

INSPECTION REPORT

HOLY SPIRIT CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Bootle

LEA area: Sefton

Unique reference number: 104910

Headteacher: Mr Peter O'Brien

Reporting inspector: Jan Thomas
17711

Dates of inspection: 15 –17 April 2002

Inspection number: 195642

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior

School category: Voluntary aided

Age range of pupils: 3 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Poulson Drive
Ford
Bootle

Postcode: Merseyside
L30 2NR

Telephone number: 0151 525 7497

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Appropriate authority: Governing body

Name of chair of governors: Father John Harris

Date of previous inspection: 10/6/1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
17711	J B Thomas	Registered inspector	Geography History	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
19344	D W Jones	Lay inspector		Attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
16041	O L Thomas	Team inspector	Science Art and design Physical education Foundation Stage	
22578	G Jones	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Design and technology Music	How well does the school care for its pupils?
30243	A Heakin	Team inspector	English Equal opportunities Special educational needs	How good are curricular and other opportunities?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is situated in the Netherton District of Liverpool within Sefton Local Education Authority. The catchment area suffers from deprivation and the school receives funding support from the local authority's Single Regeneration Budget. There is a high percentage of unemployment, single parent families and levels of crowded housing in the area. Netherton is in the top four per cent of the government Child Poverty Index. The proportion of families claiming entitlement to free school meals is above average.

There are 209 pupils on roll – 97 boys and 112 girls, organised into seven classes, Years R to 6 and a nursery, housed in a separate building. The 60-place nursery, has been piloting a project for the last two years for the local authority, as a resourced nursery to cater for children who may otherwise require special education facilities. Most children come into the reception class from the nursery. The attainment of many children into the nursery is well below average on entry. It is significantly improved, although still below what is usually found, by the time they enter the reception class due to the high quality of education they receive in the nursery. The key area of weakness in children's attainment is in their ability to communicate. However, mathematical, personal and social skills and their knowledge and understanding of the world are weak.

The school does not serve any pupils from traveller, refugee, and asylum seeker families; there are no pupils with English as an additional language. Pupil mobility is relatively high and most notable in Key Stage 2.

The proportion of pupils on the school's register of special educational needs (27 per cent) is above the national average with many pupils having a high level of need. The percentage of pupils who have statements of special educational need is in line with the national average. The number of pupils who move into and out of the school is relatively high. In addition the school is currently piloting a project for the local authority as a resourced nursery to meet the needs of children who have special educational needs in mainstream.

The school has achieved Beacon Status, has been awarded the Basic Skills Quality Mark and offers courses for Parents as Educators. It is currently investigating joining the Investors in People initiative.

The school does not suffer from significant staffing, recruitment or retention difficulties. It is well supported by most parents.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Holy Spirit Catholic Primary School is a very effective school. The school has many striking and impressive features not least the strong gains made in ensuring pupils achieve their potential by the time they leave. A key strength of its work is the concern to meet the needs of its pupils in the very broadest sense, which go well beyond the academic.

An energetic and lively work ethic pervades its daily life. This is well balanced by a family atmosphere, which ensures that its mission statement of care, respect and valuing the individual is exceptionally well met. The school's success emanates directly from the excellent and innovative leadership of the Headteacher, the resolution of the governing body, support of its community and importantly the consistently positive teaching pupils receive.

The youngest children receive an outstanding start to their school career and the quality of support for pupils with special educational needs throughout the school is very good. The school knows itself well and the challenges ahead are recognised by management for further improvement. The school gives very good value for money.

What the school does well

- The above average test performance for pupils aged 11 when compared to similar schools.
- The pupils' achievements, notably in literacy, when the very low starting point of many pupils on entry to the school is considered.
- The high quality of teaching offered to pupils and the skilled non-teaching staff support.
- The first rate leadership of the Headteacher, supported well by governors, has focused unswervingly on raising standards and brought about success by innovation, the creation of a team spirit and ability to capitalise on opportunities to improve provision.
- The thoughtful use of grant funding to raise standards.
- The very good attitudes, values and behaviour acquired by pupils during their time in school.
- The outstanding quality of provision and management of the Foundation Stage.
- The high quality of special educational needs support to pupils and the excellent management of this provision, including for those pupils with statements of special educational needs.
- Excellent pastoral care contributes strongly to pupils' personal development as do the excellent procedures for monitoring attendance and promoting good behaviour.
- The contribution of the community, parents and external support to pupils' learning.

What could be improved

- The coordination of assessment practice and the use of assessments to target further improvements in pupils' achievements.
- The impact of coordinators on raising standards in aspects of mathematics and science and some non-core subjects.
- Pupils' preparation for life in a culturally diverse society.
- Complete the implementation of the positive start to improve standards in information and communication technology (ICT).

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in June 1997 since that time it has gone from strength to strength and made very good progress in improving its provision. Key issues have been systematically addressed, national initiatives implemented effectively and new ways sought and achieved of bringing funding and support to enhance the school's work and raise standards and quality of provision for the pupils.

Developments to the curriculum, teaching quality and assessment practice have been positive. Changes in national requirements to some subjects and the school's strong focus on the basic skills of literacy and numeracy mean that the time is now right for further improvements to the non-core subjects, notably, design and technology, physical education, history and geography. The staunch commitment of governors and staff to move forward and the spirited dedication of the Headteacher suggest the school's capacity to succeed is assured.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1999	2000	2001	2001	
English	B	D	D	A	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
Mathematics	B	C	C	A	
Science	C	E	D	B	

Children under four make very rapid progress from a very low base in the nursery and this is sustained into the reception class so that by the age of five many pupils are ready for the National Curriculum.

National test results show that in 2001, 11 year old pupils performed well above others in similar schools in English and mathematics and above them in science. The proportion of pupils attaining the expected Level 4 at the age of 11 was better than found nationally in mathematics and science and close to it in English. Seven year old pupils performed in line with similar schools in reading, well above average in writing and well below in mathematics. Their mathematical knowledge on entry was low. Current support to address gaps in these pupils' mathematical skills is regular and strong.

The school's targets, set in agreement with the local authority, are higher than the pupils' work indicates that they might be. The school has high quality booster support in place but nevertheless recognises the challenges it faces in meeting the targets set.

Over time pupils achieve very well and the inspection findings bear this out that pupils attain as expected in English, most aspects of mathematics and science. Achievement in reading and writing are good; particularly in the infants where writing stimulated by role-play has had a positive impact on standards. Pupils do not attain as expected in investigation skills in mathematics and science or in data handling in mathematics by the age of 11. Pupils have made good progress recently in ICT and in communication they attain as expected by the age of 11. In other aspects of ICT they attain below expectations. They attain as expected in art, most aspects of physical education and in singing. Most do not attain as expected in history, geography and in design and technology.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	A strength of the school. The youngest children are eager to be involved. Older pupils are interested and keen to join in.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils show respect for each other and respond positively to the teachers' high expectations of them. A few lack self discipline.

Personal development and relationships	Very good attention to encouraging independence. The recently developed School Council is supporting well pupils' involvement in decision-making and responsibility. Developing pupils' initiative is an ongoing area of challenge for the staff.
Attendance	Broadly in line with the national average because of the school's excellent procedures to encourage punctuality and regular attendance linked to the work of the Education Action Zone.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching is a strength of the school and drives the pupils' learning well. In the nursery teaching regularly shows excellent features, as does teaching in Year 1. The basic skills of literacy and numeracy are very well taught. Teachers use effective methods to deliver their good quality planning and they use time, resources and the highly skilled support staff very effectively to support the range of need within the classes. Teachers manage pupils very well and have high expectations for attention and work output.

The pupils' learning is good overall and pupils' with special educational needs in all stages of the school learn very well. The learning of pupils in the juniors is at times held back because pupils have too limited a knowledge of their own learning and often show low memory recall. Teaching compensates well for these deficits by regular reinforcement and consolidation. There is scope to develop some of the practical techniques used with younger pupils in the juniors. The work the school has done on motivation and is currently trialling on 'learning' shows good potential to overcome weaknesses in pupils' innate skills. Assessment practice in the nursery is outstanding and good elsewhere.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Excellent in the Foundation Stage and good overall through the school. Information and communication technology, design and technology and physical education do not yet fully meet requirements. The provision for extracurricular activity is very good.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good; its management is excellent. The pilot project in the nursery is highly successful in integrating young children into mainstream school. Individual educational plans are very well constructed with targets which the pupils understand and work very well towards.

Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good overall. The school's Catholic ethos positively pervades its work. Provision for the pupils' own culture and heritage is good and their knowledge of other faiths is satisfactory. However, their awareness of the diverse cultural society in which they will grow is not secure.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Pastoral care is excellent. Effective procedures identify how well pupils are making progress. It uses data well to support differing ability groups including pupils with special educational needs. Tracking, predicting, target setting and involving pupils in how well they are succeeding or not, is at an early stage of development.

Parents value highly the school's efforts and the school is exceedingly supportive of encouraging parents to work in partnership with it. The school runs courses to extend parents' own skills as adults and also to help them understand how they can support their children's learning.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the Headteacher and other key staff	Excellent direction by the Headteacher drives standards forward. Other senior staff are highly effective. Some subject managers have not yet impacted fully on the delivery and monitoring of their subjects.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors are well led by the Chair who is actively involved in its daily life. Governors make a marked effect in shaping the school's work. Statutory requirements are not yet fully met in some subjects. The governors apply the principles of best value very well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Excellent. The school knows itself well and works steadfastly towards improvements. The performance management cycle is embedded in its work.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. The Headteacher is instrumental in acquiring funding from all available sources and its use is excellent to raise standards of achievement, attendance and pupils' attitudes.

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 like school.• The progress their children make.• The pupils' behaviour.• The quality of teaching and the high expectations for hard work.• The approachability of the school and how well it works with parents.• That the school is well led and managed.• The information the school provides.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A small number would like more homework for their children.• A small number feel that additional activities are not extensive enough.

The inspection agrees strongly with the positive views raised. The inspection judges that the school provides at least a satisfactory amount of homework to support school work, although not all parents support their children in reading at home. The range of extra-curricular activities is very good and considerably more than many other schools of this size.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The school faces an ever-present challenge to bring standards up to national expectations because when they start in the nursery many children's achievements are well below those expected for their young ages. Children who are under four make very rapid progress in the nursery and this is sustained into the reception class so that by the age of five many pupils are working close to, or ready for, the National Curriculum.
2. National test results fluctuate from year to year because of the often, high levels of special educational needs within year groups. Nevertheless, the results show that in 2001, 11 year old pupils performed well above others in similar schools in English and mathematics and above them in science. The proportion of pupils attaining the expected Level 4 at the age of 11 was better than found nationally in mathematics and science and close to it in English.
3. In the same year, seven year old pupils performed in line with similar schools in reading, well above average in writing and well below in mathematics. This cohort had a high number of pupils with special educational needs. Their mathematical knowledge on entry was low. Current support to address gaps in these pupils' mathematical skills is regular and strong.
4. The school achieved very close to its targets last year; however, the cohort this year is not as strong, with more pupils with special educational needs. Although the majority of pupils look set to attain the expected Level 4, the targets, set in agreement with the local authority, are higher than the pupils' work indicates that they might be. The school has high quality booster support in place but nevertheless recognises the challenges it faces in meeting the targets set.
5. Over time pupils achieve very well and the inspection findings bear this out. Pupils attain as expected in English, most aspects of mathematics and science. Achievements in reading and writing are good; particularly in the infants where writing stimulated by role-play has had a positive impact on standards. Pupils do not attain as expected in investigation skills in mathematics and science or in data handling in mathematics by the age of 11.
6. Pupils have made good progress recently in ICT. By the age of seven, most pupils are very close to attaining as expected and in communication they attain as expected by the age of 11. However, in other aspects of ICT they have not had time to catch up with gaps in their knowledge and skills and so attain below expectations in control, measuring and modelling and the use of ICT to handle data. There is no reason to assume that given the teaching they are receiving and when all resources are in place, standards will not rise as they have in the infants.
7. In the other subjects, pupils attain as expected by the age of seven in all other subjects except design and technology.
8. By the age of 11, they attain as expected in art, with some good quality work seen, most aspects of physical education (dance and orienteering are lacking) and singing; there is not enough evidence to make judgements on pupils' other skills in

music making. The required history and geography curriculums are covered but standards are lower than expected as pupils' memory recall limits them. In design and technology pupils have not acquired systematically enough design, making and evaluation skills to attain as expected.

9. Pupils who have special educational needs make very good progress in the Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1. In Key Stage 2 they make good progress. Arrangements for supporting pupils who have special educational needs are effective and the thorough planning for these pupils has resulted in their very good achievements. This reflects the commitment of the school in meeting pupils' individual needs. All pupils at Stage 2 and above on the special educational needs register have good quality individual plans that include their targets. The special educational needs coordinator takes the lead in devising these plans in conjunction with class teachers, support staff and the pupils. The pupils' involvement in setting their own targets is a strength of the provision; they understand the reasons for their individual work and are motivated to succeed. The individual plans, combined with early identification of pupils' special educational needs, good assessment, careful monitoring and consistently good teaching, result in the overall very good progress made by these pupils.
10. The school has few higher attaining pupils but they achieve in line with their potential overall. There is scope by giving more attention to the investigative aspects of mathematics and science to challenge these pupils even further.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. This aspect is a strength of the school. The very good behaviour and very positive attitudes of the pupils give significant support to their learning and to lesson progress. Their personal development and quality of relationships are very good. Attendance is satisfactory. These findings accord with those of the previous inspection report.
12. The school's ethos is clearly stated in its policies and is happening in the daily routines of school life. Its commitment to providing a stimulating, ordered and welcoming learning environment where pupils can develop whilst enjoying their lessons is being achieved. They love coming to school and parents value the quality of education provided. The school's provision, supported by very high levels of pastoral care, is the bedrock on which pupils' self-esteem and attitudes to learning flourish. Generally, across the key stages, the pupils demonstrate very good levels of behaviour and positive attitudes to their work. Many demonstrate good levels of independent learning, which the school encourages. In particular, nursery pupils show very positive attitudes and behaviour to their learning. During a story time for pupils in the Foundation Stage they were attentive and eager to answer questions as the story unfolded but quickly became quiet as the story continued. In other lessons they were seen to share and work cooperatively and have good levels of concentration. In reception, during a lesson in which the pupils were making symmetrical patterns, they enjoyed their achievements, concentrated well and made good progress. In Key Stage 1 attitudes and behaviour were found to be good to excellent. In a mathematics lessons for pupils in Year 1 their response was excellent. Several were working independently and all the pupils responded to the teacher's high expectation for hard work and progress. In Key Stage 2 the pupils' responses to learning are good and on occasion very good; they respond well to the teachers' behaviour management strategies. During a physical education lesson the pupils were developing hockey

skills. They listened well to instructions, concentrated and worked with independence and caution when dribbling with the ball. In Year 6 the pupils mostly demonstrate good behaviour. The progress of a mathematics lesson was very good as a result of their enthusiasm and hard work.

13. The pupils respond well to the school's provision for behaviour management and its expectations for good conduct. Due to the quality of pastoral relationships the pupils easily relate to the very good role models provided by all staff and they behave well during lessons and about the school. The school works hard to encourage the pupils to develop appropriate relationships and consideration for others through strategies such as the 'Buddy System' and the 'Circle of Friends'. In their lessons they meet expectations to work cooperatively and for many, with appropriate independence. The youngest pupils are seen at lunchtime being supported to develop their social skills and independence. They display good behaviour and interact well. The older pupils are represented on the School Council where they contribute ideas and suggestion on behalf of their classmates.
14. Pupils who have special educational needs have very positive attitudes to school and are very well integrated into the school community. Pupils respond very well to the caring cooperative ethos within the school. This is evident in lessons and when pupils work in small specialist groups.
15. The school has consistently recorded levels of attendance below the national average and experienced problems with punctuality. This, despite its best efforts to engage the cooperation of a significant minority of parents, who fail to meet their obligations and makes their children's ability to achieve consistently vulnerable. The school has sought to address the problem through the appointment of a home/school liaison officer, funded from the Education Action Zone, with the role of monitoring attendance, developing links with parents and providing motivation and encouragement for the pupils. The appointment is very recent, but early indications are positive. Levels of attendance do not match those found during the previous inspection.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

16. Teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection. Teaching is very good overall with high quality teaching seen in the Foundation Stage and both Key Stages 1 and 2. Teaching drives learning forward very well and enables pupils to achieve very well over time.
17. In the Foundation Stage teaching is often of the highest quality. In both classes teachers have an intuitive understanding of the needs of young children. The learning is practically based with strong emphasis on improving language at every opportunity. The teachers make the activities as relevant as possible. For example, following a visit to the baby clinic the teacher set up a role-play clinic where the children practised improving their speaking and listening skills in setting up appointments and acting as doctors and nurses. The quality of assessments in the Foundation Stage is exemplary.
18. Teaching in the infants is very good. The teaching of literacy by the coordinator is excellent with keen subject knowledge and a tireless enthusiasm which is infectious and which motivates the pupils to learn. In Year 2 teaching is strong. Subject knowledge is good and the teacher's quiet, assertive manner creates a calm approach, which the class respond to very well.

19. In Key Stage 2 teaching is more variable, it ranges from satisfactory to very good and is good overall. There is a range of teaching experience but all teachers are committed and have at least sound subject knowledge. The pace of lessons is mainly good although at times in Year 6 the group activities for higher attainers could move along more quickly and challenge the pupils to think for themselves.
20. The teaching of basic skills are well embedded in all lessons and this is a strength of the teaching. The literacy and numeracy hours are well structured and planning is detailed for the range of abilities. There is some scope to recognise the need to challenge higher attaining pupils at every opportunity. On occasion some introductions are too long and plenary sessions too brief.
21. All teachers mark pupils work regularly and comments help pupils to understand what they need to do to improve. Teachers have high expectations for attention and behaviour and the pupils understand and live up to these ideals. Non-teaching support staff are highly skilled and teachers capitalise very well on their expertise.
22. Pupils of all abilities learn well. They acquire the basic skills of literacy very well and this enables them to achieve well given their very low starting point on entry to the nursery. Pupils have gained good knowledge of methods to help them read new words in Year 1; they check the text, read ahead and look at the pictures for clues. Their learning in all subjects is well supported by the acquisition of these important skills. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are enthusiastic about learning and make very good efforts to pay attention. Whilst their efforts are satisfactory in the juniors they are not so striking and groups of pupils show some caution in joining in discussions, appearing to be conscious of peer group responses. Pupils work on their tasks very productively in the infants and well overall in the juniors. Most concentrate and show independence although the latter skill does not come naturally to them; rather it is improved because teachers give strong emphasis to pupils regularly thinking for themselves. The weakest aspect of pupils' learning is their ability in the medium and long term to recall what they have learned; this hinders their ability to attain as expected in some subjects such as history and geography which rely on knowledge of facts and sequences of events. The investigative aspects of pupils' learning are not yet fully developed in mathematics and science.
23. The teaching of pupils who have special educational needs is consistently good and reflects the high standards of teaching in the school. The teaching of basic skills in literacy and numeracy is very good throughout the school; this is invaluable for all pupils including those who have special educational needs. Class teachers are familiar with the process of identifying pupils who have special educational needs and follow school procedures. The well-focused interventions of support assistants throughout the school contribute very effectively in raising the achievement of pupils who have special educational needs. The learning support assistants are well informed and work successfully in conjunction with class teachers to ensure that all pupils gain full benefit from their lessons and from the additional programmes provide for specific groups of pupils. Some special needs teaching is individual or in small groups. It is very well structured to meet pupils' individual needs because the special educational needs teacher consistently made pupils aware of their new understanding and skills. This results in pupils' self-esteem being improved and them having subsequent positive attitudes to gaining more knowledge. Adults have a positive approach and constantly give pupils meaningful praise for their efforts; pupils feel proud of their

work and ready to take on new challenges to their learning. Children who have special educational needs and attend the resourced nursery benefit from teachers' excellent understanding of children's educational needs and the very effective teaching methods consistently used in the nursery classes.

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

24. Since the last inspection the school has successfully addressed the key issues relating to the curriculum. Guidelines and schemes of work are in place, policies for sex and drug education have been published and the length of the teaching day has been reviewed so that junior pupils receive their full entitlement.
25. The curriculum takes full account of the national strategies for numeracy and literacy and meets statutory requirements for children aged five and under. With the exception of aspects of design and technology, the school meets all statutory requirements. However, the opportunities for investigation in mathematics and science require further development. All pupils have equal access to all parts of the curriculum. The curriculum is sufficiently broad and balanced and meets the needs of all pupils well. The curriculum in the Foundation Stage is outstanding and particularly relevant to the pupils as it lays great emphasis on communication skills and personal, social and emotional needs. The National Numeracy and Literacy Strategies are enhanced well by the additional funding used to raise standards for lower attaining pupils and the Beacon initiative promoting role-play as a stimulus for writing in the infant department.
26. The school has a satisfactory system for ensuring coverage of the National Curriculum. There is no clear system for making sure that skills are taught through different subjects. Nevertheless, some cross-curricular planning does occur in the school as lesson observations showed, for example, in the design of an advertising leaflet in a Year 4 literacy lesson and the use of recording skills in a Year 2 science lesson based on materials. The good provision for personal development would be further improved by a more structured and consistent approach to formally tracking and recording pupils' personal and social skill development.
27. The quality of learning opportunities is good overall and excellent in the Foundation Stage. Curriculum planning is good and there are policies for all National Curriculum areas. Curricular provision in the Foundation Stage is a strength of the school and contributes to the very good progress made by these pupils. The curriculum overall is relevant to pupils' background and experience providing a high emphasis on literacy and personal skills. The high number of support assistants in the school means that particularly in literacy lessons, pupils make consistently good progress. The homework timetable includes not only regular reading practice but also ongoing research work for junior pupils. A homework club for junior pupils enhances this arrangement.
28. The provision for special educational needs is a strength of the school. The special educational needs coordinator is non-class based and this is an advantage in allowing the school to provide very good quality support to pupils who have special educational needs. Pupils who have special educational needs are included in all aspects of the curriculum and make very good progress. Teachers know their pupils very well and plan appropriate work that is matched to pupils' individual educational needs. When pupils are withdrawn from lessons for basic

skills work, all teachers cooperate to make sure that pupils do not miss curricular opportunities. This flexible approach is beneficial and reflects the school ethos of doing everything possible to improve pupils' skills. The school makes sure that the provision outlined in pupils' statements is in place and is reviewed in line with the Code of Practice guidance. The school states its philosophy of helping young people to become more independent; this is promoted successfully throughout the school and provides a firm foundation allowing pupils who have special educational needs to flourish.

29. Provision for extra-curricular activities is very good. There is a range of after school activities and clubs including choir, boys and girls football, Art Club and ICT Club and a confidential counselling/discussion group for girls. There are educational visits for each year group. These include Speke Hall, Netherton Health Centre, Liverpool museum and Kwik Save. The baby clinic visit was a huge success with the youngest pupils. The curriculum is enriched further by visitors to the school; a visiting artist came to the after school Art Club and Gary the Clown made a memorable visit aimed at making science fun. When Year 5 pupils were studying their Greek topic it was made realistic by the visit from the owner of a local Greek restaurant to cook food and teach Greek dancing. The impact of the Education Action Zone mentor is valuable in enriching the curriculum. Year 5 pupils were able to visit Aintree Race Course and broaden their understanding of mathematics as they worked out the odds for bets and examined the weighing procedures for jockeys. The Education Action Zone also provided a Christmas excursion for the junior pupils to see the film of *'Harry Potter and The Philosopher's Stone.'* These examples indicate the strong emphasis placed by the school on enhancing and broadening the curriculum beyond the day-to-day lessons.
30. Provision for personal, health and social education is good and is provided through recently introduced weekly opportunities for pupils to join in class circle time and religious celebrations. Sex and drug education is planned within the curriculum and parents are invited to examine the programme of work and are given the right to withdraw their children if they wish. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their own behaviour. The work of the Learning Mentor funded by the Education Action Zone provides good motivation for all pupils including those with special educational needs to participate in cooperative activities that make pupils aware of their own abilities to work as part of a team. An ongoing project is the design and refurbishment of the medical room to provide a child-friendly mentoring room. Behaviour management is a strength of the school with pupils aware of and conforming to class rules. Good behaviour is acknowledged with praise, stickers and school awards. The 'Going for Gold' strategy motivates older pupils in Year 6 to achieve their personal targets.
31. Relationships with partner institutions and links with the local community are very good. The school benefits from the Education Action Zone and the Beacon Schools initiative. This means that, for example, the special educational needs coordinator shares information and her considerable expertise on a regular basis with newly appointed coordinators in other schools. Curricular links are established with other schools within the cluster, this impacts on staff development. The school is part of the local authority Young Compact provision and welcomes Year 10 and 11 pupils on work experience. Liaison with the receiving high school ensures smooth transition as pupils move to secondary education. At Christmas time pupils venture out into the wider community with

pupils from their receiving high school to sing carols at the Aintree Hospital and Bootle Strand.

32. Provision for the development of pupils' personal values is a strength of the school. Development of their spiritual, moral and social values is very good whilst development of their cultural values is satisfactory. These inspection findings mirror those found during the previous inspection.
33. The school's church foundation and its commitment to its ethos underpin the delivery of spiritual values within a Christian context. Through the appropriate use of prayers at the end of lessons the pupils are encouraged to reflect on issues relevant to their lives and to consider others. Awe and wonder are evident in much of their curriculum work across the key stages and in many of the classes the pupils have produced artwork following the styles of famous artists. In Year 3 the pupils have produced art in the styles of Monet and Miro and in Year 5 they have drawn still life pictures using crayon and paint. In developing their knowledge and understanding of the world pupils in reception visit the baby clinic where they learn how to look after infants through bathing a doll and visiting the 'doctor' or a 'nurse'. In science lessons pupils in Year 4 have investigated the properties of liquids and solids and made models to demonstrate how electricity works. Collective worship is conducted in accordance with statutory requirements and is well used by the school to support learning in the development of personal values.
34. The school has made significant effort to provide pupils with a moral framework and guidance to support the development of their moral values. The pupils have a clear understanding of right and wrong and benefit from the security of learning in a supportive environment where the rules and expectations are consistent, fair and evident. There is very little bullying, and none serious. Wherever appropriate the pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their own conduct and they are frequently seen to do so.
35. Within school, the pupils are seen cooperating and sharing during work and in social activities. Each class has elected representatives to the School Council where they pursue requests on behalf of their classmates for the introduction of benefits or a change to school practice. Older pupils provide a buddy system for pupils in the reception class. They show concern for others in their charitable support for different causes and the choir has visited local residents' homes to sing carols for the occupants. Their social development is supported by a broad range of visits to outside venues where they are required to interact with a range of people.
36. Good provision is made for the development of the pupils' cultural values in terms of their own heritage and insight into other cultures. There is less provision made to prepare them for living in a multicultural society. This is made more difficult for the school because of its context as an all white community, but is an area which requires further scrutiny by staff to enhance pupils' awareness of the diverse world in which they are growing. Visits to venues in their immediate locality include supermarkets and a restaurant, a visit to a baby clinic and the local coast. Educational visits include trips to see Roman Chester and Chester Zoo, Wigan Pier, Rhyl sea life centre and Liverpool museum. They have enjoyed a visit into school from a Greek national to learn about food and dance and in their religious education studies they have learned of the beliefs and customs of a number of other cultures. Classes have studied life in Australia and on the Caribbean Island of St Lucia. Pupils who attend the Art Club have produced artwork in the styles of

Batik and Aboriginal art. This is displayed about the school. All of this contributes to pupils' understanding of the wider world but does not in itself practically support an understanding of the ethnic diversity of their own society or prepare them for life in it.

37. The younger pupils reveal a developing awareness of wonder at the world around them as they look at the life cycle of plants and their display 'signs of spring' with eggs hatching and flowers blooming. They are very well behaved about the school and during lessons they cooperate and share when completing tasks and are learning to put their hand up and wait their turn. Pupils in reception have celebrated Diwali.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

38. The pupils are able to enjoy learning in an environment that is not only safe and secure but is also pleasant and stimulating. In this environment they are encouraged, supported and cared for in a pastoral atmosphere of excellence. Relationships, trust and respect are significant elements at this school, which underpin achievement and progress and guide attitudes and behaviour. This is a significant improvement from the findings of the previous inspection.
39. The school's procedures for monitoring and improving attendance and those for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are excellent. The procedures for attendance monitoring are caring and supportive but rigorous and the procedures for behaviour management are well balanced and relevant to the children. The pupils do not recognise oppressive behaviour as a feature of their school life and the quality of relationships ensures early recognition should it occur. Although the staff are aware of child protection issues, there is a need to update training for this aspect. Pastoral care and security are primary features in the care of pupils in the Foundation Stage.
40. The school meets the requirements for those pupils who have special educational needs and all are well supported. There are effective links with outside agencies to ensure the provisions outlined in statements of special educational needs are implemented. Very good use is made of assessment information. Initially to identify pupils who have special educational needs and subsequently to plan appropriate work and organise groups of pupils who have similar learning targets and group them to facilitate group teaching. The careful deployment of the good quality support staff who work in the school is effective, not only in working directly with pupils but also in gathering assessment information to support teaching strategies. The impact of these strategies can be seen in the decreasing number of Year 2 pupils with low level reading skills. The special educational needs coordinator meets with appropriate staff in the receiving high schools to make sure that transition into secondary education is as smooth as possible.
41. The school has successfully addressed the issues for development, made in the previous inspection report. At that time the school collected information but did not make best use of it, neither did it have useful assessment portfolios.
42. The school administers an unofficial assessment when children enter the nursery and acts well upon the information it receives from it. When children enter the reception class the school puts into effect the Baseline assessment of the local authority. Once again it makes good use of the results, in order to make an early diagnosis of children who are experiencing problems with aspects of their early

literacy or numeracy skills or aspects of their personal and social development. It does not, however, administer a similar assessment at the end of the Foundation Stage of learning in order to see how effective teaching and learning have been over that period.

43. During the time pupils spend in the Foundation Stage, procedures for ongoing assessment are excellent. They capture not only individual and significant improvements, which children make, but also provide teachers with a growing profile of the learning patterns of their children. This information is most useful to teachers beyond this part of the school.
44. An analysis is made of the results of the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, but the results are not regularly shared with all teachers and other support workers, who might make use of the information in their day-to-day dealings with the pupils beyond Year 2.
45. The school makes good use of the nationally accepted optional subject tests at Years 3, 4 and 5. This information is set out in a growing database for each year group. Currently it is not set out in order to suggest how well the pupils may achieve later on in the school. No clear predictions are made for pupils at the end of Year 2, showing how they might be expected to achieve at the end of Year 6. Further, the intervening results of tests at Years 3, 4 and 5 are not utilised to refine these predictions further. The school is currently in the process of refining its information and communication technology work in assessment. One of the assessment coordinators is training to use a software program, which will enable the more effective use of collected information.
46. The fact that there are, in effect, three coordinators of assessment in the school, does tend to fragment the gathering and dissemination of information and is, perhaps, one reason why information is not always distributed to where it might be most useful. For example, the mathematics coordinator does not have a clear picture of standards in Year 6 and is not completely aware of the results for pupils through the school. This could be approached more successfully if the two key stage coordinators for assessment had clearer lines of communication noted in their job descriptions so that their tasks were more clearly demarcated and the pathway, along which information should proceed, was more clearly stated.
47. Year profiles record details of attendance and free school meals for each class, alongside details of pupils who have special educational needs. There is no mention of pupils who are higher achievers and who have equally special educational needs.
48. Regular assessments made in such subjects as English, mathematics and science are well constructed and give useful and recent information to class teachers upon which to base a series of lessons or modules of work. This is now much more clearly carried out than it was at the last inspection. Together with its regular annual tests, they build into a comprehensive tracking system for individual pupils and the classes in which they work. This information is made further use of for guiding class teachers' choice when deciding which pupils would benefit from extra support in aspects of English and mathematics, for instance. The school has recently made a start on using this information to set targets for pupils. This is in its early stages of development, but nonetheless is a significant step forward.

49. In order to move the process forward the school would do well to consider further and more detailed involvement of pupils in the process whilst extending the system to classes other than Year 6. By using some of their existing forms of record keeping, it would be comparatively easy to allow pupils to understand the way in which their work is leveled against the requirements of the National Curriculum, thus making them more able to play their part in moving towards what would be very personal targets.
50. Marking of pupils' work is generally good and often indicates to pupils how they might make further progress. Some work is taken and marked separately against the levels of the National Curriculum, but results of this are not shared with pupils in order that they might have a picture of their own achievements and be guided to make further improvements.
51. Personal and social development is noted very accurately in the Foundation Stage of learning, but in the rest of the school, whilst assessments are made, they are often informal and are not regularly recorded for future use.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

52. The school is very active in seeking to engage the parents in a partnership to support the children's learning and their efforts are very effective. This is an improvement on the good effect found during the previous inspection.
53. The school has continually sought ways in which to involve parents in the life of the school and in the pupils' education. In seeking to establish this relationship they are exceptionally supportive and acknowledge the contribution and value of this support. In order to give parents confidence and direction the school runs courses for Parents as Educators and family literacy and learning. Using funding from the Education Action Zone they have appointed a home/school liaison officer to improve attendance and punctuality. Parents are invited to the children's celebration assemblies. An interesting reversal of role was children invited to a celebration for parents who had qualified for awards related to the parents in education courses. Responses indicate that parents hold the school in excellent regard. The quality of information provided meets with the parents' satisfaction and they have very good formal and informal access to teaching staff to discuss their children's progress. Not all parents are actively supportive in the children's learning but the school continues to seek ways to encourage their participation. The progress made by the school to involve the parents as partners is very good.
54. The parents of pupils who have special educational needs are properly involved from the time the school has an initial concern and are kept fully informed about their child's progress. Parents are welcome to discuss the progress of their children informally whenever they might have a concern. The school values the very good links with parents and the way that parents are increasingly working alongside the school to support and encourage their children who have special educational needs in becoming confident learners. This harmonious relationship between school and parents is effective in making pupils feel secure and happy to learn.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

55. It is without doubt that the exceptional quality of both leadership and management by the Headteacher drive this school forward. The Headteacher has an inspiring

and innovative leadership style which has resulted in a strong team ethos within the school. He has secured the confidence of his governors, staff, parents and external agencies to lead the school with the prime of interests of pupils at its heart. The Headteacher's entrepreneurial skills have acquired funding from a vast range of resources and this is used very effectively to raise standards. To quote one member of the school community, "He won't give up until he has everything possible for the children". The school's aims of respect for every individual and educating the "whole child" to achieve their personal and academic potential are very well exemplified in its work.

56. The focus of attention is given to raising standards in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 so that children have the best possible start to their school careers. The Headteacher knows his staff's strengths accurately and, with this in mind, he has successfully delegated the management of the Foundation Stage to a senior member of staff who has outstanding knowledge and understanding of early learning and management skills. The teaching partnership in this phase, in the nursery and reception classes is of a high calibre and very beneficial to identifying weaknesses in children's attainment so that they can be swiftly supported and addressed. This is exemplified in the very low starting base of many children on entry and the fact they are very close to or ready for the National Curriculum at the age of five. Key weaknesses in children's poor communication skills are given priority in terms of funding and staffing and because of this, by the age of seven many attain as expected nationally in English. The Headteacher's belief in diagnosing and addressing fundamental strengths and weaknesses in children's abilities as early as possible is a pivotal feature in their very good achievement over time. 'Fire fighting' to remedy weaknesses in pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding in the latter stages of the juniors to raise test results is not a feature of this school's work and the omission of any such crisis management is at the forefront of the school's success.
57. The exemplary management of the Foundation Stage is continued into Key Stage 1 and 2 where the same philosophy prevails. Levels of support staff are high and very good attention has been given to their training, resulting in them being highly regarded by staff and very supportive to pupils' needs. The partnership between teaching and non-teaching staff is a strength of the school. In recent years the school has appointed some relatively inexperienced staff and they receive very good support to improve their teaching skills through the school's induction and ongoing monitoring programme. This is supported well by the performance management cycle which is embedded in the school's evaluation cycle and which staff feel is beneficial to helping their own development and is linked to standards rising.
58. The key subject coordinators of literacy and numeracy have supported the implementation of initiatives very successfully. The follow up from the last inspection on improving pupils' English skills particularly writing and speaking has been hugely successful. All core subject managers are clear about the direction of their subjects and plans are in place for further developments. The non-core subjects have been revised and updated as national requirements for these have ebbed and changed. The school knows that the time is right for more attention to these and to give the staff leading these subjects greater delegated responsibility and accountability for improvements. Most of the non-core subject coordinators have drafted action plans but these now need to be formalised and actioned to raise standards in the same way as has been done elsewhere, with the

Headteacher monitoring their effectiveness and impact and staff being held accountable by governors for success.

59. The school has high levels of pupils with special educational needs and the management of special educational needs provision is excellent. The special educational needs coordinator is a very good practitioner and manages the education of pupils who have special educational needs very effectively. The organisation of a range of successful strategies including booster groups, reading recovery and literacy support for pupils whose needs are high, is skilfully managed so there is minimum disruption and all pupils gain the optimum from what the school has to offer. The governor with responsibility for special educational needs is a regular visitor and has a good understanding of relevant issues. The good use of staff and resources, and the school philosophy of inclusion result in very good provision and a consequent improvement in levels of attainment.
60. School strategic planning has improved considerably since the last inspection. Its focus is simply but exceptionally well aimed at raising standards and is not sidetracked by rhetoric or peripherals. The school is sharply focused on raising standards in pupils' attitudes, attainment, attendance and their motivation to learn and how to learn. The inspection brought no surprises for the school, as its own self-evaluation is strong. The action taken to meet the school's targets and its aims is excellent.
61. The governing body is a well-established group, many of who attended the school themselves or have children in it. The governors have invested much of their time to give support to the Headteacher and staff and they are well aware of the challenges facing it. They have a good structure of committees who meet regularly and ask pertinent questions about the school's success. The governors and Headteacher use funding very carefully and they plan ahead well. They apply best value very thoughtfully.
62. Daily administrative and financial routines run 'like clockwork' because of the quiet and skilful work of administrative support staff. All visitors receive a warm welcome to the school. Financial planning is thorough and is keenly linked to school priorities. The school seeks every possible avenue to improve its grant funding or gain resources from within the community. The funding available to it including that from its links with Education Action Zone is used extremely well to impact directly on learning for pupils and their parents. The staff, from this project, make a positive impact on supporting pupils with emotional and motivational difficulties. The work of the Basic Skills Agency is also impacting very well, especially in helping parents as educators to support their children.
63. Accommodation, staffing and resources are good overall, but there are some gaps in resources, mainly for non-core subjects, but also in ICT, which hinder delivery. The accommodation is much improved since the last inspection and governors have been instrumental in this enabling pupils and staff to work in a pleasant, well-decorated environment, which is cleaned to the highest standards. The quality of displays is stimulating. The classrooms and corridors are used effectively to display pupils' work to best advantage and to provide a pleasant working environment. The policy of each pupil displaying their best work on a fortnightly basis, contributes well to raising pupils' self-esteem and motivates pupils to write.

64. The quality of leadership and management is even stronger than previously found at the last inspection. The school's achievements in attaining Beacon Status are well deserved. All staff are committed to success for the pupils and this is underpinned by the Headteacher's unceasing drive to move forward; complacency is not a feature of its work. The school's success under the Headteacher's leadership is assured.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

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

Improve the coordination of assessment practice and the use of assessments to target further improvements in pupils' achievements by ensuring that:

- the management of assessment is reviewed;
- an assessment is made at the end of the Foundation Stage of learning to measure progress made;
- the results of tests are shared with all teachers and other support workers;
- clearer predictions for pupils at the end of Year 2 are made; the intervening results of tests at Years 3, 4 and 5 are used to refine these predictions further;
- pupils who are higher achievers and who have equally special needs are recorded on Year Profiles;
- targets for all pupils are set so they are clear about how to improve what they do;
- personal and social development assessments are formalised to aid continuity and target setting.

Reference to these issues can be found in paragraphs: 44 - 51

Heighten the impact of subject coordinators on raising standards in aspects of mathematics and science and in the non-core subjects by ensuring that:

- refresher training on the role of the coordinator is planned for;
- subject coordinators devise clear and formalised action plans for the full delivery of their subjects;
- coordinators monitor the outcomes of test and assessment data for success to at least nationally expected levels;
- coordinators report on a cyclical basis to the governors on the success of their plans.

Reference to these issues can be found in paragraphs: 25, 58, 94 and 100.

Improve pupils' preparation for life in a culturally diverse society by ensuring that:

- opportunities within the curriculum are explored fully;
- resources are reviewed to reflect the diversity of society;
- clear guidance is available to staff and planning is monitored to check for appropriate inclusion.

Reference to these issues can be found in paragraph: 36

Complete the implementation of the positive start to improve standards in ICT by ensuring that:

- staff training to support teaching is completed;
- further hardware and software is purchased in order that the school might carry out work in the control, measuring and modelling aspects of the ICT curriculum;
- a complete scheme of work is developed, which clearly addresses the development of skills, knowledge and understanding;
- the development of ICT across all other curriculum areas is promoted.

Reference to these issues can be found in paragraphs: 115 - 6, 119 - 123

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	51
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	22

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	7	19	18	7	0	0	0
Percentage	13	35	37	15	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	24	185
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	68

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	7	72

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	14
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	9

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.9

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.3

National comparative data	5.6
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National comparative data	0.5
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Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	13	15	28

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	11	9
	Girls	15	15	13
	Total	25	26	22
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	89 (95)	93 (89)	79 (95)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	11	13
	Girls	15	14	15
	Total	26	25	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (95)	89 (100)	100 (100)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	11	24	35

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	6	9	10
	Girls	20	19	21
	Total	26	28	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	74 (79)	80 (93)	89 (76)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Girls	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Total	n/a	n/a	n/a
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	n/a (79)	n/a (93)	n/a (76)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year. N/A = not available

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	184
Any other minority ethnic group	1

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)	9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20.6
Average class size	26.4

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	175

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.0
Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	122
Number of pupils per FTE adult	4.8

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000/2001
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	£
Total income	544,678
Total expenditure	524,067
Expenditure per pupil	2,330
Balance brought forward from previous year	61,661
Balance carried forward to next year	82,272

Recruitment of teachers

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

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	100
Number of questionnaires returned	67

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	76	24	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	75	24	0	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	67	31	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	46	39	6	1	7
The teaching is good.	79	21	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	67	33	0	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	81	19	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	82	16	0	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	69	31	0	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	82	18	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	76	22	0	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	54	39	3	0	0

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Personal, social and emotional development

66. The Foundation Stage of learning gives the youngest children an outstanding start to their school career and is a significant strength of the school. The provision for the children with special educational needs is exemplary. This is an improvement since the last inspection when it was judged to be good overall. The nursery serves the local and wider community. Its intake is non-denominational. Enhanced funding is provided from the local authority to provide for children who might otherwise require special educational facilities, because they have multifaceted needs.
67. By the end of the reception year most pupils have made very good progress in their personal and emotional development and the majority reach the expected standards of the Early Learning Goals. As children arrive with levels well below expectation, this shows very good achievement and reflects the very good teaching in this area. All adults foster children's personal and social skills at every opportunity and children's personal, social and emotional development are given high priority. Children enjoy coming to school and the majority happily leave their parents or carers at the start of lessons. In the nursery, parents are welcomed and when they collect their children there is a happy atmosphere as children proudly show their paintings and with their parents jointly choose storybooks to take home. Children are naturally curious and explore the wide range of activities available. Adults establish routines that encourage children to become independent. For example, the reception children complete their individual turns at the computer and then go and find the next child to have a turn. Relationships are very good and adults quietly but effectively encourage children to share toys and to take turns. Children are learning to respond to instructions and nursery children know their teacher raises her hand for attention. When their teacher asked them to put down their percussion instruments and leave them alone, despite the obvious temptation the children succeeded in doing as they were asked. At lunchtime the reception children use the toilets and wash their hands independently before going to the hall for their lunch. The supervision from the teacher and support staff while the children eat is very effective in helping children to make choices about food but also in modelling good social and communication skills during lunch. Children in the reception class are beginning to take responsibility for tidying up at the end of lessons. They cooperate in role-play and for example in using large construction toys as a pirate ship. The classrooms are very well organised to promote children's independence in selecting from a range of planned activities, tools and materials. The adults are excellent role models and have very high expectations of behaviour, encouraging children with positive comments. All adults work hard to ensure that the classrooms are happy secure places where children are nurtured, can grow in confidence and achieve very well.

Communication, language and literacy

68. Children achieve very well and the majority are on target to reach the Early Learning Goals by the end of reception year. This shows very good achievement as children come into the school with communication and literacy skills that are well below national expectation. The nursery and reception classes provide an

extensive range of stimulating experiences and activities to develop and extend children's language and literacy skills. The curriculum includes a wide variety of activities and all children are given the chance to take part in these well-considered learning opportunities. Teaching is consistently very good and appropriate elements of the National Literacy Strategy have been introduced. There are consistently good opportunities for children to develop the spoken word and enjoy books. Nursery children join in with familiar songs and eagerly answer questions about their storybook. They were fascinated as their teacher created a quiet atmosphere before reading *Shhh!* and did not take their eyes off the book as their teacher shared the story with them. Reception children discuss *The Three Little Pigs* and have firm views on what they did or did not like about the story. They discuss the characters in the story and examine straw and bricks describing them as "soft" or "rough". A small number of children have difficulty in concentrating and listening to each other but their teacher skilfully manages the situation so no time is lost. Reception children were very proud of their achievement as they explained to the assistant how they had managed to make symmetrical patterns from junk materials. Though initially reserved the majority of reception children are able to talk to visitors and explain what they are doing. The adults in both classes maintain a quiet but firm approach in managing the children. This means that children are continuously being encouraged to listen carefully.

69. A very strong emphasis is placed on reading and writing skills. This results in very good achievement. Literacy lessons are typically lively, challenging and fun. Adults share books with children and encourage a desire to read. Children handle books appropriately and with respect. Children are aware that the name of a book is the title and when their teachers use a book as a focus for class reading they respond with natural curiosity and enthusiasm. Nursery children know that speech bubbles contain the words said by people in the story. Children are encouraged to record their ideas as part of their play activities. This means that writing is enjoyable rather than onerous. Reception children playing in the pirate ship drew the sharks attacking them, one little boy explaining enthusiastically that he "beat the shark". Children in the home corner drew their house and families; using their fingers to count the number of people they had drawn and compare that number with the other children in the group. Children recognise and use their name cards for self-registration. Children in the nursery start to associate meaning with marks as they 'write' lists as part of their role-play in the café or the hairdressers or draw pictures to retell a story. In the reception year children build on their skills of drawing lines and mark making and start to make recognisable letters. They learn to write their names and underwrite sentences they have dictated to an adult. Name cards, alphabet and sound friezes help children to develop early reading and writing skills. The high number of adults including helpful parent volunteers means that children are constantly given quality opportunities to enjoy books, talk and write. As a result they make very good progress.

Mathematical development

70. By the time the children leave the Foundation Stage most achieve very well and many are on target to reach the Early Learning Goals by the end of the reception year. This shows very good progress as children come into the nursery with mathematical skills that are well below national expectations. The nursery and reception classes both provide an extensive and meaningful range of activities and experiences to develop, extend and reinforce the children's mathematical

skills. Baseline assessments and ongoing evaluation of what the children know understand and can do results in activities being well matched to their individual needs. The overall quality of teaching is very good with some excellent teaching of numeracy. In the nursery children learn to count in order from one to five, some can count higher. They have regular practice each day to use mathematical language to describe; numbers which are more than, less than; the size and shape of objects; patterns and relationships. Paintings, drawings, playing with sand and water, preparing food and role-play all providing a wealth of opportunities for the discussion of mathematical ideas. Snack time is used to encourage the children to select, pour and choose plates and cups from different coloured and sized sets. Following the reading of *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* a group of three higher attaining children successfully used “sets” to distinguish between their chosen number of butterflies and caterpillars, counting accurately to five in response to the teachers’ question of, “How many altogether?” In the reception they develop their knowledge and understanding further. They are able to count successfully to 20 and many are beginning to be able to sequence numbers correctly. Singing rhymes are used to reinforce their recall skills, whilst nursery rhymes such as *Goldilocks and The Three Bears* are used to develop their mathematical vocabulary as they describe the, small, big and huge bowls of porridge left on the kitchen table. When using dominoes all the children appeared to recognise the dot shapes and their relationship to the numbers, but not all of them coped with the task of counting on eg $4/3 = 7$. However, their difficulty was observed and the information recorded, to be used to drive the planning and nature of future activities. The teachers and support staff are at great pains to promote language, and effective use is made of ICT to support mathematical development. For example, in getting children working independently to order numbers in different patterns up to 10.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

71. Attainment in this area of learning is below the expected standard by the time the children reach five. Children come to school with very limited experiences of their own world and their knowledge of the wider world is sparse. Their range of vocabulary is limited to describe what they see and their confidence in language is, as previously described barely in line with expectation at the end of reception. All of this inhibits their ability to attain as expected although they make good progress and achieve very well considering their prior attainment through a broad range of experiences and high quality teaching and support. In both the nursery and reception, children are given every opportunity to investigate, be curious and enthusiastic whilst experimenting, solving problems, posing questions whilst adopting the use of appropriate language of the adults around them. ‘Let’s find out’ techniques, encourage the children to be inquisitive and observant researchers. Children are developing their skills well and beginning to know how to use tools and equipment correctly and safely. Through guided activities they take on board information and reinforce their knowledge and understanding, for example; when the teacher, without giving anything away beforehand, caused solid lumps of chocolate to turn into a liquid when it was subjected to heat. Later as it turned back into a solid within the baking tray they were more than ready with their reasons “how and why” the phenomena had occurred. They learn about different occupations, as they subject a willing adult to the latest “hair raising” treatment in their salon, or are engaged under the safety of their hard hat in putting up barriers to protect visitors from their “building site”. The children are learning well about computers, although very few bring experiences of technology from home. Most reception children can use a mouse and control it to move objects on

the screen. A Baby Clinic offered reception children the opportunity to have a go at being a doctor or a nurse. Whilst others, when bathing the baby develop their care skills in not dropping the baby or getting soap in its eyes. Through skilful support and role-play the receptionist is encouraged to offer a patient an appointment, which involves both children in the task of using precise language to agree a time and day for the appointment. In spite of the staff's determination and perseverance in offering these broad experiences the further development of the children's knowledge of the world is a constant goal for improvement through the Foundation Stage as is their drive to enhance the children's ability to talk about what they know.

Physical development

72. Children attain as expected in the Early Learning Goals for physical development by the age of five and their progress is very good because of the highly skilled teaching they receive particularly in small skills work such as; cutting and sticking and joining objects and materials together. The children use paintbrushes, glue sticks and pencils with increasing skill in both the nursery and reception. They can fit jigsaw pieces into the correct place, although some of the younger children need support for this. They handle pencils correctly although some need reminding about holding them. The children develop cutting skills and are regularly assessed for these skills. In reception, children improve their manipulative skills in using plasticine, cut out shapes well, and use a range of tools correctly. Children have ample opportunity to play outdoors, use push and pull toys and run in free space. In an excellent physical lesson in the hall, the teacher supported very well the reception children's ability to control their speed of movement and direction, and to develop their skills of assign and receiving a ball with their partner. A camera was used effectively to assess the impact of particular teaching strategies on the quality of learning.

Creative development

73. The children's attainment is in line with the expected Early Learning Goals by the age of five. They make very good progress in both the nursery and reception classes, developing their achievements in imaginative play, art and design, music, dance, role-play and making activities. The quality of teaching is very good overall and at times excellent. The children have good opportunities through a programme of structured and child initiated activities to explore and experiment with ideas, materials and activities. For example, paintings of nursery rhyme characters, collages depicting patterns in nature, three-dimensional mobiles decorated with hand prints displayed in the nursery and paper plates decorated as the heads of different animals and box craft models in reception, all give testimony to a creative process in which the children are well supported and given time and freedom to work out their ideas and to finish their work. In the lessons observed, children were busy making shopping lists in the home area, whilst others were; at sea on their pirate ship, "beating off" the sharks that were attacking them, or outside engaged in a variety of activities on their building site. All under the watchful eyes of the staff, who sensitively support the process, helping them to gain the skills needed but not dominating it. When given the opportunity the children delighted in making music, singing familiar songs such as the *Wheels on the Bus Go Round and Round* and *Little Peter Rabbit*, whilst doing the actions in time to the beat. Their enthusiasm reached even greater heights when they were given the opportunity to play a range of percussion instruments, which they did very well with a level of self-discipline and constraint when having to wait their turn

that was beyond that expected for their young age. Throughout the activities the members of staff were vigilant in their use of appropriate vocabulary and in getting the children to model their vocabulary on theirs when expressing their ideas or in answering questions, which has a positive effect on the children's language development.

ENGLISH

74. When children enter Year 1, the majority are working within the National Curriculum Programmes of Study and most of the other children are on track to achieve the goals in listening, letter and sound recognition and reading but not in speaking or writing. Children by the age of five have made very good progress since starting in the nursery.
75. In the national tests in 2001 pupils' performance in reading at seven was well below national expectations, and performance in writing was below the national average. However when the results are compared with similar schools, reading is in line and writing is well above the national expectation. In the same tests for 11 year olds in 2001, pupils' performance was below national expectations but well above standards in similar schools. The school has built on the improvement noted at the time of the last inspection showing attainment in English to be now broadly in line with national expectations. Compared with national standards very few pupils gain the higher levels. Though trends over time have been inconsistent, the school has explored a wide range of initiatives to improve standards. The impact is evident within the school as staff and pupils work industriously to raise standards in reading, writing, speaking and listening skills. Challenging targets have been set for the school though the impact of pupil mobility may result in the targets not being achieved. The school places very high emphasis on working intensively with pupils who have special educational needs. This strategy, along with high quality teaching throughout the school, means that it is realistic to expect a high proportion of pupils will achieve the expected Level 4 at the end of Key Stage 2.
76. The vast majority of pupils who are seven show confidence in speaking and listening especially in a topic that interests them. This shows very good progress during the infants. Factual text work on the life cycle of tadpoles and frogs provoked enthusiasm and interest. Similarly when pupils examined and categorised samples of natural and man-made materials they discussed their tasks sensibly with each other. When the younger pupils planted sunflower seeds they carefully considered why the plant pot had holes in the bottom and after much discussion decided that "the roots might want to come out". These same pupils enjoyed discussing instructions with their teaching assistant as they planted grass seeds to make "Mr Greenhead". These practical sessions are typical of the very good opportunities made by the school for pupils to gain confidence in listening and talking with each other. One of the successful initiatives adopted by the school to promote the development of literacy skills is the role-play project. This is facilitated by the school as a Beacon project to use role-play as an impetus for developing writing skills. During the week of inspection this was based on an imaginary burglary that had wrecked the class shop. All the pupils in Year 1 were involved in helping the police with their enquiry, explaining their alibis and discussing the scene of the crime. This imaginative teaching which included the setting up of the crime scene as well as the discussions, resulted in the pupils including those with special educational needs making very

good progress in developing their oral and literacy skills. The school receives valuable support in this initiative from the Basic Skills Agency consultant.

77. In Years 3 and 4, though some pupils lack confidence in speaking and listening, they enjoy explaining the tasks they have been asked to do and are able to respond competently to questions about the title, author, plot and characters in a story book. In Year 4 pupils are improving their speaking skills as they use full sentences to express their opinions and predict what might happen next in a lesson based on *Gowie Corby Plays Chicken*. As they progress through the key stage Year 5 pupils thoughtfully discuss the visual clues that give them information about Henry VIII and his lifestyle and Year 6 pupils happily read aloud as they analyse a tourist guide for Stratford Upon Avon. These pupils also understood that effective discussion allowed them to work collaboratively and resulted in a wider range of ideas for their next piece of written work. By the age of 11, standards in speaking and listening are in line with those expected nationally for this age group.
78. Standards in reading are satisfactory. The school's strategies for teaching reading are effective in encouraging pupils to become competent readers and in developing skills over time. Pupils in the infant department read regularly in school and routinely take their reading books home to share with their parents. The support given by parents is effective in raising pupils' attainment and encouraging an interest in books. The present seven year olds enjoy reading and are already able to state their preferences when choosing books. They use their knowledge of phonics to sound out and decode words. The very good use of the literacy strategy helps to provide a wide range of opportunities for reading skills to develop. The focus on shared reading has encouraged pupils to feel more confident in their capability to read and to understand that text can be fun and useful. This was demonstrated when Year 5 pupils read the poem *Matilda (the little girl who told lies)* before discussing the moral of telling lies. The same class also carefully read different types of advertisement, analysing them to see what makes a successful advert before attempting to devise their own. Pupils are familiar with a wide range of genres from poetry to tourist guides and the work of classical writers as well as modern children's authors. Pupils from all year groups read aloud to inspectors with reasonable accuracy using several different ways to work out the meaning of words they did not know. The structured Reading Recovery sessions for infant pupils have resulted in those pupils not only improving their reading skills significantly but also gaining in confidence when they join full class activities. The school has made sure that sufficient good quality books have been provided in the classrooms so that pupils can enjoy fiction and use reference books to support their studies in science, history or geography. The school library has an adequate supply of good quality books and is a very pleasant part of the school, however it is underused as a resource for independent research. Information and communication technology is underused at the moment but planning documents show that the school is aware of this and is taking appropriate action.
79. Standards in writing are satisfactory. A strength of the school is the wide range of opportunities given for pupils to write in different styles and for a variety of purposes. They improve their observational skills as well as their writing when they label pictures showing the differences in apples before and after they have been cooked. The impact of the Year 1 role-play initiative is clearly evident in pupils' improved fluency in writing as they apply for jobs in the local supermarket. Year 2 pupils use plans as they write a sequenced account of the Great Fire of

London and recount a trip to the local museum. These seven year olds use basic punctuation correctly and show an increasing use of adjectives in their writing. The majority write in complete sentences though lower achieving pupils need support to do this. The range of written work produced by the infants and the progress they make reflects the high quality, imaginative teaching in those classes. The class teachers are well supported by teaching assistants and the additional work on basic skills provided for pupils who have special educational needs. This allows all pupils to make good progress.

80. Pupils in the junior classes continue to make good progress and maintain the satisfactory levels achieved earlier. As a result of the consistently good teaching they continue to extend their writing across the curriculum. For example, Year 4 pupils write postcards home as part of their study of St Lucia and develop their use of adjectives such as “rough”, “speckled” and “bumpy” as they write explanations of how they made brick rubbings. By the time they are 11, they are able to write descriptions, instructions and reports. Younger pupils identify the characteristics of the villain and hero in *Little Red Riding Hood*; they also attempt to write their own poetry. Older pupils use texts such as *Anne Frank’s Diary*, *Christmas Carol* and *Peter Pan* to inspire their own writing. Eleven year olds develop further understanding as they respond in writing to texts such as *Adrian Mole’s Diary* and *Macbeth*. Pupils draft and redraft their written work and improve their letter writing skills when they write very effective letters of complaint to big companies and use a different style to write to a friend. Pupils write commentaries on poetry such as Wordsworth’s *Daffodils* and *The Loveliest of Trees* by A E Houseman. They sensitively consider the feelings of the poet and how effective it is before attempting to write their own ‘spring poetry’. Pupils develop more complex sentence structures as they write reasoned arguments on the issues of wearing school uniform and the effect of supermarkets on people’s lifestyles. The range of different opportunities for writing stimulates pupils’ interest and gives them more confidence in their own abilities.
81. The standards of handwriting are inconsistent across the school and this is an area for further development. The school has already identified this on the action plan. The older pupils have useful guidelines to remind them about the presentation of their work but there needs to be school-wide expectation of handwriting and presentation skills.
82. Teaching of English is consistently good throughout the school. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Teachers have a very good knowledge and understanding of the teaching of literacy and the teaching of basic skills is very good. It is evident from planning that teachers have responded successfully to the National Literacy Strategy. Teachers have consistently high expectations that pupils will concentrate and work hard for success. Very good relationships are established in all classes and teachers manage pupils with genuine praise and caring encouragement. This is reflected in pupils’ efforts to learn and the good progress they make from the start of their schooling. Teachers use questions thoughtfully to help pupils extend their ideas. This was evident in Year 3 as the class responded well to questions about *Danny Champion of the World* and decided if the story was credible. Similarly, as a result of very good questioning and stimulating discussion, Year 6 pupils recognised powerful and persuasive writing as well as the characteristic features of report writing. A strength of the teaching of English is the effective use of the plenary at the end of the lesson to review what has been learned and to reassure pupils that they are making progress. Year 5 pupils concentrated well as their teacher led a useful

discussion about advertising leaflets. The pupils recognised “Have you got a wicked side?” as a rhetorical question and understood that the use of alliteration makes slogans memorable. The class had designed a variety of liquid products and bottles and then used their literacy skills to good effect in advertising the products. Very good class management strategies mean the lessons are organised so pupils can work independently or collaboratively and are very clear about their teachers’ expectations of completed tasks. Year 1 pupils enjoyed catching their teacher out as she made “mistakes” in writing sentences; they were ready to spot missing punctuation or lack of finger spacing. Teachers and assistants work very well together in making sure that all pupils including those who have special educational needs are able to take advantage of the lively and interesting lessons. Throughout the school, teachers use the correct technical vocabulary and expect the pupils to do the same, for example infant pupils readily use words such as index or glossary.

83. Marking is generally good with very useful and encouraging comments made particularly in Years 1 and 6. The links with other subjects such as geography, history or science are very effective in developing pupils’ research and writing skills. Pupils analyse and record the data they have gleaned and use the facts so they can have informed discussions on, for example, the lifestyle of Henry VIII, dental hygiene or the design of hats. In Year 1 pupils follow the exploits of Bruce the monkey who arrived from Australia. Pupils take Bruce home with them and write diaries of what they do together. Parents are very supportive of the school in encouraging their children to write the diaries.
84. The subject is very well managed. The coordinator is very enthusiastic and committed to developing the subject and raising standards. She is a very good role model and excellent practitioner in approaching the subject enthusiastically and professionally. The subject has benefited from a variety of initiatives such as the Beacon Schools and Education Action Zone; they have provided enhancement to the curriculum and included parents of infant pupils in supporting their children’s understanding of literacy. The introduction of role-play to stimulate imagination, discussion and writing has had a powerful effect on the pupils and the school is right in planning to extend this initiative. Resources to support the literacy strategy are good. There are good assessment procedures, but though teachers use ongoing classroom assessment well to make sure they are teaching appropriately and to group pupils for additional support, there needs to be further development in target setting, tracking and predicting pupils’ progress. This will allow the school to identify any pupils who are capable of achieving the higher levels in national tests. The very good management of English is making a significant contribution to raising pupils’ levels of literacy.

MATHEMATICS

85. Pupils in Year 6, in the National Curriculum tests of 2001, attained standards which were broadly in line with those expected for their age. This is similar to the situation reported at the last inspection. When results are compared with those of similar schools nationally, they are well above average, showing that pupils are achieving very well. The detail of the results showed that the percentage of pupils achieving the expected Level 4 was much higher than the comparative figure for similar schools, with 14 per cent achieving the higher Level 5. Boys slightly outperformed girls in mathematics.

86. Pupils in Year 2, in the Year 2001 National Curriculum tests, fared less well. They attained standards, which were poor in relation to national averages and when compared against schools where pupils came from similar backgrounds. These particular pupils scored badly on the Baseline tests administered by the school when pupils entered the reception class, explaining why they did not achieve as well as pupils in the previous year. Only one pupil achieved a level, which was higher than the expected Level 2. Thus while almost 80 per cent achieved the expected level, it was not good enough to meet national averages.
87. Scrutiny of work for pupils currently in Year 2 shows a much higher level of understanding than in the above results. These pupils had poor scores in mathematics when they took their Baseline tests, thus they have made good progress in the intervening year and a half. Progress in basic numeracy is currently close to the nationally expected level for a good proportion of pupils. Pupils in the current Year 6 class scored well in their tests when they were in Year 2, but with a current 38 per cent of pupils on the special educational needs register, it is perhaps not surprising that a significant minority of the class finds difficulty in aspiring to the expected level for their age group.
88. During the inspection it was clear that the school was giving good support to pupils with special educational needs during lessons of mathematics. In some classes work was designed especially for them, whilst in others, they carried out the same work but with greater support from other adults. In Year 6, very good support was given to a large group of pupils with special educational needs by a supply teacher and teaching assistant. In this particular group pupils were making good progress in consolidating their basic skills, although in spite of this, the school still anticipates few will achieve the nationally expected level.
89. Overall, whilst teachers plan for all aspects of mathematics and make good use of the National Numeracy Strategy, pupils use of their mathematical knowledge and understanding in order to carry out investigations is very limited. Equally, there is not enough use of ICT in pupils' work on data handling in particular. As a result these two strands of their work in mathematics are not as advanced as their work in number, shape, space and measuring.
90. By the age of seven, pupils have a sound understanding of place value to 100, but do not get opportunities to make enough use of this knowledge in problem solving or investigations. They can measure distances with their hand spans and strides and can measure lengths shorter than a metre with a ruler. They recognise right angles in pictures of objects and can carry out calculations using all four operations.
91. By the time they get to Year 5 they have more understanding of two and three-dimensional shapes together with a basic understanding of negative numbers. Their work with fractions is well advanced and they are able to draw, understand and derive information from graphs. Year 6 teachers divide pupils into two ability groups. Although the groups are based on ability, the very good teaching of the lower ability group helps close the gap in pupils' knowledge and understanding. Currently, however, even though teaching is very effective, it is difficult to imagine more than a very small number of pupils in this group achieving the expected Level 4 in the National Curriculum tests.
92. The school's target set for this current group of pupils is unrealistically high, even though the school only just missed its target for the last Year 6 class. Not all

class books showed sufficient emphasis on work for different groups of pupils in the various classes. Too often work set for the average and small group of higher attaining pupils was very similar, thus not challenging the higher attaining pupils sufficiently. Equally, class profiles do not show the small group of higher attaining pupils, although they clearly show those pupils with special educational needs. A clearer emphasis on the former group could well bring them more regularly to teachers' attention.

93. Overall, the teaching of mathematics is good. All lessons were at least satisfactory or better. Half were good, one lesson very good with one excellent lesson in Year 1. In this lesson the class teacher and her two support staff managed to motivate the pupils for the whole time, challenging them and supporting them very well in their learning. The teacher was very vigilant in keeping pupils on task so that no time was lost. Her enthusiasm was infectious, driving learning forward for all ability groups. Relationships within the class, between pupils and with adults were particularly good in the lesson. The lesson was fun, but within the fun, pupils made excellent progress in their learning and were achieving beyond expectations. As a result pupils showed excellent levels of self-discipline when working at independent tasks, trying to achieve the high expectations placed upon them by their teacher. As the lesson fully included all groups of abilities, there were no pupils who remained on the outside of the learning process; all were heavily involved from beginning to end.
94. The school has plans for the further development of mathematics in the school, with the introduction of more opportunities for pupils to use ICT in their lessons. The coordinator is already trying out material in her class successfully. There is further scope for the development of links between mathematics and other subjects on the curriculum.
95. All classes have mathematics displayed in a prominent place. One element, which deserves further thought, is that of vocabulary. Many, but not all, teachers try hard to use correct mathematical vocabulary consistently, however, few write new words down or make lists of new vocabulary at the time of discussion. Too often the display boards are awash with words, many of which do not have a place in current work. They would be rather more relevant and less confusing if only current words were displayed and pupils' attention was drawn to them in every lesson.

SCIENCE

96. Pupils in Year 6, in the National Curriculum tests of 2001, attained standards, which were below those expected for their age. This is similar to the situation reported at the last inspection, when attainment in science was reported to be below national expectations at the end of both key stages. When results are compared with similar schools, they are well above average, showing that pupils are achieving very well. The detail of the results showed that the percentage of pupils achieving the expected Level 4 was higher than the comparative figure for similar schools, with 20 per cent achieving the higher Level 5. Teacher assessments of Year 2 pupils put their attainment level very high in comparison with the national average, 100 per cent achieving Level 2. Inspection findings show that the majority of pupils at the end of both key stages are attaining in line with national expectations. It is clear that the school is giving good support to pupils with special educational needs during lessons which enables them to make

satisfactory and at times good progress in consolidating their knowledge and understanding.

97. Overall the delivery of the subject has improved greatly since the last inspection. Teachers are well supported by a clear scheme of work and plan their lessons within an agreed programme of structured investigations, which helps safeguard continuity and progression. The issue that lessons did not build on the pupils' previous knowledge and understanding has been successfully addressed, although the majority of activities are still teacher determined and not initiated by the pupils. However, teachers are diligent in looking for opportunities to give pupils the chance to think for themselves and to determine some aspect of the investigation whenever possible. By the age of seven, pupils have a sound knowledge and understanding of a range of scientific phenomena across the attainment targets for example; through a controlled "Fair Test" Year 2 pupils discovered that bean plants grow faster than peas, the majority confirming their prediction that they would as being correct; whilst on another occasion they investigated "forces" and the effect of friction on movement through an enquiry involving sending a toy car down a slope over a range of different surfaces. Scrutiny of planning and of pupils' work showed that these activities were a progression of work carried out in Year 1, showing that the issue of lack of progression highlighted in the last report has been addressed successfully. By the time they get to Year 6, pupils have more understanding of all aspects of the subject and through the impact of good quality teaching are better able to express their ideas using appropriate scientific language and terminology. For example; in investigating the effect of weighing objects in water they used and understood words such as, gravity and up thrust. A significant improvement from the time of the last inspection when they were reported as being confused in their understanding and use of scientific language.
98. Overall the quality of teaching is good with an incidence of very good teaching in Year 1. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection when the quality of teaching ranged from unsatisfactory to good. All lessons are well planned, thoroughly prepared and adequately resourced. Introductions and expositions are clear and meaningful and tasks are generally well matched to the pupils' needs. The organisation of lessons and the management of pupils were strengths throughout the majority of lessons. Skilful observations and questioning during the shared and grouped activities were used to assess the pupils' knowledge and understanding and to determine the need for direct support or the reinforcement of understanding through the direct teaching of specific facts to groups or the whole class. Although there was an incidence when groups of Year 6 pupils were using forcemeters to weigh objects in water when this did not happen and as a consequence their progress in the lesson suffered. Teachers are not using ICT well enough to record and analyse information within the investigative process, although full use is made of the pupils' numeracy skills in completing appropriate types of graphs and diagrams to record their evidence and findings where and when appropriate.
99. Pupils' attitudes to learning are generally good. They listen carefully and respond well to the teachers' questioning. In practical activities they work well together with enthusiasm and interest. They cooperate effectively, sharing equipment and tasks and generally show patience and consideration for all members of the group.

100. The subject is well managed and its delivery has improved significantly since the last inspection, particularly at Key Stage 1. Assessment procedures linked to specific modules are being piloted and early findings which show that information gained supports the tracking of pupils' progress is encouraging. The accommodation and resources are used well to support the delivery of the subject, which meets requirements. However, the school recognises that greater progress needs to be made in giving pupils more opportunities to determine their own lines of enquiry, and as this aspect of the subject develops throughout the school a wider range of resources will be needed. Effective use is made of the school environment, educational visits and visitors to broaden the pupils' knowledge of the world around them and of scientific phenomena generally.

ART AND DESIGN

101. The last time the school was inspected, standards in art were broadly in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and above by the end of Key Stage 2. Inspection findings show that standards are at least in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages with evidence of high quality work being produced throughout the school. During the inspection only one lesson was observed, but scrutiny of work and discussions with pupils added to the evidence.
102. In the excellent lesson observed, Year 1 pupils became highly motivated by their teacher's enthusiasm and creative use of illustrations of Andy Goldsworthy's sculptures. There was an air of sheer excitement in the classroom as the pupils worked at their group activities. Using a range of natural materials including; the branch of a tree, pebbles, seeds and sticks they concentrated on their pieces of environmental art, modeled in the style of the artist. The teacher's highly skilful support and direct teaching of the skills needed, enabled all the pupils to make excellent progress in their learning and to achieve standards well beyond expectations. The finished work was superb and a worthy testimony to the skill of the teacher and the perseverance of the pupils who showed high levels of determination and self-discipline throughout the lesson.
103. It is evident that pupils throughout the school are familiar with and use a wide range of media. These include paint, pencil, chalk, crayons, fabric and clay. Their completed pictures show an appreciation of shape, colour and texture. They use scissors and other tools confidently in the production of collages and three-dimensional work. Appropriate techniques such as colour mixing, are used well a good example are the wallpaper designs produced by Year 5 pupils in the style of William Morris. Pupils throughout the school including those with special educational needs make good progress and achieve well. They have a positive attitude to the subject and enjoy talking about their work. In discussions, a group of pupils used technical terms to explain how the wax resists the dye from getting to the fabric when sharing how they had produced their high quality Batiks.
104. The coordinator has a very good knowledge of her subject and provides enthusiastic and very effective leadership to her colleagues. Her monitoring of teachers' planning ensures good quality of teaching and that the pupils receive a broad and balanced art curriculum. Resources are good and effective use is made of the accommodation, school environment, artefacts and visits to broaden the pupils' first hand experiences of the world around them. The subject makes a valuable contribution to the pupils' spiritual development and meets the requirements of the National Curriculum.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

105. The school's approach to the teaching of design and technology does not currently allow it to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum and little evidence is available to suggest that standards are adequate.
106. At the last inspection only one lesson was seen. No lessons were available to be seen during this inspection and there was hardly any previously completed work to examine.
107. The school indicates that skills in design and technology are developed through other subjects such as history, geography and science. However, thus far there has been no over-arching plan for this, leaving teachers free to choose what activities to offer pupils and what skills, knowledge and understanding to develop. This approach does not safeguard the development of these attributes, which need to be developed in a much more systematic way.
108. A long-term plan has now been produced, but not yet put into effect, for there to be a more measured approach to the subject with a plan based on suggestions taken from the nationally recommended scheme of work. However, the school development plan does not show this, giving concern that time for teachers to discuss the issues involved, understand the detail of the planning and gather further skills themselves, is not currently planned for. The school also suggests that it will seek to develop a design and technology week for its oldest pupils. Should this be taken on, it should be seen as an adjunct to regular opportunities for pupils to take part in design and technology lessons and not a replacement for them.
109. Discussions with pupils from Year 6, reveal that their opportunities to develop knowledge, understanding and skills in the subject are sadly lacking. They have little recall of the use of tools they have used, struggle to remember the type of materials they have used and do not have a clear understanding of the place of evaluation in the process of designing and making.
110. The coordinator for the subject is newly appointed to the task. At the last inspection there was no coordinator, scheme of work or guidelines for teachers. As a result the subject has made little progress in the intervening period, as other initiatives were deemed to be more important.

GEOGRAPHY and HISTORY

111. Improvements since the last inspection are sound. Literacy skills are used well in both subjects. By the age of seven pupils attain as expected nationally. Only two lessons were seen in geography and one in history but this, along with scrutiny of pupils' work and discussions with them, enable the judgement to be made that most pupils attain as expected by the age of seven but not as expected by the age of 11. In geography, they have an understanding of weather, the types of clothes they need to wear to suit the climate, the names of the countries of the British Isles and they can name some places they can go on holiday. Pupils also know about the jobs people do and how they help us, they are aware of simple maps and how they get to school. Most can follow simple directions. Pupils make sound progress in both subjects. Their starting point of knowledge of the wider world than their own homes and locality is very low. The challenge for the teachers is for pupils to recall what they have learned as for many their memory retention is not strong.

112. By the age of 11, pupils have covered the required curriculums and whilst in the short term they can discuss their work they have little detailed memory of what they have learned some time ago. They do not attain as expected nationally in their knowledge and understanding of people, places and themes. Most have little detailed knowledge of countries of Europe, cannot remember the continents of the world or the main rivers or mountain ranges. There is evidence in their books of work covering rivers, comparing St Lucia with their own area and how people travel to work. Pupils have also engaged in debate about whether there should be a Formby by-pass and what environmental changes might happen. However, when asked about the work covered they can recall few aspects in detail. In history they have studied all the major eras but have little sense of chronology. They use literacy skills well for example, when using adjectives to describe Henry VIII. Pupils have researched Queen Victoria and have completed assessment tasks to share what they have learned. The techniques used of pupils brainstorming what they know before studying the subject and then recording what they have learned, means they are moving closer to what is expected and progress is good.
113. No overall judgement can be made about teaching seen but in the lesson in Year 1 in geography the teaching was very good and pupils made good progress in looking at clothes they would need for their holiday. The activities were very practical and all relevant to the task. Role-play, in booking a holiday to a desert island, involving adults to develop key vocabulary was valuable. The activities supported pupils well in using their literacy skills to write postcards and lists of clothes they would need to pack. Pupils enjoyed the learning and all could explain the tasks set; most put a good deal of effort into the tasks. In the lesson in Year 3 where pupils were describing routes, teaching was good. The teacher drew on the pupils' experiences for example, recalling how they got to the cinema to see *Harry Potter*. The behaviour management was good and the teacher's quiet, assertive strategy worked well to keep pupils focused. Pupils could use simple maps but had little understanding of compass directions. Very good teaching was seen in history in Year 4 where the coordinator's knowledge and enthusiasm for the subject shone through. Very good questioning prompted pupils to join in and they used secondary evidence to find clues.
114. The coordinator has already set up a useful method of charting pupils' coverage of the units of study in both subjects and this has the potential to be replicated in other subjects as a means of sharing with pupils what they are going to learn and assessing how well they have done. The coordinator has drafted subject action plans, reviewed resources and informally monitored planning. However, she has not yet observed the delivery of the subjects. Delivery meets the requirements of the National Curriculum.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

115. The previous inspection report noted that pupils in Years 1 and 2 showed "generally sound skills", while older pupils used "information technology well throughout the key stage". Since that time, the subject itself has seen a great deal of development due to national initiatives and the pace of change within information technology. The school, however, up till recently, was not able to keep pace with those changes largely due to a lack of efficient, modern computers. As a result, standards have fallen since 1997 and are only now starting to rise again.

116. The school has used its finances and grant aid effectively in providing a new computer suite together with pairs of computers and printers in all classrooms. It has decided wisely not to use the nationally recommended scheme of work, starting all classes at their age appropriate starting point. If they did adopt this approach, older pupils would not have been able to cope, as they would not have experienced the development of their skills, knowledge and understanding over preceding years. The school has chosen to develop strands of the National Curriculum for ICT across the school. As a result, recent work in the use of word processing and of paint programs is seen to be close to the nationally expected levels in Years 1 and 2. As older pupils have so much more to learn in a short period of time, their levels of expertise are not yet good enough.
117. Pupils in Year 1 were seen working with a painting program. They were able to log on to the computer network, typing in their password and user identifications. With verbal advice they loaded their painting programs and began their work without delay. They showed good mouse skills in drawing zigzag patterns and could change the size of their on-screen brushes as well as using a “fill” option which they selected from on-screen icons. Some support was given in saving their work but pupils were very confident in their use of the program.
118. Similar success was noted in a Year 2 lesson where pupils were using a screen turtle to draw shapes. Pupils were working in pairs drawing squares and rectangles. This gave good support to their mathematical understanding and much good discussion amongst pairs supported the development of their speaking and listening skills. As a result pupils made very good progress and were covering ground which was beyond national expectations for their age group.
119. Year 6 pupils, however, were working on a datahandling program. Pupils were able to access the programs and were talked through clicking on a variety of icons in order to select different data. Although pupils had remembered a good deal from their previous lesson, the class teacher did not display sufficient subject knowledge in order to move the more able pupils at a faster rate of progress. She honestly mentioned to the class that she “was learning at the same time”.
120. The school has yet to access the nationally funded training for teachers, although plans are in hand for that to happen very soon. This would give all teachers more confidence and allow them to give their pupils more directed support in their learning. The teachers in Years 1 and 2 showed much more understanding and subject knowledge, making their teaching very good. They were able to give clearer advice and not get too involved themselves in operating the computers for the pupils. As a result, pupils’ progress in their learning was equally very good. Pupils enjoyed their time in the suite, behaved well and made the best use of their time with the computers.
121. Not enough use of ICT was noted in the course of other lessons. Mathematical programs were being used in a lesson in the reception class, but other opportunities to link the use of ICT with other curriculum areas is in the very early stages of development.
122. The subject coordinator has a clear view of the development necessary to bring the work in line with national expectations:
- the completion of staff training to support teaching;

- the purchase of further hardware and software in order that the school might carry out work in the control, measuring and modeling aspects of the ICT curriculum;
 - develop a complete scheme of work, which clearly addresses the development of skills, knowledge and understanding;
 - promote the development of ICT across all other curriculum areas.
123. The time is now appropriate to amend the current development plan in order to prioritise future developments following staff training.

MUSIC

124. At the previous inspection, only two lessons were observed. From this and other information, standards were judged to be in line with national expectations in both infant and junior classes. Only two lessons could be seen during the current inspection and as these were in Years 1 and 2, it is not possible to make a judgement on standards and teaching in other year groups or by the time pupils reach the age of 11.
125. The school is fortunate to have the services of an experienced peripatetic music teacher who takes music lessons in some classes each term, with class teachers taking their own music lessons in the following two terms. This system allows pupils across the school to receive good quality teaching of music and offers class teachers the opportunity to learn more about teaching music alongside a specialist teacher. In both lessons observed, teachers were watching the music teacher and often noting down strategies and methods used. Planning was very clear and would provide teachers with a useful way forward in preparing their own work at a later stage.
126. The quality of the teaching seen was good with some very good features. Although the lessons in both Years 1 and 2 were basically the same, the teacher had made adjustments to take into account, age, ability and aptitude. As a result they were both successful, with pupils in Year 2 making slightly better progress. This was brought about by them having slightly better behaviour and attitudes to the work, not calling out and taking part in activities far more readily and without fuss. Standards achieved were in line with what is expected of pupils in this age group.
127. These pupils sang well from the start of the lesson when they sang “Hello” to each other and the adults. They enjoyed singing “Pass it high pass it low” and when the passing beater stopped with them, they did well to recognise notes written on a card for them to play on a glockenspiel. Many remembered the “rap”, which was part of a Goldilocks story and were very enthusiastic in their response. They recited their response using different voices, which underlined the lesson’s theme of “pitch”.
128. Pupils in Year 1, in addition to the above, were listening carefully to two different pieces of music, which exhibited very different changes in pitch. They readily recognised these changes and commented upon them. They too enjoyed the singing element of the lesson, especially “The churchyard song”.
129. Resources for the subject are adequate. Displays about music through the school are somewhat limited.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

130. Attainment in the lessons observed within both key stages was in line with national expectations. This is a similar picture as at the time of the last inspection.
131. In a very good lesson, Year 2 pupils carried out floor activities well, moving and travelling in a controlled way being able to change direction and speed as instructed. The structure of the lesson led them into the development of game skills demanding their concentration in working with a partner sending and receiving a ball. Their perseverance and very good teaching enabled them to

achieve well and to make good progress in the lesson. Year 5 pupils showed their prowess for field athletics during a good lesson on the playing field. The pupils responded well to the challenges presented to them in the well organised sequence of activities, which demanded a high level of concentration and perseverance from them as they improved their running, jumping, skipping and hopping techniques. Their positive attitude, good behaviour and ability to work well together enhanced their achievement during the lesson. The teacher's secure subject knowledge and good quality direct teaching of skills and support ensured that all of the pupils whatever their ability, made good progress. Year 3 pupils lived up to the high expectations of their teacher in their response to his instructions of the use of hockey sticks. Their level of "dribbling" of their ball showed they had been taught well and had the determination to improve their performance.

132. All aspects of the subject are covered, except for adventurous activities. Overall provision of resources, particularly for the teaching of game skills has improved. The coordinator's lead for the school to participate in national initiatives for example, TOP Sport has had a good effect on the quality of teaching and the standards achieved by pupils throughout the school in games skills. The majority of pupils achieve well at swimming. The subject makes a valuable contribution to the pupils' personal development, particularly their social skills, perseverance and using their initiative and in taking responsibility for developing their skills.