children have many experiences which help to develop their skills in shaping, assembling and joining materials.

Physical development

- 81 Good provision is made for the children's physical development. They are helped to understand about the importance of exercise and the changes that occur in their body. During outdoor activities, they use space effectively and move imaginatively and safely. They demonstrate good control and growing confidence when using balancing and climbing equipment. In the classroom, the children make good progress handling pencils, crayons, modelling tools, construction toys and malleable materials. They demonstrate increasing control and confidence and understand how to use equipment safely. This reflects the good quality of teaching they receive in this area of their learning.

Creative development

- 82 Good teaching and access to a broad range of activities throughout the academic year enable the children to make good progress and do as well as expected for their age. Since the last inspection, the teaching places more emphasis on colour mixing

during painting activities. As a result, the children use their skills effectively to mix colours when painting imaginatively and when painting plants and other interesting objects they observe directly. Some of this work is of a particularly good quality, well-proportioned and detailed. The teaching is planned carefully to help the children develop confidence in expressing and communicating their own ideas and feelings through designing and making, through a variety of songs and musical instruments and through imaginative role-play. For example, in the classroom's seaside café the children effectively developed their own storyline and responded imaginatively to the customers' varying requests for a variety of food and drinks. In this activity, the role of the classroom assistant was highly effective, spontaneously interacting in the role play and helping the children to sustain their interest and concentration over time.

- 83 The quality of teaching, by all the adults who work at the Foundation Stage, is generally good, and effective use is made of a broad range of appropriate resources. The teaching is successful in helping the children to work safely and confidently in all areas of the curriculum. However, there is scope for greater emphasis to be placed on developing further the children's capacity to work independently and to bring their own ideas to tasks which are sometimes overdirected. Assessment strategies are used effectively to plan further additional support. The quality of such support, provided by all of the adults, is effective in maintaining the momentum in the children's learning, especially for those who have special educational needs. Relationships are very positive and staff are sensitive to the children's needs. This helps the children to feel secure and happy in school.

ENGLISH

- 84 By the end of Year 2, standards in speaking and listening, reading and writing are similar to those found nationally. This is a better picture than the 2001 National Curriculum test results, but consistent with the results of the recent national tests, although comparative information is not yet available. The improvement in standards is partly due to the varying ability levels of pupils in different year groups, and largely due to hard work by the school to address weaknesses identified following the 2001 national tests.
- 85 By the end of Year 6, standards in speaking and listening and reading are above those found nationally and consistent with the National Curriculum test results for 2001. Although overall standards in written English are similar to those found nationally, the work of too many pupils is spoilt by untidy handwriting and careless presentation.
- 86 Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets set in their individual education plans. They benefit greatly from the setting of work which is appropriately challenging and the good quality support provided by teaching and support staff. Pupils for whom English is an additional language make good progress during their time in the school. The programme of work in English meets fully the requirements of the National Curriculum.
- 87 In speaking and listening, pupils throughout the school make good progress and, by the time they reach Year 6, achieve standards which are generally above those expected for their age. The increasing confidence and skills of younger pupils are apparent during literacy lessons, when they respond quickly to questions arising from the text and interact enthusiastically with their teachers. In a Year 1 literacy lesson, for example, pupils were able to explain clearly the differences between fiction and non-

fiction books. The pupils' skills are further enhanced during work in other subjects. A good example was provided in Year 2, during an ICT lesson, when pupils explained confidently how to enter a set of instructions to programme a robotic toy to travel various distances and change direction. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils show a capacity to listen carefully and respond appropriately to what others say, and higher attaining pupils show a growing ability to talk and listen confidently in different contexts.

- 88 Pupils continue to make good progress at Key Stage 2. They show a growing ability to vary the amount of detail and the use of vocabulary during discussion and an increasing sense of audience.
- 89 By the time pupils reach the age of 11, they talk and listen confidently in a wide range of contexts, including whole-school assemblies, whole-class and group settings. Participation in school productions enables many of them to enhance and extend their skills. The ability of a significant number of older pupils to vary expression and vocabulary to engage the listener is a strong feature in their learning. This was apparent, for example, when higher attaining pupils in Year 6 talked about the books they had read. They were able to convey very successfully their love of reading and their preferences for various authors, and they talked with some passion about the characters and events in the books they had read.
- 90 In reading, pupils make good progress during their time in the school and, by Year 6, achieve standards which are generally above those expected for their age. They benefit considerably from the support of parents, particularly in the early stages of their education. The increasing emphasis placed on the development of phonic skills, during literacy lessons for younger pupils, contributes significantly towards the good progress made by pupils up to the age of seven. In a Year 1 literacy lesson, for example, the teacher focused on words which contained the sounds "o" and "oa". In Year 2, pupils were asked to identify words beginning with the phoneme "wh". In both classes, the pupils completed these tasks successfully, demonstrating a good grasp of the key sounds to help extend their reading skills. By the age of seven, most pupils use appropriate strategies to help them read unfamiliar words, and a smaller proportion of higher attaining pupils read with increasing fluency, showing a good understanding of what they read. Older pupils build successfully on this good start. Many read a wide range of stories, plays and poems, and show growing competence in finding information from reference materials and the Internet. By Year 6, many higher attaining pupils achieve standards in reading which are above those expected for their age. They read challenging novels of their own choice, and are able to discuss confidently the plot, characters and style of books.
- 91 In writing, younger pupils make good progress and, by the end of Year 2, achieve appropriate standards for their age. This shows a better picture than indicated by the 2001 National Curriculum test results, and reflects recent hard work by the school to raise literacy standards at Key Stage 1. Younger pupils benefit greatly from the literacy hour and, by the time they are seven, most are able to write in a sequence of sentences, making appropriate use of capital letters and full stops, and generally spelling simple words correctly. A small minority of higher attaining pupils write with growing imagination, showing good skills in spelling more complex words.
- 92 Older pupils make generally good progress in their writing. Most achieve appropriate standards for their age, by the end of Year 6, and a smaller proportion exceed these

levels. By the time pupils reach the age of 11, their writing is generally lively and thoughtful. Most use an appropriate range of punctuation with accuracy, and understand how to construct paragraphs. Throughout Key Stage 2, pupils benefit greatly from good and often high quality teaching during literacy lessons, which challenges those at all levels of attainment and makes very good provision for pupils with special educational needs. This enables pupils to make good progress in acquiring new skills in writing. The successful implementation of the literacy hour is reflected in the good quality of the relatively short pieces of written work produced during literacy lessons. Some high attainers use an increasingly adventurous vocabulary and make accurate use of their new skills. Although some teachers are effective in promoting good standards of handwriting by the pupils, this is a less consistent feature in pupils' learning. In general, the standard of handwriting produced by older pupils is unsatisfactory, and pupils' written work in other subjects is often spoilt by poor presentation. The school has recognised the need to improve handwriting standards as a priority for attention.

- 93 Throughout the school, well-planned and very imaginative use of ICT contributes greatly towards the development of pupils' literacy skills. Pupils enjoy seeing good quality presentation of their work, often incorporating well selected illustrations. They benefit from the use of the spell-check facility to identify and improve weaknesses in their spelling, and extend their research skills significantly by using the Internet and CD-Rom facilities.
- 94 Throughout the school, the quality of teaching is generally good and often very good. Over 80 per cent of lessons observed were at least good and half were very good. There were no unsatisfactory lessons. Careful preparation helps teachers to be secure in their subject knowledge. Very good quality lesson planning is a strong feature in the subject. Teachers plan work which is appropriately challenging to extend pupils at all levels of attainment. Specific and measurable targets in the individual educational plans for pupils with special educational needs help them to make good progress during their time in the school.
- 95 The identification of group targets for improvement, which are shared with pupils and parents, help to give pupils a good self-knowledge of their own learning. Texts for the introductory element of the literacy lesson are carefully selected and "big books" and overhead projectors are used effectively to present shared reading texts. Careful explanation and highly effective questioning skills help to capture pupils' attention and interest. Teachers convey a strong sense of their own enjoyment, and use humour very effectively to stimulate, encourage and introduce a sense of fun into pupils' learning. This creates a positive context for learning, where pupils know that their efforts will be valued, and are not afraid of making a mistake.
- 96 In many classes, the very effective contribution of support staff is of particular benefit during group work, achieving a high level of interaction between pupils and adults, and helping pupils to work productively. The high expectations which teachers have of their pupils is a strong feature in many lessons. They use a rich and varied vocabulary when introducing new learning and questioning pupils and are always keen to extend pupils' learning by providing additional information. In Year 3, for example, when pupils engaged in dictionary work, the teacher asked them to note the origins of some of the words. This not only extended their literacy skills, but developed their awareness and appreciation of other cultures as they recognised the Greek origin of the word "crystal" and the Japanese origin of "origami".

- 97 In Year 5, highly effective teaching prompted pupils to think carefully about the way some writers use alliteration and onomatopoeia to bring their writing to life. Teaching of this quality successfully promotes pupils' interest in reading and their desire to use new words, which they often incorporate into their writing. Although some teachers place strong emphasis on high standards of handwriting and successfully help their pupils to produce well-presented work, others are less successful in promoting this aspect of the pupils' development.
- 98 Good class management is a strong feature in the teaching of English, and contributes significantly towards the generally high standard of behaviour in lessons. Pupils show very good attitudes towards their work. They generally work productively during group and independent activities, although the quality of work produced by older pupils is often spoilt by poor handwriting. During all aspects of the work in English, teachers take care to include and involve all pupils. Their questioning takes care not to favour either gender, and learning activities effectively challenge pupils at all levels of attainment.
- 99 The effective work of the subject manager is a significant factor in the good progress made in English since the last inspection. There has been a considerable improvement in the quality of teaching, which was described as satisfactory in the last inspection and is now good and often of high quality. This, together with the very successful implementation of the National Literacy Strategy, has resulted in improving standards. Compared to figures published in the last inspection report, the proportion of pupils attaining Level 4 in English has increased from 61 per cent to 78 per cent. In addition, a significant proportion of pupils now exceed the level expected for their age in the National Curriculum tests.

MATHEMATICS

- 100 By the end of Year 2, standards are above those found nationally. This reflects the National Curriculum test results for 2001, which showed the school's performance to be above the national average and well above the performance of similar schools. The standards achieved by the pupils at the end of Year 2 are close to those found nationally. This represents a better picture than the most recent national test results and is due largely to the steps taken by the school to address weaknesses in the mathematics curriculum. The great majority of the pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress during their time in the school.
- 101 By the age of seven, the pupils demonstrate a good knowledge and understanding of basic number work. They respond well to the interesting range and variety of experiences provided by their teachers. They can count reliably and show a growing awareness of number patterns and sequences. For example, in a Year 2 class, the pupils were quick to count in multiples of ten from a range of different starting points. They enjoyed demonstrating their skills and were reluctant at one stage to stop at 109 after starting at nine and counting up in tens with complete accuracy. The pupils make good progress in their understanding of place value. They know that zero acts as a place holder and that the position of a digit signifies its value. They are able to use their knowledge effectively when ordering numbers to 100 and beyond. By Year 2, the pupils make good progress in their calculations, selecting and using correctly appropriate addition and subtraction processes. The pupils clearly enjoy the challenges set by their teachers in the mental starters to the lessons. They develop

an appropriate range of strategies, which they use effectively when solving problems involving numbers, money and measures. At times, the lower attaining pupils have difficulty with the vocabulary of the mathematics they encounter. However, effective support by teachers and classroom assistants frequently enables them to overcome obstacles so that they maintain a good rate of progress.

- 102 By the age of 11, the pupils continue to make good progress in their use and understanding of place value. For example, in a Year 6 class the pupils were able to explain the strategies they used to solve problems containing seven digit numbers. They handled these large numbers with much confidence and were quick and accurate when responding to their teacher's well judged questioning, reading the numbers accurately and without hesitation. The pupils demonstrate increasing accuracy in computation, using the four rules of number. However, in some classes, the standard of presentation is lower than might be expected and at times this impacts upon the accuracy of the pupils' calculations. By Year 6, the pupils develop good skills, understanding and using their increasing knowledge of the extension of the number system, including the use of negative numbers and the relationship of fractions, decimals and percentages. Many of the oldest pupils can recognise and describe quite complex number patterns and relationships, including multiple, factor and square. They understand the use of brackets when solving number problems and can express in their own words the commutative law. The older pupils in Years 5 and 6 benefit from well-structured teaching which enables them to make good progress in understanding how to use and interpret co-ordinates in all four quadrants. They know how to read and plot co-ordinates accurately using the appropriate axes to establish the positions of the vertices of a range of different shapes.
- 103 In each class the pupils benefit from a range of well-planned activities and experiences which support effectively their work related to shape, space and measures. The teachers introduce the pupils to precise mathematical language. As a result the pupils develop a good knowledge of the associated terminology, which they use effectively when describing the properties of three and two-dimensional shapes. Many of the older pupils use confidently a range of measures and are able to convert one metric unit to another. They understand how to read scales with increasing accuracy and can record measurements using decimal notation. By Year 6, the pupils have a good understanding of perimeters, area and volume and know how to use simple formulae when calculating solutions to problems. They understand how to measure angles to the nearest degree including those that are obtuse or acute. They show good accuracy when calculating the third angle in a triangle when only two angles are given.
- 104 From Year 3, the older pupils are introduced to handling data. However, in some classes the pupils have insufficient opportunities to collect and interpret data in real life situations. Too often they are presented with data to be interpreted so that their skills in organising and presenting data they have collected are under-developed. The oldest pupils have a good understanding of the use of measures of average, and use appropriately terms such as mode, median, mean and range in relevant problem-solving contexts. For example, in one class they used this knowledge to good effect to compare and contrast rainfall patterns in different parts of the world.

- 105 Although pupils in some classes are helped to develop and practise their mathematical skills during work in other subjects, this is not a consistent feature throughout the school. When this dimension of the work is addressed effectively, the pupils benefit considerably. A good example was provided when a class of older pupils, working in the ICT suite, increased their skills in handling data very significantly by analysing and presenting information gathered from their work in comparing the population of various regions. The activity resulted in significant progress by the pupils in extending both their mathematical as well as ICT skills. They were able to produce a range of graphs and charts to good effect and to interpret the information with accuracy and understanding.
- 106 The quality of the teaching is generally good, and all staff work hard and very successfully to implement the National Numeracy Strategy. Lessons are well-planned and the content is interesting and relevant, providing pupils at all levels of ability with varied and challenging experiences. In all classes, the work is matched appropriately to the pupils' different levels of ability. The high calibre support provided by the classroom assistants is a significant factor in supporting the pupils' learning. The adults are briefed properly and know the pupils well. The quality of this additional support is effective in helping the pupils with special educational needs to make consistently good progress towards the targets set for them. In most lessons, questioning is a strong feature and is used effectively to probe pupils' thinking, consolidate learning and on occasions to correct misconceptions. Throughout the school, the teaching is generally bright and lively. Groupwork is well managed and the pupils generally put much intellectual effort into their work. Well-organised lessons help the pupils to acquire appropriate skills, knowledge and understanding of mathematics. They respond very well. They are interested in the work and generally concentrate hard on the tasks they are set.
- 107 Since the last inspection, the school has made improvements in a number of important areas. For example, the higher attaining pupils are now challenged much more effectively. In addition, the quality of assessment is much improved. Careful analysis of test results provides information which is used very effectively to plan future work. Effective marking of the pupils' work now gives them a clear understanding of their strengths and what they must do to improve further.
- 108 The subject is co-ordinated effectively. The organisation of the curriculum enables all of the pupils, irrespective of gender, race, social background or level of attainment, to have quality of opportunity and access to the subject. Mathematics makes an important contribution to the aims of the school. The subject is resourced adequately and is allocated an appropriate amount of time. The content of the work meets the requirements of the National Curriculum.

SCIENCE

- 109 By the time pupils reach the end of Year 6, standards are above those found nationally. This is a better picture than indicated by the National Curriculum results for 2001 and is consistent with the test results for 2002, which indicated that over 50 per cent of the pupils in Year 6 achieved Level 5. Standards in Year 2 are appropriate for the pupils' age. Throughout the school, pupils at all levels of attainment make good progress in relation to their prior learning.

- 110 By the end of Year 2, the pupils know about life cycles and the beneficial effects of exercise on the body. As a result of their observations of plant growth, they know some of the factors that affect the growth of seeds. Through their explorations of materials, they can name some of the properties of materials and say why some familiar materials are suited to the use which is made of them. They know that some changes caused by external influences are reversible, and that other changes are irreversible. In their investigation of the rate at which toy cars run down slopes of different heights they are able to measure the distance travelled and make simple generalisations about the factors involved. They know about the dangers of electricity and that a complete circuit with a power source is needed for a bulb to light.
- 111 By the end of Year 6, the majority of pupils have extended considerably their range of scientific knowledge, and made steady progress in developing their enquiry skills. They know about the stages of human growth and reproduction, and make comparisons with the life processes of other living creatures. They know about a healthy lifestyle and that some substances can be harmful to the body. Most pupils have a good understanding of the nature of solids, liquids and gases, and know how to separate mixtures and solutions, such as salt and water. They can explain the processes of evaporation and condensation and know that water exists in different states. In their investigations into sound and sound insulation, the pupils display a satisfactory understanding of how sound is created by different instruments and how it travels. In a suitable range of practical investigations, the pupils develop satisfactory enquiry skills. They can suggest scientific questions, make predictions and give reasons for their predictions. They know how to improve the reliability of their test results by repeating the investigation and collecting several sets of data. However, they are not always sufficiently accurate in the measurements they take, and they have insufficient opportunities to construct graphs and interpret their findings in relation to the question under investigation. Although they are able to write reports about their investigations, using appropriate scientific vocabulary, their work is often spoilt by untidy handwriting.
- 112 Throughout the school, the great majority of pupils take part in science lessons with great enthusiasm and enjoyment, particularly when the learning is set in a practical investigative context. They are keen to talk about their findings and show what they know in class discussions but, in some classes, the poor presentation of their work means that pupils' written responses often do not do justice to their levels of understanding. Most pupils behave well and handle scientific equipment and resources with care. They are particularly good at working together co-operatively. They do this responsibly and productively and this is a significant factor in the good progress they make.
- 113 The teaching is never less than satisfactory and often good. Teachers' lesson planning gives sufficient emphasis to the development of science enquiry skills and there is good provision to challenge the full ability range in each class. Teachers make good use of questioning to probe and extend their pupils' understanding. A particularly good feature of the teaching is the way in which teachers encourage their pupils to explain their thinking in extended answers. This helps the development of scientific thinking and understanding, and makes a good contribution to the development of the pupils' speaking and listening skills. The practical investigative work is well organised and teachers' expectations of what the pupils can achieve are

made clear by the use of targets and the sharing of lesson objectives. The good lessons provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to use mathematical skills in accurate measurement and graph construction and require pupils to interpret their findings in depth. However, this is not a consistent feature throughout the school, and in some lessons insufficient opportunities are created for pupils to use and apply their mathematical skills to support their work in science.

- 114 Thorough lesson planning and a good range of resources and equipment provide good support for teaching science. Support staff make a particularly valuable contribution to the pupils' learning and their work is of high quality. The subject manager provides effective leadership and the programme of work meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. However, there is scope for creating more opportunities for pupils to measure variables, create graphs from their data and interpret their findings in scientific terms, particularly in Year 6. The systems for assessment are very thorough and give useful information on which to base future lessons. The school makes good provision for all pupils, regardless of gender, race, ability or background, to be fully included in all aspects of the science curriculum.

ART AND DESIGN and DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

- 115 In art and design and design and technology, standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are at least satisfactory for the age of the pupils, and some work of high quality is produced in both subjects. This is a similar picture to the last inspection in design and technology, but represents a significant improvement in art and design, where standards were described as below the expected levels in the last inspection report. In both subjects, pupils at all levels of attainment, including those with special educational needs, make good progress during their time in the school.
- 116 The timing of the inspection and the school's timetabling arrangement meant that it was not possible to observe a full range of lessons in either subject. However, the examination of teachers' planning and of work produced previously by the pupils, together with the sample of lessons observed, indicate that National Curriculum requirements are met fully in both subjects.
- 117 In art and design, younger pupils respond to and explore ideas enthusiastically. They use a variety of materials to design and make their own illustrations and models. They make good use of ideas gained from examining closely the work of other artists. In Year 2, for example, pupils who had looked carefully at Van Gogh's painting of *The Sunflowers* produced some work of high quality when asked to paint their own versions. As they progress through the school, pupils work with increasing precision. Pupils in Year 3, for example, produced some detailed drawings from direct observation of plants and shells. In Year 6, pupils produced work of a high standard during a unit of work based on the paintings of Pablo Picasso. Evidence of previous work produced by older pupils indicates an increasing capacity to explore and communicate ideas, using different methods and materials.
- 118 In design and technology, pupils make good progress in extending their skills in designing and making, and in evaluating what they have produced. They use simple techniques for creating movement effectively. For example, Year 1 pupils used cardboard levers to make a moving picture, and pupils in Year 2 used a cotton reel to make a simple wind-up mechanism. The pupils make good use of ideas, which they

acquire from close examination of objects brought in by their teachers, and this helps them to plan and design their own product. For example, younger pupils examined different types of wind-up mechanisms taken from broken toys to help them plan a project. The good variety of opportunities for pupils to use different techniques for creating movement is a strong feature throughout the school. Pupils in Year 3, for example, use a form of pneumatics effectively, using a balloon, plastic tubing and washing-up bottle, to open and close the mouth of a 'Pneumatic Monster'. Older pupils use wood-technology to make a strong chassis for a vehicle to be powered by a battery operated motor. In all of these projects, the pupils completed clear designs, before making their products, and took the time to evaluate at the end to see how they could improve the quality of what they had made. Older pupils took note of potential user preferences and considered the likely impact of various slogans and designs before designing and making a drink recipe and packaging, with slogans to catch the eye of the customers. The pupils showed a very good understanding of points for consideration in this process and produced designs and slogans of good quality.

- 119 In both subjects, the quality of teaching is good. Lessons are well planned and organised. Teachers and support staff co-operate very effectively to provide a good level of interaction with the pupils and an appropriate degree of intervention to support pupils' learning. This helps them to make progress in both subjects, and also contributes positively towards the development of pupils' vocabulary and their skills in speaking and listening. At both key stages and in both subjects, class management is a consistently good feature. This promotes good behaviour by pupils and positive relationships. Throughout the school, very good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs, and appropriate care is taken to ensure that all pupils, irrespective of gender, race, background or ability, are appropriately involved and supported. Both subjects are co-ordinated effectively, and this has a positive effect on pupils' learning and progress.

GEOGRAPHY and HISTORY

- 120 By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, standards in both subjects are generally appropriate for the pupils' age. This represents an improvement on the last inspection, when standards in both subjects were found to be unsatisfactory. Pupils at different levels of ability, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress during their time in the school. However, their progress in both subjects is sometimes restricted by the relatively narrow range and limited quality of learning opportunities provided in some year groups.
- 121 In geography, by the age of seven, the pupils have gained a basic sense of place, in relation to their own locality, and are beginning to develop an awareness of places beyond their own locality, recognising that not all places are the same. The work they are given provides a suitable basis for developing the appropriate geographical skills. By the age of 11, most pupils develop a sound understanding of maps of different scales and are able to interpret these with reasonable accuracy. They recognise some of the ways in which human activity affects the physical environment, and are able to express their own views on topics such as the advantages and disadvantages of different forms of transport used in the Mersey region. They make simple comparisons between their own locality and that of a contrasting locality such as Chembakolli in India. In Year 6 they make effective use of secondary sources, such as the Internet, to research geological events such as

earthquakes and volcanoes. Although the pupils make satisfactory progress in the development of their geographical knowledge, many of the tasks in which they engage, do not challenge them to develop their geographical study skills to the levels of which they are capable.

- 122 In history, by the age of seven, the pupils have made satisfactory progress in the development of their knowledge and skills. They know about famous people, such as Florence Nightingale, and are able to carry out simple research from secondary sources to find out more about her. In their study of the Great Fire of London, the pupils identify correctly some of the reasons why the fire spread so quickly, and place the events of the fire in chronological order. They show appropriate awareness of the distinction between past and present, and use appropriate vocabulary to describe the passing of time. At Key Stage 2, in classes for pupils in Years 3 to 6, pupils make sound progress in extending their knowledge of ancient civilisations such as Egypt, Greece and Rome. When given the opportunity, the pupils show good skills in searching for and finding appropriate information to support their work. In their studies of Tudor England and the Second World War, for example, pupils were able to use an appropriate range of historical sources such as books, artefacts, CD ROMs and the Internet, to research the key events and people of those periods in history. In general, however, too few opportunities are created for pupils at Key Stage 2 to use and extend their study skills.
- 123 The teaching in both subjects is never less than satisfactory, and there are some good features. All teachers manage the pupils well. Lesson planning takes careful account of the range of ability in each class, and lessons are structured effectively with good use of time and resources. The teachers have appropriate subject knowledge and use this well in questioning and supporting their pupils. They use appropriate teaching methods to stimulate the interest of their pupils and make good use of visits and field trips in the surrounding area and further afield. For example, a visit to Keswick provided valuable experience and photographic evidence to enable the pupils in Year 3 to make relevant comparisons between a rural, inland area and their own urban, coastal locality. The themed 'history' days in school provide further enrichment of the pupils' learning. Although lesson planning in both subjects identifies clearly the skills and knowledge to be acquired, the tasks and activities chosen for the pupils do not always have sufficient focus and challenge to extend all pupils fully. In addition, the demands on pupils' standards of presentation are sometimes too low, so that the written work produced does not always do justice to the pupils' knowledge and understanding. Appropriate opportunities are created for pupils to use ICT to research information during history and geography lessons, but there are generally too few opportunities for the pupils to apply their mathematical skills in geography, for example in the collection of data or the construction of graphs.
- 124 The procedures in place for monitoring lesson planning give the subject leaders a good overview of priorities for development in both subjects. The recently implemented programmes of work are well balanced and have the potential to meet fully the requirements of the National Curriculum. However, these have not yet been through the full cycle of evaluation and need careful monitoring in order to ensure that lessons reflect the intentions of the programmes with appropriate depth and level of challenge. Good procedures are in place for monitoring the progress of

pupils in history and geography. The programme of visits to support learning, in both subjects, makes a significant contribution towards the high level of interest shown by pupils in both subjects.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

- 125 By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, standards in ICT are above the levels expected for the pupils' age. Pupils at all levels of attainment, including those with special educational needs, make very good progress during their time in the school. The programme of work meets fully the requirements of the National Curriculum and makes very good provision for all pupils.
- 126 Regular lessons in the ICT suite enable pupils to acquire confidence in using the computer to complete a variety of tasks relating to their studies. They benefit from a well thought out programme of work, which meets fully the requirements of the National Curriculum, and enables the pupils to engage in learning activities which are meaningful and purposeful.
- 127 Pupils make particularly good progress in extending their skills in communicating information. They use a wide range of facilities to produce, amend and enhance text. From an early stage, they become familiar with tools such as those for correcting their spelling and for adjusting the style and size of print. As they progress, they show high levels of competence in using ICT to organise and present their work in the best way for a particular purpose, often incorporating graphic images to complement the text. In Year 2, for example, pupils produced an illustration of Florence Nightingale, inserting their own text into an appropriately placed speech-bubble. Older pupils re-organise aspects of their work confidently, for example by shifting text about, using cut and paste techniques. They show a good awareness of audience, and structure, refine and present their work in ways which are suitable for specific purposes. In Year 4, for example, pupils produced eye-catching and colourful posters, for a variety of purposes, such as saving electricity and encouraging recycling in order to avoid causing unnecessary damage to the environment.
- 128 Pupils also make very good progress in developing their skills in handling information. Younger pupils are able to use ICT effectively to present the results of class surveys. In Year 1, for example, pupils produced accurate block graphs to represent their favourite party food. As they progress through the school, the pupils extend these skills, and use programs such as *Pinpoint* and *Graphplot* to represent the findings of surveys and investigations in various subjects. They select the most appropriate means of presenting information, using pie-charts as well as line and bar graphs, and show good skills in interpreting information presented in graphical form. Older pupils show good skills in using spreadsheet, and are able to enter relevant data and the formulae for various calculations. By Year 6, the pupils' skills in handling information are very well developed. They are able to select the information they need for different purposes and retrieve it from relevant sources, using the Internet and CD-Rom facilities, before checking its accuracy and presenting it in a suitable way.
- 129 Pupils make very good progress in extending their knowledge and understanding of control technology. In Year 2, for example, pupils entered a set of instructions accurately to programme a roamer robotic toy to travel various distances and change direction. As they progress, pupils extend these skills further by entering a set of

precise instructions to draw quite complex shapes on screen. Older pupils show well-developed skills in preparing and entering a set of instructions to programme the computer to operate an external device. In Years 5 and 6, for example, pupils successfully programmed the computer to operate a set of traffic lights according to United Kingdom regulations. They were then able to adjust the order and timings of the instructions in order to make the traffic lights operate in the same fashion as those in another country.

- 130 Throughout the school, work in ICT has a very positive impact on pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. The activities involved in communicating and searching for information contributes significantly towards the development of pupils' literacy skills. Handling information tasks, including the accurate presentation of information, as well as the use of spreadsheet, help to extend pupils' mathematical skills.
- 131 Teaching is never less than good and generally of a very good quality. All of the lessons observed were at least good and two thirds were very good. Lessons are very well planned with clear objectives, and work is pitched at a challenging level. Pupils respond with enthusiasm and work productively. Class teachers and support staff co-operate very effectively and provide a perceptive level of intervention in pupils' learning. This allows scope for pupils to learn through trial and error, but ensures that help is provided before the momentum of learning is lost. Excellent use is made of the computer suite. New ideas are introduced very effectively to the whole class, using the large screen computer projection. Teachers achieve a good balance between whole-class explanation and creating time for pupils to work on their tasks. The arrangements for pupils to save their work on their personal disks is a positive feature, which contributes towards good levels of continuity in their learning. Class management is consistently of a high standard, promoting very good relationships and high standards of behaviour. Very good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs, which is reflected in their very good progress. Appropriate care is taken to involve and extend boys and girls, and to meet the needs of pupils of different racial backgrounds including those who speak English as an additional language.
- 132 Very good progress has been made since the last inspection, when relatively little direct teaching of ICT was observed. Standards, which at that stage were described as unsatisfactory at Key Stage 2, now exceed the level expected for the pupils' age. Considerable improvements in resources, the development of the computer suite, the implementation of a clear and comprehensive scheme of work and very effective subject co-ordination are important factors in the progress achieved.

MUSIC

- 133 By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, standards are similar to those expected nationally and consistent with those evident in the last inspection. Pupils at all levels of ability, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress during their time in school.
- 134 Younger pupils sing tunefully. They use their voices expressively during the singing of songs and hymns. The pupils sing clearly and know how to maintain a steady pulse. From an early age, the pupils learn how to hold and play correctly a variety of tuned and untuned percussion instruments. They are sensitive to the moods and feelings which different types of music evoke. For example, in a Year 1 class pupils

were able to describe how they felt when listening to part of Bach's *Third Orchestral Suite in D*. One pupil remarked, "It's calm, as if someone has died". They compared this later in the lesson to *The Grand Old Duke of York*. Another pupil remarked, "It makes you want to get up and march!"

- 135 By the age of 11, the pupils develop their singing skills appropriately. In two part singing, they maintain their own parts with a growing awareness of how the different parts fit together to achieve an acceptable overall effect. In some lessons, the pupils demonstrated an increasing awareness of how time and place influenced the way music was created and performed. This was evident, for example, when Year 6 pupils sang World War II songs in a lesson linked to work in history.
- 136 Some of the older pupils receive specialist teaching of stringed instruments, and achieve high standards playing violas, cellos and violins. The pupils are confident performers, and practise, rehearse and present performances with an awareness of audience. For example, the string group played before, during and at the end of a school assembly. They could read staff notation very effectively and produced serene and spiritual music which evoked a strong sense of awe and wonder.
- 137 The quality of class teaching is satisfactory, and the progress of pupils' learning to play an instrument is significantly enhanced by very effective specialist teaching. Lessons are planned carefully and well resourced so that the pupils benefit from an interesting range of activities in listening to and making their own music. The subject is well co-ordinated and enables the pupils to take a full part in lessons. The pupils respond well to the experiences provided. They enjoy music lessons and behave sensibly. Music makes a good contribution to the aims of the school. The content of the work meets the requirements of the National Curriculum.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- 138 Standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are appropriate for the pupils' age. Pupils at all levels of attainment, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in lessons and during their time in the school.
- 139 In games, the pupils develop increasing skills, control and fluency in their performance. For example, in a Year 6 class, many demonstrated good skills in striking, throwing and receiving when engaged in cricket activities. They worked productively in small groups putting in much physical effort. They benefited greatly from the specialist teaching they received and by the end of the lesson they were able to demonstrate their growing fielding skills to good effect. By the age of 11, the pupils acquire good control of their body movements and their co-ordination is well developed.
- 140 Almost all of the pupils can swim at least 25 metres unaided by the end of Year 6. Many perform at a higher level. The pupils are confident in the water and know how to use a range of recognised strokes. The pupils are taught how to breathe correctly, so that they swim effectively and safely.
- 141 In dance, older pupils perform expressively and with confidence. In a Year 4 class, for example, many demonstrated good control when performing a traditional Indian

dance linked to their work in geography. Younger pupils show a good understanding of the importance of warming up before exercise, and know how to use expressive movements to convey emotion.

- 142 At other times during the year, pupils in all year groups take part in gymnastics activities and older pupils also take part in outdoor and adventurous activities which include developing a range of orienteering and problem solving skills.
- 143 The quality of teaching is generally good and sometimes of a higher calibre, especially when specialist teaching of the subject occurs. A good example of this was provided when staff from the local high school contributed very effectively to a games lesson which was very successful in extending the pupils' skills. The teachers enable the pupils to have access to all aspects of the subject during their time in the school. They organise a range of extra-curricular sporting activities open to boys and girls and enable the pupils to compete against pupils in other local schools.
- 144 The work in physical education makes a good contribution to the aims of the school. The subject is well co-ordinated, and is allocated an appropriate amount of time. Since the last inspection standards have been maintained. The content of the work meets fully the requirements of the National Curriculum.