

INSPECTION REPORT

NORMAN PANNELL SCHOOL

Liverpool

LEA area: Liverpool

Unique reference number: 104600

Headteacher: Mrs B C Sullivan

Reporting inspector: Mr B Tyrer
23101

Dates of inspection: 11th – 14th June 2001

Inspection number: 195454

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior school
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Brownbill Bank Netherley Liverpool
Postcode:	L27 7AE
Telephone number:	(0151) 487 7718
Fax number:	(0151) 488 6843
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr P Ratchford
Date of previous inspection:	January 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
2310 1	Mr B Tyrer	Registered inspector	Religious education Music Equal opportunities	The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught?
1268 2	Mr J Griffin	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school in partnership with parents?
1791 3	Mr B Frost	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Design and technology Physical education	How well is the school led and managed?
7958	Ms G Lewis	Team inspector	English History Geography	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
1892 6	Mr M Ridout	Team inspector	Science Art Foundation Stage Special educational needs	

The inspection contractor was:

PPI Group Ltd
7 Hill Street
Bristol
BS1 5RW

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Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is situated in the Netherley ward of Liverpool and is larger than average with 300 pupils on roll. There are 133 boys and 127 girls and 80 children attend the nursery part time. The school population is predominantly white and no pupils have English as a second language. As the area served by the school is one of high social and economic deprivation, almost 70 per cent of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. This proportion is well above the national average. Thirty per cent of pupils are identified as having special educational needs and this proportion is above the national average. One of those pupils has a statement of special educational needs, well below the national average. The attainment of pupils on entry to the school is well below that which might be expected nationally.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a school with a good level of effectiveness. Pupils enter the nursery with levels of attainment that are well below what might be expected for their age and leave at the end of Key Stage 2 with levels of attainment that are broadly average. Teaching is satisfactory, overall, and almost half the teaching is good or better. The governing body's understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and the positive leadership of the headteacher combine to make the school into a unit with a strong sense of purpose and identity. Taking effectiveness, pupils costs and the quality of education provided into consideration, the school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils achieve well.
- Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development and relationships are all very good.
- The provision for pupils' moral development is good and the provision for social development is very good.
- The school has good links with parents.
- Procedures for child protection and pupils' welfare are good.

What could be improved

- Standards in English, mathematics and science at the end of Key Stage 2.
- Attendance and punctuality.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in November 1997, since when it has made a satisfactory improvement. Standards in English, mathematics and science for pupils at the end Key Stage 2 have been rising at the same rate as that seen nationally, although inspection shows a significant improvement in this current year. Standards in mathematics have been raised and the school has established good procedures for assessing pupils' levels of attainment in English, mathematics and science but this does not yet extend to all other areas of the curriculum. The outdoor

environment has been enhanced and particularly so for children in the Foundation Stage. The key issue about registering pupils on the schools register for pupils with special educational needs has been met. The setting of clear targets for pupils with special educational needs has not been adequately addressed and remains a key issue for the future.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
English	C	E	E	B	well above A average above B average C average D below average E well below average
mathematics	E	E	E	B	
science	D	E	D	B	

Results of national tests in 2000 for pupils aged 11 were well below the national average in English and mathematics and were below the national average in science. Results over time in national tests for pupils at the age of 11 have generally been well below the national average. The exceptions being in English in 1998 when they were average and in science in 1998 and 2000 when they were below average. The school has a very high percentage of pupils who are eligible for free school meals. The results in English, mathematics and science are above the average for schools that have similar proportions of pupils eligible for free school meals. Inspection shows a significant improvement in attainment for the current pupils in Year 6. Standards in English, mathematics and science are now broadly average. Results in national tests for pupils aged seven at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2000 were well below average in reading, below average in writing and above average in mathematics. Teacher assessment put their performance in science as above average. Inspection shows similar improvement for pupils currently in Year 2 where standards are average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Children enter the Foundation stage in the year in which they are four with levels of attainment that are well below those expected for their age. The school has set reasonable targets for pupils in the present Year 6 they are achieving well.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good - parents report that their children like school. Pupils are keen to involve themselves in lessons.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good - pupils behave very well and respond well to their teachers. Pupils have clear understanding of what is expected. They are tolerant and have a good sense of right

	and wrong.
Personal development and relationships	Very good - pupils cooperate well with one another and staff. They take good care of their school and are quick to offer help or assistance at appropriate times.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory – the rate of authorised absence is higher than average and the rate of unauthorised absence is also much higher.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching and learning are satisfactory, overall. They are good in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 and satisfactory in Key Stage 2 where rates of pupils' progress vary. Teaching was satisfactory in 47 per cent of lessons. It was good in 41 per cent, very good in six per cent and excellent in two per cent. Five per cent of teaching (three lessons) was unsatisfactory. The quality of teaching in literacy and numeracy is satisfactory and the teaching of basic skills is good in the early stages. In some instances, the planning for literacy and numeracy fails to take account of the differing levels of attainment within the class. Pupils who have special educational needs are satisfactorily provided for in Key Stage 1, but their provision becomes unsatisfactory in Key Stage 2. Where teaching is particularly successful pupils are given tasks that are closely matched to their needs. Where teaching is less successful, this is not always the case. Teachers have good knowledge of all their pupils' home circumstances and are very committed to their wellbeing. As a result, very good relationships exist and classrooms are places which are well ordered with a sense of purpose. Teachers, many of whom are long established in the school, work hard to create and maintain the very good levels of attitude and behaviour seen in the pupils.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory- but some subjects are in need of review in the light of recent changes. There is satisfactory provision made for extra-curricular activity.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Unsatisfactory - individual education plans are not specific enough in the targets they set.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good, overall - spiritual provision is satisfactory and the school has a good relationship with the local church. Cultural development is also satisfactory. Provision for moral development is good and the provision for social development is very good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school takes good care of its pupils and supports them well with the result that they feel safe and secure.

The school works well with parents and they have positive views of it. The majority of parents make a good contribution to their children's learning, but some fail to meet their responsibility where attendance and punctuality are concerned

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory- the headteacher provides a positive lead and is well supported by the senior management team. Areas of responsibility like those concerned with the provision for pupils with special educational needs should be improved.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body meet their statutory requirements.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has satisfactory procedures, overall, in place for assessing and evaluating performance. This is not always reflected in the provision made for pupils at classroom level.
The strategic use of resources	Financial planning is good and the school makes best use of its resources.

The school is adequately staffed and, despite having no dedicated area for the library, the accommodation is very good. Resources are satisfactory. There is a need to appoint a permanent coordinator with responsibility for music. The school is careful to exercise the principles of best value.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• That their children make good progress.• That behaviour is good.• That the school has high expectations.• That the teaching is good.• That their children like school.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The amount of homework provided.• The links the school has with parents.• The range of activities outside lessons.

The inspection team supports and confirms those aspects that parents find pleasing. It is felt that an appropriate balance is struck with the amount of homework that is given. A review of the school's links with parents shows that these are good and the range of extra-curricular activity provided by the school is satisfactory.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Children enter the nursery class on a part-time basis with levels of attainment that are well below those expected for their age. They make good progress through the nursery, but attainment remains below average. They make good progress in the reception year and, by the time they have completed the Foundation Stage have made good gains in their personal and social development, their creative development and their physical development, so that levels of attainment in these aspects are close to what might be expected nationally. They have also made good progress in communication, language and literacy and mathematics and their knowledge and understanding of the world, but few children are on course to reach the expected standard here.
2. Results in national tests in 2000 at the end of Key Stage 1 showed that pupils' attainment in reading was well below the national average and that this performance was above that of schools thought to be similar on the basis of eligibility for free school meals. Results for writing were below the national average and, in comparison with similar schools, were well above average. Results for mathematics were above the national average and were well above similar schools. Results have improved in mathematics with 2000 being the best year to date.
3. Results of national tests in English, mathematics in 2000 for pupils aged 11 were well below the national average and were below the national average in science. Performance in all three subjects was above that of similar schools. When looked at in terms of improvement since they were tested at age seven, the improvement for English and mathematics and for science was well below when compared with pupils of a similar standard at that time. Results over time show that attainment has generally been well below the national average, with the odd exception as with English in 1998, when attainment met the national average. The school has continued to raise standards and the rising trend over time nationally is matched by the school's generally rising trend.
4. The efforts of all concerned have produced a picture of considerable improvement and inspection shows that attainment for pupils at the age of seven is now average in English, mathematics and science. At Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment is also average in English, mathematics and science. This is attributable to good teaching in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 which means that pupils are generally coming into Key Stage 2 with higher levels of attainment. Good use of assessment data, at the end of Key Stage 2 for pupils in Year 6, also means that they are able to make good progress in their final year.
5. Pupils aged seven at the end of Key Stage 1 speak fluently and confidently. They choose their words with precision and respond coherently when asked

about their work. As readers, they are beginning to read with expression. They can retell the plot of their story and identify the main characters. They have different strategies for reading new words and know that non-fiction books generally have index and contents pages. Their writing is legible and neat. Pupils produce sentences that are demarcated with capital letters and full stops and spelling is usually accurate. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 again show good levels of confidence when speaking. The questions they ask show that they have listened to and considered what they have heard. They value books and read with expression. Pupils can find information from non-fiction books and can offer opinions and draw inferences about the text they are reading. Whilst the school does not have a dedicated library room, the pupils are aware of how the Dewey classification system works. Writing is joined, neat and fluent and written work is almost always well presented. Punctuation is effective and includes the use of colons, exclamation marks and hyphens. Pupils can write for different purposes such as note taking and letters and can produce pieces in the manner of poets they have been studying.

6. Pupils aged seven have a good working knowledge of addition and subtraction of numbers and can write numbers to 100. They use this knowledge to solve problems in money and they tell the time to the quarter hour. They can name basic two and three dimensional shapes and understand simple symmetry. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 2, in Year 6, accurately use the four rules of number and can work effectively with fractions, percentages and decimals. They know about negative numbers and can apply their mathematical knowledge to solving problems. They use metric measurements and are able to convert these to imperial measures. In science, the pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 know about life cycles and that materials can be classified by different properties such as magnetic/ non magnetic. They understand that materials can change and they know about healthy foods.
7. The attainment of pupils at the end of both key stages in the remaining foundation subjects is in line with expectations, with the exception of art which is above. History is above expectations at the end of Key Stage 2. No judgement is made about physical education at the end of Key Stage 1 and design Technology at the end of Key Stage 2. The level of attainment of pupils in religious education at the end of both key stages is above what might be expected from pupils of those ages, using the same agreed syllabus.
8. The school set reasonable targets in 2000 for pupils at the end of Year 5, based on the analysis of good data and these were subsequently revised upwards prior to pupils taking national tests. Evidence supports the expectation that the current targets are attainable. Because teaching is good in mathematics and English in Key Stage 1, the pupils learn at a good rate. Pupils make satisfactory progress in science at this age. At Key Stage 2, rates of progress become variable and whilst they are generally satisfactory this is due in the main to pupils making good progress in their final year. There is little evidence to suggest that boys or girls are learning at different rates. Those pupils who are designated as gifted or talented and who are funded through the excellence in cities initiative are making good progress.

9. Between the ages of three and five, children with special educational needs make good progress. A satisfactory rate of progress is maintained in Key Stage 1 where teachers and support staff work with good effect to meet pupils' needs. However, the rate of progress slows in Key Stage 2 and is unsatisfactory, overall. Progress is too slow, particularly early in the key stage. This results from a lack of rigour in targeting these pupils and matching teaching and learning to their needs. However, in those classes where teaching is effective, such as in Year 6, progress improves markedly.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. Pupils show very positive attitudes towards school and their work, behave very well, form very good relationships and their personal development is good. The good partnership with parents together with pupils' moral and social development at school make significant contributions to pupils' very positive attitudes and values. Their attitudes and values, have improved since the previous inspection.
11. Pupils' attitudes to school are very good, overall. Based on questionnaire returns, nearly all pupils like school which plays a very important part in their lives. For example, a group of Year 6 pupils ranked school ahead of friends and hobbies and only behind family in a list of the important things in their lives. Most look forward to coming back to school at the end of holidays, for example. They like the positive atmosphere in the school. They consider that the way most teachers make their learning enjoyable and the very good relationships among pupils make significant contributions to this atmosphere. In nearly all lessons, pupils listen very well, concentrate well and start promptly on their individual work. Pupils' favourite subjects and lessons are those where they are practically involved, such as physical education, information and communication technology, art and mental mathematics. By contrast, few express positive attitudes towards English, from which few get a sense of enjoyment or achievement. Whilst many like the discussions and opportunities to express opinions in religious education, they do not like the writing work that usually follows. The best attitudes and behaviour occur in lessons where expectations are high, work is demanding and pupils are busy and engaged in a variety of activities, which provide the right level of challenge for them.
12. Behaviour in classrooms, during lunchtime and playtimes is very good, overall. The very good and reliable behaviour of nearly all pupils is a key element in the prevailing positive atmosphere for learning. In nearly all lessons, pupils are very well behaved. Prior to moving in groups, pupils form orderly lines and move about in a calm and responsible way. Behaviour of pupils at lunchtime and playtimes is very good. There is no sign of any bullying, racist or sexist behaviour. Indeed the calm sociable atmosphere that prevails, as pupils have their lunch, is a strikingly positive feature. There have been no permanent or fixed term exclusions for well over ten years. Parents' questionnaire responses fully support this very positive picture, with nearly all parents positive about

pupils' behaviour. Pupils take good care of property and resources and help keep their school in attractive condition.

13. Relationships between adults and pupils and among pupils are very good, overall. Adults act as good role models. Teachers value pupils' work and effectively praise effort and good work. For example, pupils in Years 2 and 6, spoke very positively about the support they get from teachers and the fair way in which they are treated. As a result, pupils are comfortable expressing views and asking questions of their teachers. This assists their learning. Very good relationships among pupils, including those with special educational needs, is a striking feature. As a result, pupils work well in pairs and support each others' learning with explanations, for example.
14. Pupils' personal development is good, overall. Pupils know and calmly carry out the daily routines expected of them. They enjoy speaking with visitors and show concern for others, if they are ill or otherwise upset. They regularly and without prompting, hold doors open for each other and adults. Pupils become increasingly comfortable taking responsibility as they move through school. They become more able to work well in groups as they move through school. As a result, in the juniors nearly all pupils work very well in pairs and small groups in lessons. When questioned in groups, Years 2 and 6 pupils are comfortable listening to different views expressed by others. They enjoy contributing to a number of charities. Pupils also show initiative in relation to their learning. For example, many pupils use the computers at school or at home to find out and use information for topic work.
15. Attendance is unsatisfactory. It is below the national average. The unauthorised absence level is persistently well above the national average. Register inspection identifies illness, unauthorised absence and holidays during term time as the three main reasons for absence. Attendance is lowest in the Foundation Stage and highest in Key Stage 2. Punctuality is satisfactory, overall. Most pupils come to school on time and settle to their work promptly and calmly. However, a minority are regularly late for school.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

16. The quality of teaching is satisfactory, overall. It is good in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 and satisfactory in Key Stage 2. Teaching was satisfactory in 47 per cent of lessons. It was good in 40 per cent, very good in 6 per cent and excellent in 2 per cent. Five per cent of teaching - three lessons - were unsatisfactory. The proportion of very good and better teaching appears to have improved slightly since the last inspection and the percentages of satisfactory and better and unsatisfactory teaching appear to be similar. The quality of teaching, therefore, appears to have been maintained. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good, overall, with four out of nine lessons being good or very good and no unsatisfactory teaching. The best teaching is found in Key Stage 1 where no unsatisfactory teaching was found and 83 per cent of teaching was good or better. Teaching in Key Stage 2 is satisfactory. Three unsatisfactory lessons were seen, 57 per cent was

satisfactory and 35 per cent of teaching was good or better. The quality of teaching of English and mathematics follows the general pattern already described. Whilst the strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy are generally satisfactory, there remains the need for some staff to develop their skills in teaching the literacy session and aspects of the numeracy lesson, such as the plenary. Teachers, many of whom are long established on the staff, show that they know their pupils' backgrounds and family circumstances very well and this contributes to the very good relationships that are found throughout the school.

17. Children enter the Foundation Stage in the nursery in the year in which they are four on a part time basis. They then pass into the reception year where they are taught either in a class of wholly reception children or one where they share their teacher with some pupils from Year 1. Careful provision is made for these children who are entering the school with levels of attainment that are well below what might be expected for their age and they make good progress. Those children who are in the mixed age class are well provided for and work is set that matches their needs and capabilities.
18. The teaching of literacy is satisfactory. It is good in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory in Key Stage 2. There are detailed schemes of work and planning is thorough. Teaching in Key Stage 2 is more variable in quality than in Key Stage 1 and, as a result, pupils' progress is not so smooth. A reason for this lies in the need for some teachers to extend their knowledge and understanding of the Literacy Hour. Pupils were seen to be making good progress at the end of the key stage. The teaching of reading is well promoted, although the school does not have a room specifically for the library. This inhibits pupils in their carrying out of research and in carrying out their own independent studies. Work is well targeted according to pupils' levels of attainment in Key Stage 1 but this is less well done in some classes in Key Stage 2 and the same is true of the provision made for pupils with special educational needs. Support for these pupils is better and more evident in Key Stage 1 than in Key Stage 2. Pupils are given opportunities to express themselves and because relationships are very good, they do so with enthusiasm. The subject makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and is also found in support of other areas of the curriculum, notably those with a major written content.
19. The teaching of numeracy is satisfactory and again is better across Key Stage 1 than across Key Stage 2. The good gains being made at the end of the Key Stage 2 in English are repeated in mathematics where planning pays close attention to the interpretation of assessment information. A satisfactory start has been made with the implementation of the numeracy strategy, but this is in need of improvement in areas like the way in which lesson objectives are shared, teachers' understanding and use of the plenary sessions. Pupils are particularly enthusiastic about the mental/oral sessions at the beginning of the lesson, which they find challenging and exciting, but care needs to be taken to ensure that there is sufficient challenge for pupils of all abilities at these times.

20. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is limited by aspects of the way in which the provision for them is managed. Individual education plans are often too general and this inhibits teachers as they plan their lessons. Better provision is made for pupils in Key Stage 1 than in parts of Key Stage 2, because the teaching is generally of a better quality. Planning seldom makes reference to pupils with special needs or shows that it is taking account of their individual education plans. The teaching provided for gifted and talented pupils through the excellence in cities initiative is good.
21. There is scope to improve the quality of teaching. Teachers need to take more account of the good quality assessment information that they have at their disposal and this needs to be reflected in the quality of planning and the way in which they identify and target pupils according to their levels of attainment or ability. There is also a need to develop schemes of work along nationally recommended guidelines so as to take advantage of the built in assessment opportunities they offer. Attention should be paid to the school's comprehensive marking policy so that learning objectives in schemes of work, such as for pupils to write, using paragraphs by a certain age, are not ignored. Time and resources are generally well used and support staff often make a good contribution to the progress that is made in lessons.
22. Pupils are treated fairly and well. Steps are taken to ensure that lessons are free from stereotyping and that all pupils are treated with respect. Pupils whose parents may be experiencing financial hardship are not disadvantaged and this sits comfortably with the ethos of the school in its promotion of making access available to all. Because staff feel this commitment deeply they find their pupils cooperative and willing learners. The school has achieved great success in the way pupils respond whilst in school. This is hard won and requires great effort and commitment to maintain it. As a result the school presents as a quiet and purposeful unit which is obviously cared for and respected by its pupils and is in sharp contrast to the surrounding environment beyond the school gates.

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

23. The curriculum meets the statutory requirements and includes all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. It is broad and balanced giving pupils opportunities to develop their skills and abilities in all subject areas. There is an overall curriculum policy which is based on the aims of the school; this states (it is) 'characterised by breadth, balance, coherence, relevance, differentiation and progression...' There are policies for each subject area, which closely follow the whole school curriculum policy which are in line with the aims of the school. These aims appear at the front of each policy statement. Some of these policies need to be reviewed in the light of the changes which have and are taking place. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory and follows the specified early learning goals in providing them with a broad base for their future learning.
24. The curriculum policy also refers to assessment procedures 'identifying areas for development and determining the next steps in learning ... evaluating teaching and informing the planning of future teaching.' It is in this area at Key Stage 2 particularly where there is need to develop strategies which do this more effectively. The senior management team has overall responsibility for monitoring the curriculum provision and subject co-ordinators 'manage the implementation and working practice in the area of the curriculum for which they have responsibility'. This is not as consistently managed and improvement needs to be made in music and science where monitoring is not well developed.
25. There are regular reviews of curriculum content and, at present, co-ordinators are in the process of moving from the school's schemes of work to the nationally suggested models. The school development plan identifies areas for review each year. In the current year, targets which have been identified include raising standards in mathematics, English, information and communication technology, and the Foundation Stage.
26. The planning of lessons is detailed and offers guidance with regard to the delivery of aspects of the curriculum. Teachers, especially in Key Stage 1 and at the end of Key Stage 2 use imaginative ways to interest and develop pupils' learning.
27. The Literacy and Numeracy hours are in place. They do, however, have more than the hour allocated on the timetable, which is sometimes too long for sustained concentration. Some of the Foundation subjects are integrated into the Literacy hour. Evidence of this is found in geography, history and religious education especially. Resources have been purchased to facilitate this integration; there are several 'big books' which deal with the subjects and supporting pupil books and resources.
28. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is unsatisfactory. Although pupils with behavioural or learning needs are identified across the

school, arrangements to support their learning are not always clearly targeted, especially in Key Stage 2. All pupils named on the register have a very basic individual education plan. These provide only the briefest note of behavioural and learning targets. There is very little indication of the steps in learning required, the strategies to be followed and hardly any information about provision. As a consequence, the plans do not provide sufficient information to guide the way forward for teachers, parents or pupils. Overall, insufficient account is sometimes taken of pupils' targets when planning work, especially for lessons where additional support is not available. The pupil with a statement of educational need receives appropriate support. The required annual review is undertaken in conjunction with the local education authority, but the information provided by the documentation over several years is incomplete, because not all aspects of the review are recorded.

29. The school is proud of the visits and visitors it is able to offer. These substantially extend the pupils' experiences, socially and academically. The visits support many aspects of the curriculum and enhance the opportunities for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. An example is a recent visit to London by Key Stage 2 pupils which included a visit to the Houses of Parliament with the local MP, the London Eye and other famous sites. Citizenship, history and geography, English and personal, social and health education were all integrated into the work done by pupils in preparation and after the trip. Key Stage 2 pupils have visited Chester as part of their study of the Romans. Visitors include storytellers, associated with the Merseygrid project, and role players who bring alive aspects of history. Grandparents and parents are also involved in curriculum projects providing first hand evidence of the past.
30. There is a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities for a number of pupils, some of which are provided at extra cost to parents. Within the school day, there are choir and drama, needlework and computer clubs. There are also sculpture, basketball and homework clubs. The Learning Mentor takes part in some after school activities.
31. There is a good equal opportunities policy which is closely followed; no pupil is left out of any of the trips etc. and access to the curriculum is available to all.
32. The school is involved in the 'Healthy Schools' Award' which brings together many aspects of personal, social and health education. The Merseygrid project provides good information and communication technology support in the form of a CD Rom (access to the Internet is not available yet so the site was downloaded onto a CD) and a technician in school to give technical support to teachers and pupils. Pupils are able to use this facility in a number of subject areas. There is good provision under the excellence in cities initiative for pupils who are designated as gifted or talented.

33. The school makes good provision, overall, for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and levels of provision have been maintained since the last inspection. A particular strength is pupils' social development.
34. Pupils' spiritual development is promoted appropriately. Assemblies and areas of the curriculum, including religious education, science and art provide opportunities for pupils to reflect and think. Religious education makes a good contribution to spirituality, in that it shows pupils that others have different faiths and beliefs. Interwoven throughout the ethos of the school is the importance of charity and pupils' exceptionally generous responses confirm that, whilst they themselves are often needy, they have the ability to respond to appeals for help from others.
35. Pupils' moral development is promoted well. Each class has a clear set of rules and pupils understand the school's system for rewards and sanctions. There are many opportunities for pupils to consider moral and social issues and qualities, such as honesty and integrity, are well supported. Assemblies are used to reward and recognise the good works of pupils and they are pleased to have their endeavours recognised. A strong lead in this aspect comes from the staff, who consistently reinforce their expectations through their own relationships with the pupils. The effectiveness of this provision can be judged to an extent by the fact that there has not been either a temporary or permanent exclusion of a pupil in the last ten years.
36. The provision for the social development of pupils is very good. Pupils of all ages are confident in the company of known adults and approved visitors. They will readily offer to help one another and are courteous and considerate in many ways, such as offering to return plates in the dining hall or in the way they hold doors open for others to pass through. A strong feature of this aspect again stems from the charitable activities of the pupils. It is pleasing to see that international, national and local charities are all supported at one time or another. Pupils are also keen to take advantage of extra-curricular activities and show the same patterns of very good behaviour, when doing so, that they do in class.
37. Provision for cultural development is satisfactory. The school provides a good range of visits to places like Chester and also brings in visitors to the school who enrich the pupils' cultural and multi-cultural development. Religious education makes a good contribution in this respect and the plans to visit a variety of places of worship other than the local church with which there are close ties will extend pupils' understanding and appreciation still further.
38. The system of having two co-ordinators for subjects has advantages and disadvantages; advantages in the shared responsibility and disadvantages in the possible lack of co-ordination across the key stages. The provision of training for literacy has only recently been available and some staff are less confident in teaching literacy at Key Stage 2. The revision of schemes of work along nationally approved lines to take account of the new curriculum needs to be accelerated.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

39. As at the previous inspection, the care arrangements for pupils are good, whilst procedures and use of assessment information and pupils' educational and personal support are satisfactory, overall.
40. Procedures to promote and ensure pupils' care and well being are good. The school has effective arrangements for induction to reception and other classes. Pupils confirm that they are well cared for when they are ill or otherwise distressed. Under the direction of the headteacher and teaching staff, the learning mentor is making an important contribution to improving the lives and attitudes of those pupils experiencing a range of difficulties. By having significant time to listen to these pupils, the nature of their difficulties is better defined and this enables appropriate help to be identified. Child protection procedures are good. There is a good quality school policy. The designated staff member and procedures are known by all adults in the school. Close links exist with social services. Pupils are made appropriately aware of this issue as part of their personal, social and health education.
41. There is good pastoral support and care provided for pupils with special educational needs, including a pupil with a statement of special educational need. However, the educational guidance provided is effective only in those classes where teachers and support staff work hard to ensure that pupils' learning needs are met. Teaching and support staff are not adequately guided by the special educational needs co-ordinator as he has no time during the school day for this purpose. A pupil with a statement of need receives the appropriate amount and type of support as outlined in the statutory assessment provided.
42. Procedures to ensure pupils' health and safety are good. The separate playgrounds for infant and junior pupils make the playing areas inherently safer, whilst encouraging wider participation by all pupils. Teachers make pupils aware of health and safety issues in practical lessons, such as in science and design and technology. This effectively contributes to the development of a safety conscious attitude among them. Fire alarm testing and the inspection of portable electrical equipment are routinely carried out by external agencies. Fire drills are carried out regularly. First aid arrangements are well established and appropriate.
43. Procedures to monitor and promote good behaviour and discipline are very good. The rules, which pupils value, provide a coherent basis for their behaviour, discipline and personal development. The main emphasis is on recognising and rewarding good behaviour and nearly all pupils respond positively. On-going praise, in lessons and assemblies are routine features. Class teachers deal routinely with low level classroom incidents and have a clear route for referring more serious incidents. In nearly all classes, teachers use praise effectively and routinely maintain clear and consistent boundaries

between what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. Another important feature is the very good link that exists between teaching and lunchtime staff.

44. Procedures for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour, including bullying, are good. The few pupils, with significant behaviour difficulties, are clearly identified. Behaviour improvement plans are well used to support these pupils. There is a clear, proportionate set of sanctions, in relation to classroom and playground behaviour. The lunchtime staff feel well supported by teaching staff and the headteacher in relation to playground incidents. Parents are effectively involved where concerns arise. Pupils confirm that they feel comfortable reporting rare incidents of bullying or other anti-social behaviour. Measures taken to resolve such cases are usually very effective.
45. Despite working hard on the needs of those pupils with poor attendance, procedures to monitor and improve attendance are unsatisfactory, overall. For example, the headteacher regularly scans the registers to identify those pupils with persistently poor attendance and reports this information to the educational welfare officer. More recently the learning mentor has been working, with some success, with nineteen pupils to improve their attendance. However, the level of unauthorised absence remains substantially above the national average. Improving attendance has too low a profile in school. For example, it is not a priority area in the school development plan and the summary data in several attendance registers are not completed. Effective measures to recognise good and improved attendance are now in place. Individual recognition and rewards are given for full attendance, over a term and the school year. Also, the recent work of the learning mentor recognises those pupils who have made a sustained and significant improvement in their attendance. This is an important recent improvement.
46. Procedures, for assessing how well pupils are getting on, are satisfactory in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. There is an adequate whole school policy. The full range of baseline assessments, statutory assessment tests, non-verbal reasoning and reading tests, optional Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) and other standardised tests are in routine use. However, there are weaknesses in the way all this information is used by teaching staff.
47. Overall the use of the assessment information, in terms of guiding curriculum planning, is satisfactory. Subject co-ordinators are now starting to assume more responsibility for assessment in their subjects. However, the use of the information to support special needs pupils is not fully effective. Also, the information is not used systematically to set end of year targets in all classes for individuals and groups.
48. The tracking and support for pupils' progress are satisfactory, overall. The substantial amount of testing information means that teachers have an informed view on pupils' current performance. Some teachers are also starting to use the implications of this information, provided by external educational analysts, to target pupils who are underachieving. Parents are effectively

informed of pupils' progress, at the termly open evenings. Pupils in Year 6 are also aware of where they are in their learning and this helps to support their progress.

49. Procedures to monitor and support pupils' personal development are good. Pupils and their needs are well known to staff. Good work and attitudes are regularly celebrated in assemblies. This recognition and reward provides pupils with frequent and public confirmation of what is good in their lives and helps raise their self-esteem. The school creates effective opportunities to take responsibility for themselves and others. For example, older pupils help at lunchtime and at assemblies. There is no mechanism, such as a School Council, to hear the views of the pupil community and provide them with wider responsibilities and opportunities. Extra-curricular clubs make an adequate contribution to pupils' personal development. Opportunities arising from team sports are very limited. Trips and visits do contribute to pupils' wider knowledge of surrounding areas. Parents are positive about the school's part in helping pupils become mature and responsible. The pupils who are supported through the excellence in cities initiative are well provided for and are making good progress.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

50. Overall, the partnership with parents makes a good contribution to the quality of education provided and the standards achieved. The effectiveness of the partnership has been fully maintained, since the previous inspection.
51. Parents are positive about what the school provides and achieves. Around a quarter of the parents replied to the questionnaire and 15 attended the pre-inspection meeting. Nearly all confirm that their children like school, behave well and make good progress. They consider that the school has high expectations and helps their children become more mature and responsible. They are positive about the teaching. Most feel well informed about their children's progress. They feel comfortable approaching school with suggestions or concerns. They are positive about the way in which the headteacher and her staff deal with their suggestions and concerns. However, whilst supporting the school uniform, a significant number have unresolved concerns about the insistence on boys wearing short trousers in winter. A significant minority are not satisfied with the range of activities that take place outside of lessons. In particular, they talk about the decline in sporting provision in recent years. Whilst most are positive about the levels of homework, there are some concerns about the low levels in some Key Stage 2 classes and their difficulties in supporting pupils with mathematics. The inspection team supported the positive views that parents held and considered that the school was providing an adequate range of extra-curricular activity. The amount of homework was considered to be satisfactory and that the links that the school had with parents were good.
52. Links with parents make a good contribution to pupils' learning. Staff are accessible and listen to parents' concerns. Based on questionnaire returns,

nearly all parents feel comfortable raising questions or problems with the school. The significant response level to the parental questionnaire, is another indicator of the good links which the school enjoys.

53. The school makes appropriate arrangements to inform parents of pupils having learning difficulties. They are consulted when a pupil is to be placed on the school's register of special educational needs. Most parents receive appropriate information about their children's progress during termly meetings with teachers, but only a minority contribute to the review of pupils' individual education plans. The school maintains appropriate links with other agencies and occasional meetings are held to consider how pupils are getting on and to evaluate provision for them.
54. The quality of information provided for parents is good overall. Nearly all parents feel well informed about how their children are getting on, based on the questionnaire return. Pupils have reading diaries, which provide a routine communication link between school and home. The practice of holding class meetings with parents early in the autumn term, means that some key messages are shared between school and home. The termly 'Open Days' provide timely and regular updates on pupils' progress and a good opportunity to discuss any concerns. Copies of the 'Learning Journey' booklets and year group targets in English and mathematics are provided. The quality of pupils' written annual reports is satisfactory overall. Reports convey a clear sense of what pupils are doing and most indicate the level of effort pupils are making. Few systematically identify key areas for improvement in attitudes or subjects.
55. School related information is of satisfactory quality. Letters keep parents adequately informed on ongoing school life. The prospectus gives a clear outline of school's expectations and character. The governors' annual report provides an adequate picture on the main issues which the governing body is working on.
56. Parents' involvement with the work of the school makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' learning and the life of the school. Discussions with pupils, indicate that most have somebody at home who checks that set homework is done. Most pupils are represented at termly parents' open days and most parents of special needs' pupils attend their reviews.
57. Many parents attend and enjoy Christmas performances, harvest and 'Mothers' Day' assemblies and the annual 'Prize day'. Parents are keen for their children to do well and most will respond to individual requests to discuss issues, such as, behaviour, attendance and punctuality. A few parents and other adults help regularly with reading and on visits
58. However, too many parents do not deliver on their responsibility to get their children to attend school regularly. The school also experiences difficulties finding volunteers to fill the three parent governor positions.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

59. The school is competently led and managed by the headteacher so that it operates as a well organised and calm establishment where appropriate systems and routines enable it to operate smoothly. Members of the senior management team provide the headteacher with much support, so that the school presents its pupils with a socially coherent and ordered learning environment, conducive to the steady raising of standards. The headteacher works closely with the senior management team and the governing body to provide, in most respects, a clear vision and direction for the work of the school. They are supported by a committed and hardworking staff.
60. Since the last inspection, the composition of the governing body has changed. Although some of the governors are relatively new to the positions they hold, overall, they have a growing understanding of the school's strengths and priorities for improvement. The governors are proud of the social ethos of the school, but recognise that there is still much to do in order to raise standards even further. Appropriate governing body committees are now established and they work with increasing effect.
61. The leadership and management of special educational needs are unsatisfactory. At the time of the last inspection there were significant shortcomings in administration. The co-ordinator has not been given sufficient time for his task. Furthermore, the aspect of special educational needs has not been given a high priority in the school development plan. However, a draft development plan indicates that the school has identified the need to make improvements in this area. The additional funding for pupils with special educational needs is appropriately targeted. The co-ordinator informally monitors provision, but there is no effective programme in place to evaluate the quality of provision.
62. With the exception of music, all subjects have a curriculum co-ordinator. While designated staff work hard in many areas of their role, they have been slow to realise their intentions to update policies and practice linked to the guidance in their subjects provided by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. As a result, there is much to do, to implement effective assessment procedures in all subjects and to use the information to plan future work. The picture is better in English and mathematics which have received much greater focus during the successful implementation of the national strategies for these subjects. However, the school has yet to reach the stage where pupils are set individual targets, based on the close scrutiny of assessment results in English, mathematics and science.
63. The school's realistic and attainable aims are set out clearly in the prospectus and communicated effectively to parents. The school sets out to create a secure and welcoming environment and succeeds in doing so. The aims emphasise the importance of promoting the pupils' personal and social development in addition to their academic development. These aims are consistently reflected in all of the school's work.

64. Procedures for monitoring teaching in English and mathematics are rather fragmented and a systematic and rigorous approach to monitoring the teaching and the curriculum has yet to be implemented effectively. The impact of the senior management team in this respect is not as effective as it might be.
65. Well conceived school development planning procedures enable the school to move steadily forwards towards the targets identified. The views of staff and governors are considered before priorities for inclusion in the plan are agreed. Targets for improvement are listed clearly and appropriate information is provided about action to be taken to support their implementation. This includes deadlines for meeting targets, persons responsible, costing and criteria for evaluating the success of initiatives. The effective use of the plan to inform spending enables funding to be used appropriately on relevant educational priorities.
66. The requirements for staff appraisal are met effectively through the school's performance management process. Strong emphasis is placed on staff development. Teachers, support staff and governors are given opportunities to attend relevant in-service training. However, since the new computer suite was established, staff have been unable to take part in the national information and communication technology training programme, because the school has yet to be connected to the internet. This problem is largely out of the school's hands since it involves a commitment to sort out the technical difficulties between the contractors. The school has appropriate procedures for supporting the induction of newly qualified staff
67. The school makes good use of all funding, with sensible plans to reduce the budget surplus. Grants for specific purposes are used appropriately. The headteacher, the governor's finance committee and the efficient school administration staff, co-operate effectively to monitor spending and to provide efficient financial control. Administrative staff are well trained and make good use of information technology to support financial management. The school is also able to draw on financial advice provided by the local authority. The most recent audit of finance, carried out by the local authority, found that the school maintained good standards of financial control. The school has implemented the relatively few minor recommendations for improvements to the systems in place. The governing body is guided by a well written policy on best value principles. The governors seek to secure best quality and value when purchasing resources and arranging for work to be completed. The successful completion of the computer suite and the additional teaching space in the new conservatory provide good illustrations of the application of best value principles. The quality of provision was improved and value for money was secured. The school has effectively acquired funding from the excellence in cities initiative and this is helping pupils who are described as gifted or talented to make good progress
68. The strategic management of all resources is good. The school has sufficient suitably qualified and experienced teachers to meet the demands of the

curriculum for pupils at all stages of their education. All staff are deployed effectively.

69. Good use is made of the range of facilities provided by the very good accommodation and school grounds. These enable the curriculum to be taught effectively. Standards of cleaning and caretaking are high and the quality of the learning environment is enhanced by the attractive and carefully presented displays of the pupils' work.

WHAT THE SCHOOL SHOULD DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER

70. To raise standards in English, mathematics and science at Key Stage 2, the headteacher, senior management team and governing body should:

- ensure that analysis of assessment data and the evaluations of pupils' individual performances and levels of attainment are recognised in the planning of their lessons in all classes;

(see paragraphs 18, 21, 46, 47, 62, 100, 101, 109, 112)

In order to raise levels of attendance across the school, the headteacher and senior management team and the governing body should:

- develop strategies to identify and then set targets for those pupils who are regularly late or absent.

(see paragraphs 15, 45, 58)

In order to improve the provision for pupils with special educational needs, the headteacher, senior management team and governing body should:

- provide the coordinator with and time during the day to fulfil his duties;
- provide pupils with individual education plans that set out measurable and specific targets.

(see paragraphs 9, 20, 28, 41, 53, 61, 96, 102, 113)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	64
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	38

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2	6	41	47	5	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	40	260
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		174

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		90

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	3
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	1

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.3
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1.8
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2000	18	20	38

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	14	18
	Girls	20	19	20
	Total	33	33	38
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	87 (84)	87 (100)	100 (91)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	12	18	18
	Girls	19	19	19
	Total	31	37	37
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	82 (86)	97 (91)	97 (77)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2000	19	23	42

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	11	15
	Girls	17	17	20
	Total	27	28	35
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	64 (61)	67 (64)	83 (67)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	11	13
	Girls	16	19	20
	Total	26	30	33
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	62(70)	71 (67)	79 (76)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	7
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	217
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	13.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.4
Average class size	26

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	198

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	65

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

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	649,471
Total expenditure	632,348
Expenditure per pupil	1,995
Balance brought forward from previous year	67,913
Balance carried forward to next year	85,036

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	300
Number of questionnaires returned	97

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	45	43	5	3	2
My child is making good progress in school.	56	39	3	2	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	47	48	3	1	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	38	35	12	4	3
The teaching is good.	59	32	3	2	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	45	41	9	4	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	62	26	7	3	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	65	28	2	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	37	40	16	3	1
The school is well led and managed.	54	34	2	4	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	48	38	6	3	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	22	38	18	10	1

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

71. The provision made for children in the Foundation Stage is good and a strength of the school. There have been considerable improvements since the last inspection and staff continue to develop their planning and the organisation for both nursery and reception children to form a cohesive Foundation Stage. Resources have also been improved, including the provision of enhanced outdoor facilities in the nursery.
72. Children attend the nursery part-time following their third birthday. At the beginning of the school year in which they are five, they transfer to full-time education in a reception class, or a mixed age class containing some pupils in Year 1. The nursery provides 60 places in the morning and afternoon sessions, but only about half of those attending transfer to the reception year at the school. Children come to the nursery with a very wide range of attainment. This includes a significant number who have poorly developed personal, social and communication skills. All children in the nursery make good progress towards the early learning goals, but baseline assessments completed at the beginning of the reception year show that the attainment of most pupils is well below that found nationally across the areas of learning. The children benefit from good provision and high expectations in reception and many make very good progress towards the early learning goals. This is most evident in the children's personal social and emotional development, and in the creative and physical areas of learning where children achieve very well and the majority attain the early learning goals. Starting from a very low base, progress is also very good and all children achieve well in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and in knowledge and understanding of the world, but only a minority of children are on course to attain the early learning goals in these areas by the end of term. Children are well prepared for work on the National Curriculum in Key Stage 1.
73. The quality of teaching is satisfactory and occasionally good in the nursery and consistently good in reception. Teachers have a good understanding of how young children learn. They have established clear routines, which provide the children with a safe, happy and secure learning environment. Planning ensures that all areas of learning are covered and they are well linked together to provide a good range of learning activities within the half-termly topics. Teachers across the Foundation Stage plan interesting activities together, so that all children receive similar learning opportunities. Arrangements are made to ensure that children in the reception year experience the full range of practical experiences offered in the nursery. Good attention is paid to the 'stepping stones' towards the early learning goals in all areas of learning and effective systems are being developed to record children's progress. This is well established in literacy and numeracy. Nursery nurses and teaching assistants are well informed and are used very effectively. They have a significant impact on the very good progress these

young children make. Good relationships have been established; the adults provide good role models and interact well with the children to create a good learning environment.

Personal, social and emotional development

74. Personal, social and emotional development is promoted well through all areas of learning. Teachers have appropriately high expectations and children are taught to listen, not to call out, put hands up, share and take turns. They are provided with varied and interesting tasks, which motivate them to learn. They are confident in selecting their own materials, for example, when making a home for a pet from junk materials. They clear away quickly at the end of sessions and return everything to its proper place. They sit quietly when their teacher talks with them or leads an activity. The younger children take turns to find out what's in the 'touch and feel' box and older children confidently say what they think about 'Farmer Duck'. Children in the nursery have made satisfactory relationships and work well together when grouping animals for instance. They also worked with particular enthusiasm in response to an adult volunteer, when acting out the movements and sounds made by animals they had identified in pictures. The older children have developed good relationships and work particularly well together in role-play and self-chosen activities. The children understand what is right and wrong. Teachers and other adults help those who find it difficult to conform, sensitively but firmly.

Communication, language and literacy

75. Children learn to communicate appropriately in small groups, for example, sorting objects that various pets need and describing the guinea pig. They listen with enjoyment to stories and the older children confidently share books with an adult. They are developing an appropriate sight vocabulary based on familiar books and most children are learning to recognise initial sounds. Some children are beginning to blend sounds together to make words like cat, dog and pig. The youngest children recognise their name and some older children read a simple text accurately and with understanding. There is a structured approach to reading in the reception year. Children read in small groups during a literacy session, as well as individually to the teacher and teaching assistant. Children take books home to share with parents and carers and they have individual words to learn. This support from home and the daily school input mean that children make good progress and achieve well. Children are learning to form letters correctly, to make them a uniform size and to leave spaces between words. Most children can write their names and many are beginning to write simple sentences with some support. For example, they match animal names to pictures and write invitations to the animals to come to a party. However, insufficient emphasis is sometimes placed on providing structured activities for speaking and listening during role-play and for children to develop their emerging writing skills during self-chosen activities. Some children are on track to attain the early learning goals by the end of term, but the majority are unlikely to attain all of the stepping stones

towards these goals, although they are achieving very well in relation to their starting point.

Mathematical development

76. A range of activities is provided to enable children to develop their mathematical skills. All children make very good progress from a low starting point and achieve well, particularly during the reception year. However, the majority are unlikely to attain the early learning goals for mathematics by the end of this term. Many count to ten and recognise the number symbols, and some go beyond this with increasing accuracy. They are familiar with a range of number rhymes, songs, stories and counting games which help consolidate their knowledge of number. They are developing correct mathematical language for two-dimensional shapes, size and quantity, such as big and small, more and less. Sound mathematics teaching in the nursery and good teaching in reception ensures a suitable emphasis on practical experience and using mathematics in a wide range of activities such as counting games and matching and grouping activities to enable children to make good progress.
77. Staff plan work for small groups, such as matching and comparing big and small items in the nursery, and they emphasise vocabulary which promotes children's learning well. For example, children playing in the sand knew whether their 'houses' were big or small. Numeracy lessons in reception are thoroughly planned, with good use of interesting resources, such as a number line to help children practise sequencing their numbers. The use of enjoyable number games makes learning fun and effective. The majority of children can count to ten orally and some go beyond. They can make sets of objects to match a number and have a developing understanding of addition, when it means adding two sets together. They use a template to record the sums they have made and some of the older children are beginning to understand 'one more' and can recognise the missing number in a sequence. The children know the names of the most familiar shapes, square, triangle and circle and can use these to make a repeating pattern. Although good emphasis is placed on developing children's mathematical vocabulary, and basic numeracy skills are well-taught, progress is constrained by the children's limited ability to ask questions and further explore mathematical ideas and use their developing numeracy skills for themselves during structured play

Knowledge and understanding of the world

78. Most children enter the nursery class with poor general knowledge. Staff in the nursery and reception classes plan a wide range of activities and experiences which effectively develop children's learning. For example, children observe a variety of pets and visitors to the classroom talk about taking care of pets. The children experiment with wet and dry sand, coloured water and dough and investigate floating and sinking. Reception children confidently play with technology equipment. As free choice activities, they put on a story tape and experiment with computers, using the arrow keys or the mouse to click on a picture and get a sound response, for example. However,

the lack of adult intervention sometimes means that children do not sufficiently develop these skills. Children in both nursery and reception confidently use construction kits to make models. They talk very simply about their families and their pets. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is affected by their limited ability to ask questions about why things happen, how things work and to talk about features in the place they live. This means that at the end of the reception year the majority do not fully meet the expectations of the Early Learning Goals.

79. In the home play areas, children play at using a telephone and act out a story shared by the class. However, because there is less spoken communication among the children than usually found during practical tasks, this limits the effectiveness of the children's learning. For example, a group of boys quietly played with different animals, placing them in the zoo or on the farm for a considerable time. Children also acted, but talked very little, as they played with the instruments. The teaching missed opportunities to develop the use of language during these activities and to extend children's curiosity by asking them questions.

Creative development

80. Children have a wide range of materials to explore in both classes, which adults regularly change. Teaching enables them to make good progress and so the majority will achieve the Early Learning Goals at the end of the reception year. The children have good opportunities to draw, paint and explore colour, with painting or a craft activity, such as junk modelling, always being available as a free choice activity in the nursery. Children select materials, use tools such as scissors with increasing skill and join materials using glue. They model and explore shapes, using simple tools to help shape play dough and clay well. Children in both classes enjoy singing a range of nursery rhymes and songs. They use their imagination well in role-play activities, such as being Farmer Duck. The teaching effectively encourages and praises children's work and this means that children take care over their art work and they often proudly take it home at the end of the day.

Physical development

81. Children in the nursery class quickly develop an understanding of how to move safely with an awareness of space, during sessions outside. They make good progress and the majority achieve the Early Learning Goals in all aspects of physical development by the age of five. Children have regular opportunities to play with large wheeled toys, construction blocks, balls and hoops as well as sand and water. Some of the older children have physical education sessions in the hall to develop movement and gymnastic skills. The children move confidently, with good control and co-ordination, and show an awareness of the need to move safely in the space around them. They also use a range of tools and materials confidently during practical activities in the classroom. In reception, for example, children cut and stick reasonably

carefully and accurately and know that you have to be careful with scissors. This results from good teaching that promotes an awareness of safety.

ENGLISH

82. The attainment of pupils aged seven at the end of Key Stage 1 in national tests in 2000 was well below the national average in reading and was below average in writing. These results were disappointing in that in the two years prior to that, results had been better. When compared with similar schools the attainment of these pupils was above average for reading and well above average for writing. The attainment of pupils aged 11 at the end of Key Stage 2 in national tests in the same year was well below the national average. This had been the case over time since 1997, with the exception of 1998 when attainment matched national averages. The pattern of year on year variation is more pronounced in English than it is in mathematics or science. When compared with schools judged to be similar, on an eligibility for free school meals basis, this performance is average. The improvement since Key Stage 1 tests were taken in 1996 is well below that of similar schools. Closer analysis of results at both key stages shows that pupils were not reaching the higher levels in average numbers in tests in 2000. The percentage of pupils at the end of Key Stage 1, however, exceeded the national percentage for pupils reaching the expected level (Level 2 or above). The percentage of pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 did not reach the national figure for pupils achieving Level 4.
83. Inspection shows that standards in English for pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 and 2 are now in line with the national expectation for pupils to reach Level 2 and level 4. Inspection, therefore, shows a significant improvement at Key Stage 2 and one that is more in keeping with past performances at the end of Key Stage 1. Several factors are responsible for the improvement at Key Stage 2. These include the improved attainment of pupils entering the key stage from Key Stage 1, measures taken to group pupils, for teaching by their prior attainment and a more focused approach to individual levels of attainment, particularly in the final year of the key stage. Pupils in Key Stage 1 are making good progress, but progress across Key Stage 2 is less consistent, principally due to the way work is not well enough matched to pupils' needs in some classes. Whilst progress accelerates for pupils in Year 6, higher attainers are unable to make up the ground in sufficient numbers to match the national average for pupils achieving Level 5.
84. Pupils in Key Stage 1 are well catered for, with targets clearly identified and differentiated work set in single and mixed age classes. Teachers cater well for the full range of capability. Pupils know what is expected of them and, by the end of the key stage, they produce an impressive standard of written work. In speaking and listening, they speak fluently and confidently, choosing words with precision, organising what they wish to say and taking account of their listeners. They are able to talk about their work and respond coherently to questions. They listen and concentrate well from an early age and relate their contributions in discussion to what has been said before. Most achieve Level

2 whilst some achieve Level 3. Particularly impressive was role play by Year1 children during which two pupils performed in response to the teacher's stimulus. They had no prior knowledge of what was going to be said, but responded imaginatively and with some flair.

85. Older pupils in Key Stage 2 speak clearly and with confidence. They are able to ask questions and their comments show that they have listened to the views of others. In discussion, they show that they are able to appreciate the different points of view that they encounter.
86. Standards in reading for pupils at the age of seven are average. They are fluent readers who are beginning to read with expression. They know something of how to access information from non fiction books. Reading is given a high profile and the structured reading sessions in the Literacy hour and the support pupils receive at home have a positive effect on standards. These pupils make good progress through a combination of direct teaching of phonics and other support aimed at developing a sight vocabulary. They are also able to gather clues to the meaning of new words from pictures and can generally tell the listener about the characters and plot of the book they are reading.
87. The standard achieved by pupils in reading, at age 11, is also average. Books are valued and a good range of suitable texts is provided. These pupils read confidently and with expression. They are able to find information from non fiction books and the higher attainers can summarise what they have read succinctly. Pupils seen were able to find texts easily in the non-fiction section of the 'library', showing a good knowledge of the Dewey system. They know how to use the contents page and Index of non fiction books from a very early age and use dictionaries well.
88. Standards in writing for pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 are satisfactory. Pupils aged seven write legibly in sentences that are demarcated with capital letters and fullstops. Their spelling is generally accurate and, when this is not the case, is usually phonetically plausible. Good progress was seen in a Year 2 class when pupils began to incorporate question marks into their writing as a result of a session on how questions could be framed. Pupils in Year 4 use a wide range of appropriate vocabulary in their writing about Roald Dahl. In Year 6, they are able to demonstrate effective use of punctuation, including colons, exclamation marks and hyphens. They are able to use their writing skills to write effective pieces in the style of T S Eliot.
89. Pupils at 7 are able to write with confidence and form letters correctly, some are beginning to join letters up. The variety of styles of writing is extensive, with opportunities given for extended writing being exploited in history and geography. The quality of handwriting by the age of 11 is very good and the content covers a range of writing styles for a variety of purposes. The work in children's books was impressive with regard to presentation. Most pupils by the age of eleven write in a cursive style, using either fountain or fibre tip

pens. Literacy makes a satisfactory contribution to other areas of the curriculum.

90. The quality of teaching is satisfactory, overall. It is good in Key Stage 1 where teachers provide opportunities for learning and help to develop skills and knowledge in an enjoyable atmosphere. The classrooms are stimulating and the variety of activities is good. Account is taken of the differences in capability and age (in the mixed age class). Different tasks and materials are provided and the learning support is good, well integrated and effectively employed. Particularly commendable is the quality of story telling and communication work and the methods employed to keep children's interest. Teaching in Key Stage 2 is satisfactory, but one unsatisfactory lesson was observed. Where teaching is good, the lessons take account of the different needs of pupils, the resources are imaginative and the pace of lesson is brisk. There is little in class support provided for pupils at Key Stage 2. One statemented pupil has a support carer and the Learning Mentor gives some support to pupils who are in her 'charge'. Too often, little attention is paid to the needs of pupils in mixed age classes. Pupils are grouped by prior attainment in English at Key Stage 2 and this is the way in which provision is made for differing levels of attainment but it does not cater for the differences in capability and maturity, unless supported by suitably targeted materials. The teaching of Literacy especially at Key Stage 2 needs to be more focused and the expertise of some staff extended to ensure that pupils receive a co-ordinated, cohesive diet as they progress through the programmes of study. The good practice seen in Key Stage 1 needs to be communicated to others to improve standards of teaching in Key Stage 2.
91. At the end of the key stage, the work for pupils in Year 6 is designed to meet their needs and clear indications are given with regard to targets for improvement. However, this process needs to be accurately recorded as it relies heavily on the individual teacher's knowledge of pupils which is not satisfactory.
92. There are few opportunities given for independent learning. Pupils are responsible and respectful and need to be allowed to be able to access information for themselves. They are well informed with regard to accessing information, showing knowledge of the Dewey system and information technology by the end of both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. The skills exhibited by pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 were impressive. Pupils are responsible and mature and could be trusted to behave sensibly within a less directly supervised situation.
93. Pupils' learning was more effective where there was a variety of methods used to promote it. They responded best to the more imaginative approaches used in Key Stage 1, where the lessons did not require too long a time sitting listening with little participation. Some of the best lessons included the participation of pupils in their learning whilst the less successful often did not.

94. The contribution made by English to the provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, with moral behaviour being reinforced even in the story telling of 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears. The cultural development often comes through the use of geography and history materials within the Literacy hour. Good behaviour and cooperation is praised and expected at all times. From a very early age, good manners are taught and continue throughout the school.
95. The use of the new information and communication technology suite by some teachers is good and there was evidence of several aspects of information and communication technology having been used to write letters, present work for display and some use of desk top publishing skills in posters and front pages of newspapers. Pupils know how to edit work and also how to access information from CD Rom (at present there is no Internet connection which is hampering progress in this area.)
96. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1, but, at Key Stage 2, this becomes unsatisfactory. The support for pupils in Key Stage 1 is well focused and aids development. Setting in Key Stage2 ensures that separate provision is made for the different attainment groups. The teaching in these groups does need to be more specifically focused.
97. There are two co-ordinators for Literacy, one for each key stage, who work closely together to fulfil the requirements of the National Literacy Strategy. The link between the two key stages needs to be more closely monitored, especially at the beginning of Key Stage 2 so that the momentum with which pupils leave Key Stage1 is not lost. The subject co-ordinators' job descriptions are detailed and include guidance on their assessment role which is not fully developed. They monitor the work of colleagues and pupils' work is seen each half term when levels are established. This process has not been fully exploited to ensure that pupils have clear targets for improvement and work is set to match the targets.
98. The English policy document provided for the inspection is dated 1997. It provides a framework, but needs to be updated to take into consideration changes in the school and national priorities for literacy and the use of assessment data to improve attainment. There are detailed schemes of work that meet the requirements of the National Literacy Programme and teachers' planning for lessons is thorough.
99. To assist in raising attainment levels at the end of Key Stage 2 the school offers 'Booster' classes designed to lift pupils to and beyond Level 4. These provide an important supplement in raising attainment in Year 6. The amount of time allocated to literacy and English is much greater than other core subjects and some literacy hour time is used to cover other subjects such as geography and history.
100. The resources and accommodation for the teaching of English and Literacy are satisfactory. However, the removal of the Library to a corridor to make

space for the computer suite does not encourage its use during the school day. Some consideration needs to be given to providing a permanent base for the Library which also includes the fiction section (at present distributed around the classrooms). If pupils at Key Stage 2 are to develop their independence, they need to be given the freedom to research within an environment which allows this. The use of library facilities is essential to this development.

101. The school has collected a large amount of data about the pupils' attainment, but does not fully utilise the analysis of these data to set targets for pupils in Key Stage 2. The marking of pupils work does not comply with the marking policy in many books. There is little consistency in correcting work, although the marking policy sets out clear guidelines about how this should be done. There are few opportunities given for independent learning. Pupils are responsible and respectful and need to be allowed to be able to access information for themselves. They are well informed about this, showing knowledge of the Dewey system and information and communication technology by the end of both key stages. The skills exhibited by pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 were impressive.

MATHEMATICS

102. The standards achieved by pupils aged seven in numeracy and all other aspects of the subject, are in line with those found nationally. The great majority of the pupils make good progress in relation to their prior attainment. By age 11, the pupils also achieve standards which are broadly in line with those expected nationally. However, their rate of progress, although satisfactory, slows somewhat, especially in the early stages of Key Stage 2. The pupils with special educational needs make sound progress at Key Stage 1. Their progress at Key Stage 2, is slower and more uneven, particularly in classes where the teaching gives too little attention to matching the work closely enough to the pupils' needs.
103. The test results indicate that in the 2000 national tests, the school's performance, at Key Stage 1, was above the national average for all schools and well above that of similar schools. However at Key Stage 2 in the 2000 national tests, the school's performance was well below the average for all schools, although it was above average in comparison with similar schools. The pupils' attainment over time indicates a steady improvement in line with the national trend. Girls make slightly better progress than boys. The improvement in standards at the end of Key Stage 2 is attributable to the setting arrangements for pupils of different abilities and the good progress they are making in their final year which results from good teaching and good use of assessment data.
104. The pupils enter Year 1 at an overall level which is below that found nationally. However, consistently good teaching enables them to make the expected progress in their learning by the end of Year 2. They have a good knowledge and understanding of basic number work and can read, write and

order numbers to 100 or more. Mental work is brisk and well taught, so that pupils are challenged effectively. As a result, they make good progress in recalling basic number facts. They use this knowledge well when solving problems using number and money. By the end of Year 2, most of the pupils have a good sense of the size of a number and where it fits into the number system. They are beginning to understand the concept of place value.

105. At Key Stage 2, much of the teaching is less rigorous, except in Year 6 where the pace, rigour and challenge in the work extends the pupils at just the right level. By the end of Year 6, the pupils have a secure understanding of place value and demonstrate good levels of accuracy in calculations using the four rules of number. Most can recall quickly essential tables and number facts. The pupils have a good understanding of the extension of the number system. This is reflected in their knowledge of the relationship of fractions, decimals and percentages. They also demonstrate their knowledge of the use of negative numbers, in their work on temperature and when they plot co-ordinates in the fourth quadrant as part of their work on transforming shapes.
106. The well planned teaching at Key Stage 1 introduces the pupils to a variety of relevant experiences, related to shape, space and measures. The teachers place great store on the use of precise mathematical language which the pupils use effectively in the course of their work. By Year 6, the pupils show increasing confidence and proficiency, using a range of measures. They know how to read calibrated scales with reasonable accuracy when measuring temperature and liquids. The oldest pupils know how to calculate perimeters, areas and volume, using accurately simple formulae. Their knowledge of angle work is good and most can measure angles quite accurately to the nearest degree. The higher attaining pupils understand how to calculate the third angle of a triangle when only two angles are known.
107. Throughout Key Stage 2, the pupils make satisfactory progress in handling data. They know how to collect data, record their results and interpret their findings. They are helped to understand and use an appropriate range of graphs, charts, diagrams and frequency tables. Most make satisfactory progress in this area. For example, a Year 4 class, looking at a real restaurant menu, were helped to organise and order their work effectively. They learnt how to present their findings accurately, using Venn and Carroll diagrams. By Year 6, the well planned teaching helps the pupils to broaden their mathematical knowledge and understanding. For example, in work related to measures of average, they were helped to understand and use appropriately, terms such as mode, median, mean and range in relevant problem solving contexts. Their work was accurate and reflected their increasing mathematical confidence. In each year group, the pupils make steady progress, using and applying their mathematical skills in a range of relevant contexts. They organise their work effectively and generally record and present their findings in a clear and organised manner. The pupils take pride in setting out their work neatly. In all aspects of their work in mathematics, the pupils make at least satisfactory gains in their learning. They acquire appropriate skills, knowledge and understanding, so that, by

Year 6, the great majority are ready for work at Key Stage 3. The pupils enjoy mathematics, especially when they are challenged during mental activities. They approach their work confidently, putting in much intellectual effort and in most lessons they work productively.

108. The quality of teaching is satisfactory, varying from good to unsatisfactory. At Key Stage 1, teaching is good. While this is also true of the teaching of the separate Year 4 and Year 6 classes, in the other classes the teaching is more variable. Where this is the case, the planning is not always implemented with sufficient rigour and the final plenary element of numeracy lessons is taught superficially. However, where the National Numeracy Strategy is implemented successfully, the teaching takes care to present the pupils with challenging mental work. In these lessons, adequate time is given for pupils to explain their strategies and, with guidance from their teachers, to learn from each other. In these lessons, group tasks are better matched to the pupils' needs. Assessment strategies are broadly adequate. However, the school has yet to use the results effectively to set targets for individual pupils and to develop strategies to raise the pupils' attainment even higher.
109. The planning is beginning to incorporate the use of information and communication technology to develop further the pupils' mathematical skills. However, this is not a consistent feature in all classes. In addition, the planning of work to develop the pupils' numeracy skills in other areas of the curriculum is similarly underdeveloped.
110. A satisfactory start has been made in implementing the National Numeracy Strategy. However, not all staff share the lesson objectives with the pupils, or manage confidently the format of lessons. In a number of classes, the mental work lacks depth and rigour, group tasks are not sufficiently well matched to the pupils' level of attainment and the final plenary element is planned poorly.
111. A satisfactory homework system is well established in mathematics. This makes an appropriate contribution to the pupils' learning. The subject is well resourced and the pupils with special educational needs are particularly helped by access to practical equipment. They are well supported, especially at Key Stage 1, by informed and competent classroom assistants. The school has adopted the National Numeracy Strategy guidelines which are backed by a clear policy and guidance document. The co-ordinators for both key stages have monitored the teaching in all classes. As an additional part of their role, they collect planning and, on occasions, sets of books in order to have an overview of practice. Overall, the subject makes a good contribution to the aims of the school. It contributes effectively, to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and the content of the work meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. Since the last inspection, the school has worked hard and successfully to raise standards in mathematics

SCIENCE

112. Standards of attainment in science are broadly in line with those expected nationally at the end of both key stages. This is similar to the standards found by the last inspection.
113. The results of the 2000 statutory assessments at the end of Key Stage 1 show that the proportion of pupils attaining Level 2 and above was above average, but few pupils attained Level 3. Pupils' performance in experimental and investigative work was well below average. Inspection finds that weaknesses remain in this aspect and this is reflected in the overall average standards seen in the pupils' work. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' performance in the 2000 National Curriculum tests was below average for the number of pupils achieving level 4 and above and few pupils attained level 5. In comparison with similar schools having more than 50 per cent of pupils entitled to free school meals, performance was above average. The school's results show a steady improvement since 1997. This trend is in line with the national picture, but analysis of these results shows that boys under-perform compared with girls. Inspection finds that pupils lack sufficient opportunities for experimental and investigative science. This limits pupils' progress in other aspects of the subject, even though their knowledge of life and living processes, materials and their properties and physical processes is about average. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to their peers in Key Stage 1, but this becomes unsatisfactory at Key Stage 2. Most pupils maintain satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1, but in Key Stage 2 progress slows in the early part of the key stage, but improves markedly by the end of Year 6. However, the progress of higher attaining pupils is limited across the school, because the curriculum does not provide sufficient scope for them to attain higher standards.
114. In Key Stage 1, pupils make steady gains in their learning. In Years 1 and 2, pupils have a good knowledge about the differences between living and non-living things and have a sound understanding of the variety of creatures that are found in specific habitats, such as the pond or garden. They are developing suitable environmental awareness; this is also apparent with pupils in Key Stage 2. Pupils in Year 1 know the conditions that are required to keep plants and animals alive and pupils in Year 2 can describe the stages in the life cycle of ducks, frogs and butterflies. Most pupils in Key Stage 1 have a sound understanding about materials and the specific properties that make them useful in different circumstances. They know that some materials can be changed by heating and cooling. They observe carefully what happens to snow and ice as it melts and they show suitable awareness that some changes cannot be reversed. All pupils have a satisfactory understanding of the needs of human beings, including a healthy diet.
115. At the end of the key stage, pupils have a satisfactory understanding that things are moved by forces of pushing and pulling. However, although pupils are beginning to use a more specific vocabulary for describing their work, there is little evidence of them planning and recording experimental work, such as discovering how to make a simple circuit to light a bulb. The absence of experimental work means that pupils have too little experience of drawing

conclusions and understanding the relevance of their findings to everyday life. Although pupils record observations, such as grouping foods and classifying animals and birds, it was evident during lessons and from the scrutiny of work that most pupils do not use their literacy and numeracy skills sufficiently well and writing within science is often very limited.

116. The curriculum at Key Stage 2 provides a two year cycle of topics. This ensures that areas of study are re-visited, but in some cases work about materials and physical and life processes is repeated at a very similar level. This, together with a lack of emphasis on experimental and investigative activities, means that younger pupils in the key stage have little understanding of fair testing and they seldom make predictions. It was noticeable that pupils in Year 4 had not systematically recorded their findings or drawn conclusions when finding out about insulators by measuring the rate of cooling of a liquid. However, most pupils are capable of using a more scientific vocabulary in discussions. They distinguish between natural and man made materials, have a satisfactory knowledge of change and understand that some changes are reversible and others are not. For example, they know that water evaporates to form vapour and condenses to form a liquid. They also know that some substances will dissolve. Most pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of the conditions for growth and germination and are aware of growth and healthy lifestyles. Pupils in Year 5 develop their scientific vocabulary linked to materials, have a sound knowledge of environments, habitats and food chains and a limited knowledge of planets, forces and light sources.
117. Pupils achieve well in lessons in Year 6. They are well informed about the major organs of the human body and are aware of the importance of the heart, skeleton and muscle groups, for example. They have a good knowledge of materials and understand such properties as transparent, flexible and rigid. They undertake experiments to discover the properties of soil and rocks, to investigate forces and to test the efficiency of thermal insulators, for example. They are beginning to understand the conditions for a fair test, to make predictions and to draw conclusions. Overall, pupils have a sound factual knowledge of the aspects taught, but the use of key skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology is very limited.
118. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall ranging between satisfactory and good. In Key Stage 1, teaching was effective where the teacher had planned the lesson well and provided clear information through the good use of texts and pictures and learning was enhanced by collections of snails which the pupils observed. They were captivated by the snails. Their response was lively and enthusiastic and questioning by the teacher helped guide their observations. This encouraged pupils to use terms such as tentacles, slime, eyes and shell correctly and one group was fascinated as they watched a snail eating. The good organisation, including the contribution of the learning assistant, ensured that pupils made satisfactory gains in their learning, although most lacked independence in carrying out the tasks. A further example of effective teaching was observed in Year 6 where the teacher made good use of the hall to guide pupils in acting out the function of the heart and

circulation. This followed a clear factual introduction supported by visual aids and was followed by experiments to determine the effect of exercise on heart rate. The good support and guidance provided ensured a good quality of learning where pupils understood the tasks and made positive gains in their knowledge and understanding of the heart. Their response was enthusiastic and they maintained interest and concentration well, because the learning tasks were relevant, suitably challenging and instructions were clear. Teaching is less effective where the emphasis is on teaching a narrow range of factual knowledge and pupils are required to listen, copy text, colour diagrams and complete exercises without the opportunity to find out information for themselves through research or carrying out experiments. For example, an over directed approach was used when pupils in Year 3 were taught about teeth. Although pupils listened well, the teachers' expectations were too low and, as a result, pupils learned little new.

119. The quality of the basic curriculum is satisfactory, but there are shortcomings in its implementation. In particular, expectations for the level of pupils' knowledge and understanding in each age group are not sufficiently clear and there is too little emphasis on investigative work. The scheme of work provides a sound basis for progression, but the learning objectives are not always made clear in lesson planning. There are satisfactory procedures for the assessment of pupils' progress, but too little use is made of this information to guide teaching, except in Year 6 where a start has been made on analysing test results. The school has revised its target for the proportion of pupils attaining level 4 and above to 81 per cent this year, which is a realistic expectation. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory, overall, although the separate key stage co-ordinators do not have a strategic overview of strengths and weaknesses in the subject across the school. They regularly monitor planning, but do not have opportunities to monitor teaching and standards. The current school development plan indicates that the scheme of work is to be reviewed, but there is no evidence of a plan of action to achieve this goal. Resources for the subject are satisfactory, but very little use is made of information and communication technology to support work in science.

ART AND DESIGN

120. The attainment of pupils is above expectation at the end of both key stages. Good standards have been maintained since the previous inspection, but progress is now uneven across the school. In Key Stage 1, teachers plan a good range of artistic experiences, but in Key Stage 2 the level of teacher expertise is variable. There is insufficient attention to the progressive development of pupils' artistic skills and progress. This is most evident in some of the classes in the early part of the key stage where such skills as colour mixing and observational drawing are not adequately developed. However, in some classes, skilful teaching enables the older pupils to make good progress and achieve good results. Slow learners and pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to their peers.

121. In Key Stage 1, pupils experience a good range of artistic experiences which help them to express themselves well in two and three dimensions. They experiment with the different properties of pencils, pens, crayons, pastels and paints when creating pictures of animals and birds. Their pictures of jungle creatures reflect a vibrant use of colour and their carefully observed drawings of owls are well proportioned. The drawing of the feathers and claws reflect good attention to detail and pupils' pictures are finished with the subtle use of pastel shades. Pupils have experimented with watercolours and produced strong pictures of sunflowers in the style of Van Gogh. In Year 1, pupils develop drawing skills by closely observing a selection of freshly caught seafood. The use of a viewing frame helped them to look in detail at the scales of the fish, for example. In Year 2, pupils followed clear instructions well to create snail designs on printing blocks. With guidance, they quickly mastered using a roller and ink and were delighted with their bold prints. Pupils' extended their work about snails by making clay models and cardboard spirals. Across the key stage, pupils are able to create three dimensional effects with paint and collage, they experiment with textiles through weaving and produce collage figures.
122. In Key Stage 2, younger pupils draw a portrait of a partner and add colour, using water colours. Pupils repeat previously learned techniques and some produce striking effects with colour. However, they do not improve their sketching skills or experiment with line and tone by mixing water colours or experimenting with other media. Work displayed in the classroom indicates that pupils have looked at the work of Van Gogh before producing pictures of vases of flowers and in history they have carefully drawn pictures of Roman figures and artefacts. Older pupils show good colour mixing skills and appropriate control of colour and brush strokes. They know how established artists such as Cezanne and Van Gogh used effective and imaginative colour mixing in their paintings. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 worked meticulously when investigating pointillism based on the work of Seurat. The teacher had researched the lesson well, he used prints of the artist's work to show the development of his style and demonstrated the use of tools and techniques to create a range of effects. This inspired the pupils and they worked with a high level of concentration when experimenting to create stipple effects and colour blends using cotton buds and sticks. Towards the end of the key stage, pupils show increasing control over a range of materials, tools and techniques. For example, they use clay and papier-mache to create Greek urns and figures and carefully paint designs on clay tiles. Pupils have good observational drawing skills and become adept at blending colours with chalk, charcoal and pastels. Printing techniques, paper sculpture and collage, incorporating a range of materials, are also well developed. Pupils have a good sense of composition and make good use of the visual elements to create particular effects.
123. The quality of teaching is good in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory in Key Stage 2. Where teachers have good subject knowledge and communicate their interest and enthusiasm to pupils, this motivates them to work hard and achieve good results, for example, when working with clay to make snails or experimenting

to create effects in painting which are similar to those used by established artists. Teaching is less effective where a task is presented without guidance on developing techniques and skills. The planning of lessons is supported by a suitable scheme of work, but lesson planning across the key stages does not consistently identify suitable contexts for the use of art and there is insufficient attention to the artistic knowledge and skills, plus the range of materials and techniques to be studied in each age group. Although there is no effective recording of pupils' attainment in art, the co-ordinator enthusiastically offers advice to colleagues. She has done much to maintain the profile of the subject in the school and maintains a comprehensive collection of art work and a photographic record of displays and work undertaken. This forms the basis of a subject collection to exemplify standards. The quality and range of resources for the subject are satisfactory.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

124. The school's timetabling arrangements and the timing of the inspection meant that it was possible to inspect only one lesson, in a Year 2 class.
125. The standards attained by the pupils were broadly in line with those expected for pupils aged seven. During the lesson, they made good progress in response to the good teaching. For example, the pupils were provided with a range of appropriate materials in order to plan, assemble and join and combine materials and components. The focus of the work was to design and make a truck to carry a sick animal to hospital. The pupils were highly motivated and benefited greatly from the good quality interaction with their teacher and classroom assistant. The pupils were helped to evaluate their work and to make relevant improvements to their design. The final products were of good quality. This demonstrated how well the pupils used their new skills while putting in much creative and intellectual effort.
126. At Key Stage 2, discussions with pupils, scrutiny of planning and observation of photographs and previously made products and artefacts revealed that the programme of work meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. The pupils are able to show their plans and written evaluations of a range of work, including pop-up cards, moving vehicles, toys for a younger audience and periscopes. They spoke clearly about the importance of the quality of finish of their models and artefacts. This aspect was criticised in the previous inspection report. It has undoubtedly received appropriate attention. The present policy for design and technology is outdated and the school is in the process of developing a new scheme following guidance provided by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. Current assessment procedures for the subject are poor

GEOGRAPHY

127. The attainment of pupils at the end of both key stages is in line with what might be expected for their age. This shows that standards have been maintained since the last inspection.

128. Pupils in Key Stage 1 learn about their immediate environment from trips into the community. They are able to discuss different forms of transport and relate these to a forthcoming trip. By using maps, they show that they know that their own district is part of the wider Mersey Region. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils aged 11 undertake practical work to discover the effects of water on landscapes. Variable conditions, such as permeability, are taken into consideration. Younger pupils in the key stage use maps to identify places in this country that they know or have visited. Others have experience of comparing conditions in an Indian village with those of their own area. Environmental issues are examined when a class looks at the question of packaging and its potential for re-cycling.
129. Teaching is satisfactory, overall. It was good in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory in Key Stage 2, where one unsatisfactory lesson was observed. In the lessons which were good and very good teachers were very well prepared and had planned thoroughly. They used the pupils' prior knowledge successfully to reinforce their learning. The pace of the lessons was brisk and involved the pupils extensively. Materials were well chosen for the capability and age of the pupils. Pupils worked well in small groups and in pairs and cooperated with their peers. Learning support provided in Key Stage 1 was effective and well integrated. One lesson in Key Stage 2 included a demonstration by a visitor of 'permeable' and 'non- permeable surfaces'. Pupils were encouraged to predict what might happen, prior to testing, were water to be applied. This lesson was carefully planned and gave all pupils an opportunity to participate. It made a valuable contribution to both numeracy and science. The measuring of the time taken for water to be absorbed and also the reasons given for the amount of water absorbed were discussed as pupils predicted what would happen. Where teaching was unsatisfactory, too much time was taken up with teacher exposition, with the result that pupil interest waned and control became difficult. Tasks were not sufficiently well matched to the needs and attainment levels of the pupils, including those with special educational needs. Pupil behaviour is generally good. They are interested and actively participate in their learning. When given practical work they quickly become engrossed and show good levels of cooperation.
130. The two coordinators for geography work effectively together to provide a good, structured approach to the subject. Use is made of the Literacy hour to supplement provision for the subject, with extra resources being made available. A number of artefacts are available for display to bring the subjects alive for pupils. The two co-ordinators have regular meetings to update colleagues about what is available and how resources might be used.

HISTORY

131. The previous inspection reported that attainment in was in line with expectations for pupils at the end of both key stages. Inspection shows that this picture has improved and attainment for pupils aged seven is as might be

expected for their age, but, at 11, is above expectations and that pupils have made good progress, overall.

132. Two lessons only were observed and these were at the end of Key Stage 2. It was not possible to see other lessons in history because of the timetable and the organisation of topic work in history and geography. There was, however, a substantial amount of evidence of the work done earlier in the year in pupils' books and the displays of Greeks, Romans and World War Two showed that a great deal had been done.
133. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 effectively record facts about Britain since the 1930's and learn effectively about World War II from good quality classroom displays. They consider the effects of air raids and the need for the evacuation of children from cities. In their writing, they assume the role of evacuees and recount their sometimes unpleasant and unhappy experiences in their new homes. Other pupils have experience of visiting Chester in their study of life in Roman times and good opportunities for art and design are taken when pupils produce a range of Ancient Egyptian artefacts, including canopic jars.
134. Both of the classes observed were at the end of Key Stage 2 and studying aspects of World War II. One lesson was good and the other very good. Each lesson took into account the capabilities of the pupils and to a lesser extent the difference in ages in the mixed age class. The tasks set were interesting and built on pupils' earlier knowledge. In both classes, pupils were enthusiastic. Learning in both classes was good. Attitudes were good and behaviour was very good. The pupils seen obviously had learned a great deal about different aspects of World War II and were able to use this in developing further understanding. The pupils in one group were timetabled to use the information and communication technology facility and used the 'Merseygrid' project CD-Rom. There was also a member of the Merseygrid staff on hand to assist, who was able to help those pupils whose skills were not as well developed. Their computer skills were good, they were able to follow instructions with ease and understand the specialist language used by the teacher without difficulty. The quality of displays was exceptional in some areas. The quality of written work by pupils was good. There were artefacts as well as work done by the pupils. Both written and art work illustrated the obvious enjoyment pupils had had in creating their display. Pupils spoken to referred to their displays with some pride. Pupils were observed to be actively engaged in their learning. Their behaviour is very good and this is in part a response to the quality of teaching they are offered.
135. Good use is made of visits to local places of historical interest and local museums of which there are several. This helps to enhance not only the provision for history, but also plays an important part in extending some pupils' experience of their world. The use of local people to gather primary source material is well developed. It was obvious that the two teachers involved felt comfortable teaching history. Their knowledge was sound and they showed enthusiasm for the topic which was transmitted to the pupils. The contribution made by history to Literacy and Numeracy was good. Time lines had been

drawn showing the various historical periods, and writing as pupils reached eleven was exceptional in some cases. The resources are good and are also supplemented by Literacy 'big books'. The use of information and communication technology to research is encouraged and well planned. Pupils who have special educational needs were well catered for in the differentiated worksheets provided in one lesson and the support given in the other. The contributions to the pupils' spiritual, moral and social development, especially through visitors and visits, are extensive. Spiritual development through the empathy encouraged for people of different ages, for example plague sufferers in Eyam or evacuees, is valuable also in encouraging cultural development, understanding the feelings and experiences of others.

136. The two co-ordinators, who also have responsibility for geography, are well organised and offer staff sound support in the teaching of history. The decision to use museums rather than 'borrow' artefacts is an effective decision which extends pupils' experience of their city as well as their cultural development. Resourcing has improved since the last inspection and now makes a positive contribution to teaching and learning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

137. The standards attained by pupils aged seven and 11 are broadly in line with the standards expected nationally. The great majority of the pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in relation to their prior attainment. Standards at both key stages have been maintained since the last inspection.
138. Regular lessons, held in the newly established information and communication technology suite, enable the pupils to acquire confidence in using the computer keyboard and mouse to complete a range of tasks related to their studies. They derive much benefit from the planned learning activities which are meaningful and appropriately challenging.
139. The youngest pupils quickly extend their skills in communicating information. They understand how to use a wide range of facilities to produce, amend and enhance text. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils know how to save and print out their work.
140. At Key Stage 2, the pupils build effectively on this good start. For example, Year 4 pupils make good progress, using simulations and exploring models. In a task involving building a kitchen from scratch and purchasing and positioning items of equipment, the pupils had to work within a set budget. They demonstrated increasing dexterity and control, moving furniture, evaluating its impact and altering positions to obtain the most efficient layout. They showed newly acquired skills in using a spreadsheet to good effect, to assist them in their calculations.
141. By Year 6, the pupils know how to organise and present their work in the best way for a particular purpose, often incorporating illustrations to complement

their text. For example, in a Year 6 class, they used the 'Merseygrid' disc to locate information related to children as evacuees during World War II. They were able to write on the screen postcards to send back home as if they were evacuees. They could interrogate stored information, add to and amend information and incorporate relevant graphic images to complement their text. The pupils show an increasing awareness of audience and are able to structure, refine and present their work in ways which are suitable for specific audiences.

142. The quality of teaching is good. The pupils respond very well to the planned activities and benefit from their teacher's expertise in the subject. The work is matched effectively to the pupils' interests. Lessons are well structured and the content of the work builds progressively on the pupils' prior achievements.
143. Recently, many of the older pupils were included in a residential visit to the information and communication technology centre at Winmarleigh Hall. They took part in a range of relevant activities, including mixing music, using a range of data logging equipment to measure temperature, light and sound, and creating their own website, using 'Hyperstudio'. During the latter activity they were helped to incorporate text, animation, still pictures, sound and moving pictures. The school also invites staff from the 'Merseygrid' project to support the pupils' learning. During the inspection, some of the pupils took part in a story session where the interactive whiteboard was used with telling effect. In addition to these initiatives, the pupils are able to take part in an after school information and communication club where they develop increasing skills in the subject.
144. The operation of the new computer suite is well organised by the co-ordinator who provides staff with effective support. However, technical difficulties have arisen between the contractors. The co-ordinator is anxious for this avoidable and unnecessary problem to be resolved because at present the pupils are unable to use the internet.
145. The school is in the process of amending its scheme of work to incorporate guidance from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. Adequate assessment procedures are in use. Resources show much improvement since the last inspection. The subject makes a good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Very good support in lessons, by teachers and classroom assistants, enables all pupils to be included fully in the work. The content of the work meets the requirements of the National Curriculum.

MUSIC

146. The previous inspection report said that high standards were a strength of the school. This is no longer the case and standards are now broadly in line with what might be expected for pupils at age seven and 11. The previous coordinator, who would have been in post at the time of the last inspection, has left the school and no permanent replacement has been found. This has

happened during a time when schools have been heavily committed to developments in other areas of the curriculum and the subject, which was reported on favourably last time, has not been a priority. As a result, standards have declined.

147. Pupils in Key Stage 1 know an impressive number of songs, many of which they accompany with actions. They sing with enthusiasm either with a piano or unaccompanied. Their own accompaniment with percussion instruments, such as tambourines, is enthusiastic, but not always in time with the music. They also enjoy dancing to their music and happily perform before an audience. In Key Stage 2, pupils experience music from different eras and are able to identify the instruments used. They sing clearly in unison in assembly. Pupils at the end of the key stage are able to produce a simple piece of accompaniment to a piece of poetry they have been studying. They are able to talk about a range of musical styles they have heard, but their knowledge of classical music and its composers and of the use of standard or non-standard notation to record their compositions is relatively weak. A choir, held at lunchtime by a visiting pianist, is producing some pleasing results and the mostly girl group is able to sing in parts and put in a descant line where appropriate. A small number of pupils are learning to play woodwind instruments and their level of attainment is higher than that of the rest.
148. Three lessons were observed, as well singing in assembly and choir. A peripatetic music lesson made possible through grants for gifted and talented pupils was also observed. Teachers in Key Stage 1 produced a good session with the whole of the Key Stage 1 and reception children in the hall. The pupils were well motivated, not least because of the enthusiasm and energy of the staff involved. Good use was made of the visiting pianist. Whilst the session was thoroughly enjoyed by all, some opportunities for the development of musical language and for the improvement of the pupils singing were not taken up. The two lessons at Key Stage 2 showed differing levels of expectation from teachers. In one lesson, pupils were asked to evaluate their performance and suggest ways that it might be improved, but in another they were introduced to different styles of music, without being given sufficient background information about the times or the people involved.
149. The subject does not have a coordinator or an up to date scheme of work. Teaching is supported by a commercial scheme, but there are no systems in place for the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and the curriculum. As a result, teaching of the subject is left to the individual teacher and continuity and development of skills and knowledge are left to chance. There is no systematic approach to assessing or monitoring the assessment of pupils' progress although the scheme of work is clear about what should be done. The extra provision that is made by visiting music teachers is good, but this is not enough to compensate for the absence of a coordinator. The subject is suitably resourced and facilities for music lessons are satisfactory.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

150. The school's timetabling arrangements and the timing of the inspection meant that it was not possible to observe a lesson at Key Stage 1. At Key Stage 2, games lessons were observed, but only in classes of eight and nine year olds. The pupils in these classes attain appropriate standards for their age and, during the lessons, the great majority, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress.
151. In these lessons, the pupils demonstrate increasing skills in catching and throwing activities. Their developing co-ordination and control are reflected in activities, using bats. Many demonstrate well developed striking skills. However, at times, the teaching makes too little demands on the higher attainers and tasks set for these pupils are not always sufficiently challenging. Games lessons are well resourced and the quality of the teaching is broadly satisfactory. Since the last inspection, the planning of lessons shows some improvement with the cool down element now receiving adequate attention. The pupils demonstrate satisfactory attitudes to the subject, although not all have the necessary clothing when taking part in outdoor lessons.
152. At other times in the year, the pupils at both key stages take part in gymnastics and dance. At Key Stage 2, the programme for older pupils also includes swimming, athletic activities and outdoor and adventurous activities. However, the closure of the local swimming pool has restricted opportunities for Year 6 pupils in swimming. As a result, the school is not able to assess the pupils' achievements in this area.
153. The co-ordinator is currently on long term sickness. The current scheme of work is in need of updating and the assessment guidance is inadequate. As a consequence, assessment is left to individual teachers who mainly keep a check on what has been covered. To improve standards further, it is necessary to adopt more rigorous assessment procedures and to use the results to plan further relevant work which challenges pupils of all capabilities.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

154. The previous inspection reported standards in religious education that were above the average expected nationally. This inspection confirms that standards remain above those expected from pupils at age seven and 11 who are using the same locally agreed syllabus. Standards have been maintained at this high level, principally because of the effectiveness of the subject coordinator and the quality of teaching. Religious education makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Whilst both boys and girls make equally good progress and their work is adequately assessed, those pupils who have special educational needs that relate to their learning difficulties, whilst progressing at a satisfactory rate, do not progress as quickly as the rest.
155. Pupils in Key Stage 1 have a good knowledge of Old Testament stories such as Moses and David and Goliath. They know that there are festivals such as Christmas and Diwali and they know something of the life of Jesus. In looking

at compassionate people they have learned about The Good Samaritan and Florence Nightingale. Pupils at Key Stage 2 show that the good start made earlier has been continued. The oldest pupils have a good knowledge of several religions and the ways in which these are followed. They consider social issues and look at the work of inspirational leaders.

156. The teaching of religious education is good. Scrutiny of work shows a strong commitment and observation in the classroom confirms this. Planning is good, although there is little evidence of written tasks being aimed at pupils with different capabilities. Objectives are clear and teachers are knowledgeable. Relationships are good and there is an evident respect for the thoughts and beliefs of others which is seen generally in the work of the school. Teachers have good skills in the way in which they make Biblical stories relevant to this modern age and they are adept at putting across the original moral issues such as forgiveness and the importance of keeping promises. Because of the good relationships and the interest that teachers bring to the subject the pupils are keen to listen and contribute to discussions. They are able and eager to offer opinion and do so knowing that others are interested in what they have to say.
157. The subject is well led by an enthusiastic and effective coordinator. She has produced a system for assessing the work done by individual pupils that effectively involves them in self-evaluation. Her priorities, such as arranging visits to places of worship are appropriate. A new agreed syllabus is expected, at which point the scheme of work will be reviewed. Good progress has been made with the acquisition of resources which are now satisfactory.