

INSPECTION REPORT

Millbrook Community Primary School

Kirkby

LEA area: Knowsley

Unique reference number: 104432

Headteacher: Mrs Jane M. Maloney

Reporting inspector: Stafford Evans
21217

Dates of inspection: 21st - 24th January 2002

Inspection number: 195999

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:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Kirkby Row Westvale Kirkby Knowsley Merseyside
Postcode:	L32 0TG
Telephone number:	0151 477 8160
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Anthony Ely
Date of previous inspection:	9 th June 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr S. Evans 21217	Registered inspector	Science Information and communication technology Physical education	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
Mr L. Kuraishi 11450	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Mrs S. Russam 10228	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Special educational needs Art and design Design and technology	
Mr R. Evans 20692	Team inspector	English Music Religious education	
Mr R. Battey 2866	Team inspector	Equal opportunities English as an additional language Mathematics Geography History	How good are curricular and other opportunities?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Millbrook is a community primary school with a total of 248 pupils on roll aged 4 to 11 years. There are also 52 part-time children in the nursery class. The school is about the same size as other primary schools nationally. Attainment on entry to the nursery class at the age of three is below that expected for children this age. The percentage of pupils in the school identified as having special educational needs - 28 per cent - is above the national average. One pupil has a Statement of Special Educational Need. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals is above the national average. A very small number of pupils are from ethnic minority backgrounds. One pupil speaks English as an additional language.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school that gives good value for money. Standards by the time pupils leave the school at 11 years of age are above the national average in mathematics and science and in line with the national average in English. Pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds achieve similarly to other pupils. The quality of teaching is good, as are the leadership and management of the school.

What the school does well

- Throughout the school, there is a high proportion of good, very good and excellent teaching. This ensures pupils achieve well by the time they leave the school.
- Pupils' personal development and relationships with one another are very good. Their attitudes towards school and their behaviour are good. This positively affects pupils' quality of learning.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and they achieve well in relation to their prior attainment.
- Provision for pupils' personal development is good. The experiences provided for their moral development is particularly strong.
- The headteacher, very ably supported by the deputy headteacher, provides very good leadership. There is a very good team spirit in the school and a staff, who are committed to raising standards.

What could be improved

- Attainment in design and technology is below nationally expected standards.
- Despite improvements, pupils' attendance is below the national average.
- Assessment procedures are good in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology, but are less effective in supporting pupils' learning in other subjects.
- Long term strategic financial planning.

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. The school has developed well since then and is in a very strong position to make further improvements. Standards of attainment, except in design and technology, are higher now than at the time of the last inspection. Standards in information and communication technology are much higher compared with those reported on in the last inspection. To raise standards in information and communication technology was a key issue last time. The quality of teaching is significantly better. For example, the amount of very good and excellent teaching has increased by a significant amount. Procedures for assessing pupils' work have improved, but still with some work to be done. The school has gone a long way to meeting this key issue from the last inspection. School development planning is more effective now than at the time of the last inspection. Inspectors identified this as another key issue for action last time.

STANDARDS

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

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

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

Inspection evidence indicates that standards of attainment are currently higher in mathematics and science than those shown in the table above for 2001. Standards are above average in both these subjects. Standards in English are close to above average, with a significant proportion of pupils attaining above nationally expected standards in writing. By the end of Year 6, pupils attain standards in line with national expectations in most other subjects. The exception is in design and technology in which pupils attain below national expectations. Taking account of all subjects, by the time pupils leave the school at the end of Year 6 they achieve well in relation to their prior attainment. The school achieves very well in comparison with similar schools. Ethnic minority pupils achieve similarly to their classmates. Also, there is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Those pupils identified as gifted make very good progress. By the end of the Foundation Stage, children make good progress, including children who learn English as an additional language, and attain standards in line with national expectations. Pupils build on this progress well and by the end of Year 2 attain above average in mathematics and information and communication technology. They attain nationally expected standards in other subjects, except design and technology, which is below the expected standard. In 2001, the school exceeded its target in English and came close to it in mathematics. The school assembles a range of information on pupils' prior attainment to set appropriate attainment targets.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils like school and have good attitudes to their work. They show interest in their lessons and willingly involve themselves in the range of activities the school provides.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils' behaviour in and around the school is good. They are polite to each other and to adults and they look after their own property as well as that of others. There are no exclusions.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' personal development is very good. They have very good relationships with one another and with the adults in the school. Pupils respect and value other pupils' beliefs, cultures and backgrounds.
Attendance	Attendance levels have improved since the last inspection, but despite the school's very good monitoring procedures the attendance remains just below the national average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is good. High quality teaching enables pupils with a wide range of needs to learn effectively. Throughout the school, the teaching has many strengths and few weaknesses. The strengths include: the teaching of basic skills, including literacy and numeracy, the mainly good management of pupils' behaviour, the effective use of a range of teaching methods and the deployment of support staff. Support staff make a positive contribution to pupils' learning. The teaching and learning of children with English as an additional language and the support of minority ethnic pupils are good. The quality of teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. The school meets effectively the needs of the higher attaining pupils. A weakness in the teaching is in a very small minority of lessons when pupils' behaviour and learning resources are not managed effectively. This adversely affects their learning. The quality of the marking of pupils' work varies from excellent to unsatisfactory and is satisfactory overall. This inconsistency in the marking of pupils' work slows the progress that some pupils make.

The quality of pupils' learning is good. They are keen to learn and work hard. They show a real interest in what they learn and concentrate well. They acquire basic skills, knowledge and understanding at a good rate. When appropriate they work co-operatively and collaboratively.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Work is well planned to cover the six areas of learning for the Foundation Stage. The school provides a satisfactory range of work that is interesting and relevant to pupils in Years 1 to 6.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Support for pupils with special educational needs is good. It enables pupils to participate fully and with confidence in all their learning.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Children at the early stages of learning English as an additional language are given good additional support by a visiting teacher.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for pupils' moral development is very good. It is good for their spiritual, social and cultural development. The school ensures pupils have a clear understanding of what is right and wrong and show a high degree of respect for all people.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares well for its pupils. Members of staff treat the pupils with understanding and respect. Procedures for child protection are in place. The school has good procedures for assessing pupils' progress in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology, but these are informal for the other subjects.

The school has effective links with parents. Parents give good support to the school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	In the short time the headteacher has been at the school, she has demonstrated a very clear vision of what sort of school it should be and puts pupils and their achievements first. The deputy headteacher and senior teachers very ably support the headteacher. Subject co-ordinators make a good contribution to the success of the school. There is a good sense of team spirit among the staff and a definite shared commitment to succeed.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors have a good grasp of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and work effectively with the staff in their efforts to improve standards even further. They need to set out clearly their specific individual roles.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school monitors and evaluates effectively its performance. It knows its strengths and weaknesses and takes effective action to secure improvement.
The strategic use of resources	There is not a clear link between school development planning and budget setting. The principles of best value are applied satisfactorily. The school is well staffed. There is a generous amount of accommodation. In some subjects, there are significant shortages of learning resources.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Fifty-one questionnaires were returned. This was 17 per cent of those sent out. Four parents made a written response. Twelve parents attended the pre-inspection meeting for parents.

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school. • The school enables their children to make good progress. • The teaching is good. • Their children behave well at school. • The school is very easy to approach with concerns. • Staff have high expectations for their children. • The school works closely with parents. • The school is well led and managed. • The provision for their children's personal development is good. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some parents feel there are insufficient extra-curricular activities.

Parents think this is a good school and the inspection confirms this. Inspectors agree with the positive features identified by the parents. The programme for extra-curricular activities is limited, but the school is actively considering ways of improving this aspect of school life.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Pupils achieve well by the end of Year 2 when compared with the time they start school. Inspection evidence indicates that standards in reading, writing and science achieved by pupils by the end of Year 2 are satisfactory in comparison with all other schools and high when compared with those schools similar to Millbrook. Standards in mathematics are good and very high in comparison with similar schools. The mathematics and science results broadly reflect the results of the 2001 national tests. The reading and writing standards are an improvement on the test results for 2001.
2. The reason standards are higher in reading and writing is because there are more pupils achieving at a higher level than there were in the 2001 tests. For example in reading, higher attainers - 25 per cent of pupils - achieve a level higher than that expected of pupils this age. Also, in writing almost all pupils - 90 per cent - achieve at least at an appropriate level for their age. A small proportion of pupils - 5 per cent - attain above the nationally expected standard. This is an improvement on last year when no one achieved this. By the end of Year 2, pupils attain nationally expected standards in all other subjects except for information and communication technology and design and technology. Standards in information and communication technology are above national expectations, but below in design and technology. Pupils attain well in basic literacy and numeracy skills.
3. Pupils achieve well by the time they leave the school and standards are higher than they were at the time of the last inspection. By the end of Year 6, inspection evidence indicates that standards in mathematics and science are above the national average and in line with the national average in English. There is a significant proportion of pupils achieving highly in writing. In comparison with similar schools, standards are very high. Standards in other subjects are satisfactory, except for standards in design and technology, which are below national expectations. Throughout the school there is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls.
4. Standards achieved by the current Year 6 in English reflect closely those achieved in the 2001 national tests. The standards in mathematics and science are higher. Mathematics standards are higher because more lower attainers achieve nationally expected standards compared with last year. This is due in the main to the very good quality of teaching they receive in a smaller group setting. In science, standards reflect those of the previous two years prior to 2001 when 95 per cent of pupils achieved the nationally expected standard compared with 82 per cent last year. From inspection evidence, last year's science results were a blip in a trend of otherwise high standards.
5. By the end of the Foundation Stage, children achieve nationally expected standards in all areas of learning. All children by the time they enter Year 1 make good progress. Children identified with special educational needs make good progress as a result of the extra help and support they receive in class. This represents an improvement in standards since the last inspection.
6. There is no significant difference in the achievement of pupils of different ethnic backgrounds. All pupils achieve as much as they can. Children in Reception with English as an additional language make good progress. This is mainly because teachers promote children's spoken skills effectively. The local education authority also provides good support that enhances children's learning.

7. The school's programme of support for pupils with special educational needs is good. It is well organised to identify pupils who need additional help in class. This ensures they make good progress, similar to that of their classmates. Arrangements to support pupils who have statements of special educational needs are good and ensure they attain standards that are in line with their prior achievements. Pupils who have individual education plans also make good progress in meeting their targets; therefore, their attainment in relation to these targets is good. Pupils who are withdrawn from class to receive additional help with literacy gain competence in basic reading, writing and spelling skills. However, because they miss significant parts of other lessons, such as numeracy and geography, their attainment in these areas of the curriculum is impeded.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

8. The behaviour and attitudes to learning of nearly all pupils are good and when teachers plan lessons to suit their ability, they work hard and behave very well. Pupils' relationships with one another and their personal development are very good. No pupil has been excluded from the school in recent years. These findings, which are better than those reported in the last inspection in 1997, are strengths of the school.
9. Children's attitudes and behaviour in the Foundation Stage are good. The staff provide good opportunities for the children to take initiative and they show a good level of concentration, initiative and independence for their age. These good attitudes continue throughout the school. Older pupils are courteous and polite and they hold doors open for visitors and other adults in the school. Pupils take pride in presenting their work and respond well to the teachers' expectations for collaborative work and good behaviour. The majority of pupils listen with respect and attention to their teachers and to each other in lessons and during break times. On occasions, in less challenging lessons when the teacher is talking, a few pupils' are in the habit of calling out and sometimes they answer out of turn and behave inappropriately.
10. Pupils with special educational needs generally respond well to their lessons and demonstrate a positive attitude to learning alongside their classmates. A minority of pupils, who are withdrawn from their lessons for additional help by a visiting specialist teacher with their literacy, resent having to miss the opportunity of sharing new learning experiences with their classmates. This was particularly evident when pupils from Year 6, who have specific learning difficulties, completed work that failed to enthuse them.
11. Most pupils have a well-developed understanding of the need to be courteous. Pupils clearly respect their school and respond by taking care of the resources and by storing their own belongings tidily. During assemblies, pupils arrive quietly and clearly enjoy the time they spend together as a whole school. At lunch times, boys and girls sit together, chat sociably and eat their meal sensibly. Behaviour at playtimes is very good. All pupils' use the equipment sensibly and older pupils take care of vulnerable children.
12. No oppressive behaviour or bullying was observed during the inspection. Interviews with pupils show that they know the school rules for good behaviour at play times and what to do if they are bullied.
13. The personal development of pupils is very good and remains a strong feature since the last inspection. From the time pupils enter the school, the staff treat them with care and respect and value the efforts that they make. This builds their confidence and self-esteem. As a result, all pupils join in tasks willingly and rise to the challenge to do their best. They accept responsibilities well and take great pride in their work. They eagerly join in the school activities. For example, they initiate raising money for national and international charities. Older pupils have a mature approach to school life and contribute responsibly to the school through the school council.

14. Relationships throughout the school are very good. Relationships between pupils and with members of staff are friendly and very constructive. Pupils have a very good understanding of the impact of their actions upon others. They also have a high level of respect for the values and beliefs of others. They listen carefully to their teachers and other people, particularly in the assemblies and in the playground. They show good understanding that other people's beliefs may be different from their own. Pupils with special educational needs and those from the ethnic minority community are well integrated in the school. They are fully accepted and work and play happily alongside other pupils. Pupils are curious and sensitively express interest in people who look and speak differently from themselves.
15. Attendance levels have improved since the last inspection, but despite the school's very good monitoring procedures, the attendance remains just below the national average. The most recent information on the school, available after the last inspection, shows that due to more rigorous monitoring unauthorised absence in 2000/2001 has increased and is now above the national average.
16. During the inspection most pupils arrived punctually and both morning and afternoon sessions started promptly. Attendance registers are completed correctly and the school secretary ensures their safekeeping

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

17. The quality of teaching is good for children in the Foundation Stage and for pupils in Years 1 to 6. In the school as a whole, the teaching is satisfactory or better in 97 per cent of lessons. It is excellent in 6 per cent, very good in 34 per cent, good in 26 per cent and satisfactory in 31 per cent. It is unsatisfactory in 3 per cent of lessons. Teaching is a strength of the school and has a positive effect on pupils' attainment and progress. The quality of teaching is significantly better than at the time of the last inspection.
18. The quality of teaching in the nursery class is satisfactory in all six areas of learning and the children make satisfactory progress. Staff work together successfully and give the children in their care effective support. Work is planned to meet both class and individual needs. Adults manage the class appropriately and have realistic expectations of behaviour and performance. A weakness in the teaching is the day-to-day assessment of the children's progress. However, if there are any concerns the staff inform parents so that they can offer their children extra support at home. The nursery classroom is suitably organised, but has an unsatisfactory range of resources. The outside play area is inadequate in size and does not provide a bright or stimulating environment. It is not yet used as a carefully planned resource to contribute effectively to the children's learning.
19. In the reception classes, the children make very good progress as a result of very good quality teaching. There has been an improvement in the quality of teaching since the last inspection. Staff have very good relationships with the children. Teachers plan work well to cover the six areas of learning for the Foundation Stage. Children learning English as an additional language receive good support from their teachers and a visiting specialist. The teachers assess the children's progress regularly and keep detailed records of what they can and cannot do. They use the information on attainment on entry to the reception class when planning the next stage of learning and draw comparisons between the school's results and those nationally. Each child has a detailed record of achievement, which is started in the nursery and continued through the Foundation Stage. It provides the Year 1 teacher with valuable information.
20. In the teaching of pupils in Years 1 to 6, teachers' planning shows satisfactorily what they want different groups of pupils to learn in each lesson. This ensures pupils know what is

expected of them in lessons and their learning is focused. Teachers use a range of appropriate teaching methods. They persist in trying out a range of approaches when pupils find something difficult to grasp. They use questioning skills to help pupils learn and encourage pupils, particularly those who are reticent, to respond in ways that boost their self-esteem. These teaching approaches motivate the pupils to want to learn. For example, in a Years 5/6 numeracy lesson, pupils, through skilled questioning by the teacher, gave clear and precise explanations of how they complete their calculations. In the same lesson, lower attaining pupils calculated mentally complex problems involving multiples of ten. This was as a result of very good teaching of basic arithmetical skills. In a Year 6 science lesson taught by a teacher from the local secondary school, pupils extended their scientific knowledge of solids and liquids and how mixtures might be separated. This work built very effectively on pupils' previous learning.

21. Teachers mainly have secure subject knowledge so they answer pupils' questions accurately and teach with confidence. This in turn extends pupils' knowledge and understanding of the work they complete. Pupils' behaviour is mainly managed very effectively. As a result, little time is wasted in lessons and the pupils have more time to work hard. A strength of the teaching is the very good relationships between staff and pupils. This ensures all pupils, whatever their backgrounds, are fully involved in lessons and feel valued. This greatly enhances the quality of pupils' learning. Teachers deploy support staff effectively to support pupils' learning. Support staff contribute positively to pupils' progress.
22. Teachers use time and resources efficiently. Their use of computers to support pupils' learning is a particular strength. The use of the computer suite provides frequent opportunities for the use of information and communication technology to support learning in, for example English, mathematics, art and science. Pupils respond by being attentive and keen learners.
23. There is room for improvement in some aspects of the teaching. Work is not always matched accurately to the varying needs of pupils. This is particularly relevant in subjects other than English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology. Occasionally, pupils' behaviour is not managed effectively. This results in unsatisfactory standards of behaviour and disruption to pupils' learning in a very small proportion of lessons. The quality of the marking of pupils' work varies from excellent to unsatisfactory and is satisfactory overall. In the high calibre marking, teachers provide very helpful comments to pupils to show why work is good or what needs to be done to improve it. A shortcoming of the marking is when teachers sometimes use a cursory tick without comment in one piece of work after another. Teachers subject knowledge in design and technology is not secure.
24. Support in whole class lessons for pupils with special educational needs is good. It is very effective in enabling pupils to participate fully and with confidence in all learning tasks. Trained learning support staff are particularly effective and make a valuable contribution to the quality of teaching and learning. Teachers make satisfactory use of individual education plans to inform their planning for literacy and match the work they provide to the pupils' individual needs. The quality of specialist teaching provided for pupils who have moderate learning difficulties is good and promotes good opportunities for them to make good progress in their learning. Whilst the quality of specialist teaching for pupils with specific learning difficulties is broadly satisfactory, the work some pupils are expected to complete is insufficiently challenging and therefore the progress they make is not as good as it should be.
25. The teaching of literacy and numeracy skills is good and the setting of pupils in Years 3 to 6 into groups by ability has a positive impact because it enables teachers to plan work

more efficiently to meet the needs of similarly attaining pupils. The following are examples of how good quality teaching positively affects pupils' learning:

- The teaching and learning were very good in a Years 1/2 literacy lesson on phonics and writing in sentences. The planning was very good because it was closely linked with previous teaching and looking forward to future work. Pupils' work was very carefully matched to their varying needs. This, allied to the good support from the learning support staff, ensured pupils with special educational needs made very good progress. Support staff were very clear what pupils needed to learn and skilfully developed their letter and word recognition from flash cards.
- In a Years 5/6 excellent numeracy lesson about solving problems involving fractions of money, capacity and time, higher attainers worked at a level above that expected for their age. Very skilled questioning involved all pupils and extended their learning. The activity was very challenging - indicative of the teacher's high expectations - and pupils responded by working with sustained concentration and high levels of enthusiasm and motivation.

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

26. The quality and range of learning opportunities provided by the curriculum is satisfactory throughout the school. The school has improved the provision for design and technology and information and communication technology since the last inspection and they both now meet statutory requirements. However, there are too few opportunities provided for the study of design and technology where, in some classes, it is timetabled against art and design. The provision for information and communication technology has considerably improved as there is now a computer suite, which allows for whole class teaching. The school implements the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies well, although the opportunities for pupils in all classes to use their written and numeracy skills across the curriculum are not always fully taken up.
27. Work is well planned to cover the six areas of learning for the Foundation Stage. The school provides a satisfactory range of work that is interesting and relevant to pupils in Years 1 to 6. All groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs, have equal access to the curriculum and there is a good access and opportunity for all. Children with English as an additional language, in a reception class, are well supported in class, aided by good levels of support from a specialist teacher from the local authority. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 are in ability sets for English and mathematics. There are some occasions when pupils are withdrawn for extra help, for example for reading, when they miss some of the time for another subject. Overall, the inclusion of pupils in the total curriculum is satisfactory.
28. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The school provides a flexible range of support to meet the various needs of individual pupils. The most effective is the in-class support from teachers and support staff, who know the pupils well, and in classes where pupils are taught in ability groups. Except in literacy and numeracy lessons, teachers do not use pupils' individual education plans well enough to plan suitable work to meet the needs of individuals. The school ensures that the provision outlined in pupils' statements is in place and reviewed annually in line with Code of Practice for special educational needs¹ guidance. The arrangements for the withdrawal of a small minority of pupils for additional literacy help means they miss work in other subjects. This slows their progress in the missed subjects.

¹ [Code of Practice – this gives practical advice to schools and local education authorities about their responsibilities, duties and tasks to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs receive the most appropriate help and support to further their learning and personal development. This is a statutory duty under the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001. Code of Practice for Special Educational Needs – this gives advice to schools and local education authorities about their responsibilities and tasks to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs receive the most appropriate help to further their learning and personal development. This is a statutory duty under the 1993 Education Act.](#)

29. The school's extra-curricular provision has declined since the last inspection. It was previously good compared to satisfactory now. This is mainly due to teachers giving their time to support after school study classes. At present, the school offers pupils opportunities to play football and netball after school and they compete against teams from other schools. There is an intention by the headteacher, who has recently effectively taken on the responsibility of managing the curriculum, to introduce some activities at lunchtime.
30. Links with the local community are satisfactory. These include visits by people to talk about their work, such as the local curate, police constable and representatives from charity organisations. Visiting musicians, visits to local art galleries and the church enhance pupils' learning. For example, in a Year 3 geography lesson, teachers effectively used photographs taken during visits to the local area. This helped ensure pupils' map-making skills developed at a good rate. The school makes good use of volunteers. A parent with a good level of experience in information and communication technology plays a significant role in assisting teachers with their teaching in the computer suite. The school, in employing its own consultant support on a part time basis, develops teachers' confidence in information and communication technology teaching.
31. There is a good relationship with partner institutions. There are good links with schools involved in the 'Excel' project. Higher attaining pupils work well together with pupils from other schools. There are good links with the local secondary school. For example, teachers from the secondary school teach in Millbrook and Millbrook pupils visit the secondary school for lessons.
32. There is satisfactory provision for pupils' personal, social and health education. This includes teaching about the dangers of alcohol, smoking and drugs, and sex education for older pupils. Teachers teach these topics in science lessons, supported by input from the school nurse. The school has not yet devised a policy for drugs education for approval by the governors. Good emphasis is placed on sharing thoughts and feelings during a discussion period called Circle Time². These lessons provide good opportunities for pupils to talk over issues that face them as part of everyday life. Staff encourage pupils to be aware of their responsibilities as well as their rights. Topics for discussion, such as making choices and their responsibility, attitudes and responses to others, are successfully integrated into lessons and assembly times.
33. The high standards of provision for pupils' personal development, praised by the previous report, have been strongly maintained. The school's aims to provide high quality educational experiences enabling pupils to be happy, successful and keen to learn are very well promoted in all aspects of school life. The very good relationships between all members of the school community, and the respect that each has for others, promote a very good ethos in the school. This leads to an atmosphere in the school that is secure, supportive and conducive to learning and in which all members feel valued.
34. Pupils' spiritual development is strongly fostered in school assemblies. In addition to fulfilling statutory requirements for collective worship, the well-planned assemblies provide a daily opportunity to strengthen the school's sense of community. Praise for individual and group effort, achievement and behaviour gives pupils a sense of worth and of belonging. This was very evident when the curate of the local church praised a class for showing quiet respect for a funeral at her church as they were walking past. The rest of the school applauded. Assemblies conclude with prayers or reflection on some aspect of its theme. The school has good links with the local church. The curate is a school governor and visits the school regularly and not only to take an assembly. Pupils visit the

² During Circle Time pupils discuss a wide range of personal and general issues. It is agreed by all pupils that no interruptions should occur and only one person at a time will speak.

church as part of their religious education and also hold occasional services there, such as a recent Christingle service. The very good local religious education syllabus gives pupils good insights into the beliefs and traditions of other faiths. In one lesson, pupils meditated successfully as they considered how they could behave better and show concern for others.

35. Pupils' good behaviour in class and around the school demonstrates that they distinguish clearly between right and wrong. They are honest and trustworthy and treat the school's and others' property with respect. 'Circle Time' is timetabled for all classes except Year 6. This gives pupils the opportunity to speak about issues and problems they may have in an atmosphere of fairness and sympathy. All staff have high expectations of the pupils both in and out of the classroom. This fosters high standards of relationships and consideration for others. The school's action plan aims to maintain a consistency in this by ensuring that good behaviour is recognised and celebrated. Similarly, there are appropriate sanctions should unacceptable behaviour occur.
36. The school is an inclusive community where every individual is made to feel valued. The school council is a forum of eight elected pupils, who represent pupils' views and aspirations to the headteacher. This helps all pupils to feel that their opinions count and are heard. The council has recently been taking opinions on the kind of playground equipment that should be provided. The school's aim is to provide opportunities to take responsibility for as many pupils as possible. Older pupils have rotas of lunchtime duties and helping the youngest. Year 3 pupils produce a termly newsletter, whereas Year 2 and Year 6 pupils are responsible for collecting and totalling house points from each class.
37. The curriculum provides many opportunities to broaden pupils' cultural experiences. Art, music, drama and writing encourage pupils to explore and express their individual ideas. A good range of further activities enriches the curriculum, including concerts, art and theatre. All the junior pupils will shortly participate in a concert at the Liverpool Philharmonic Hall. Some pupils will visit the local library for an artist's workshop. Classes go on walks to study the local environment, which has seen great change over the past century. Some grandparents have visited the school to talk about these changes. History and geography give pupils an insight into other lands and cultures as they study locations in Africa and India. One pupil's Indian mother comes into school to show Indian food. In addition to learning about other faiths in religious education, the school observes their festivals such as Diwali, Chinese New Year and Eid.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

38. The school's care for its pupils is good. Teachers and support staff work closely to ensure that a good level of personal and educational support and guidance is given to all pupils. The procedures for child protection and pupils' welfare are very good. Health and safety procedures are in place and the school has developed very good systems for monitoring and improving attendance. The school promotes behaviour effectively and procedures for eliminating oppressive behaviour and racial harassment are firmly in place.
39. The school is a warm and caring place where adults and pupils enjoy working and learning together. Teachers and support staff express genuine concern for pupils and as a result trustful relationships are established between adults and pupils. Staff monitor personal development and keep detailed information in pupils' records of achievement. Parents are happy with the termly reports on their children's educational and personal development. Teachers make it a priority to ensure that pupils settle well at the start of the school life. The only pupil whose home language is not English and a pupil with physical disability are well supported. Parents who responded to the questionnaire

strongly agree that the school has high expectations for their children and inspection findings confirm that very good systems are in place to set targets and monitor pupils' progress effectively.

40. The school complies with the locally agreed child protection procedures. These provide clear instructions about action to be taken and how cases will be followed up by other local authority agencies. Teaching and non-teaching staff are aware of the procedures and know what action to take if the need arises. There are good arrangements for first aid and sick pupils are sympathetically cared for in a strategically located area in the foyer. Staff know what to do in case of an emergency or if a pupil becomes ill whilst at school. All pupils feel that they are safe and secure in the school. To ensure pupils' safety, staff monitor vulnerable children while awaiting collection by their carers. Parents are confident that their children are safe and secure in the school.
41. The school has a firm commitment to inter-agency working and has developed a good understanding of what can be contributed by other professionals. The school makes good use of outside support and advice from a range of sources to support pupils who have medical problems or where there are emotional, social, behavioural or learning difficulties. The school nurse visits the school regularly and attends to pupils' medical and other social needs in the strictest confidence.
42. The school pays good attention to health and safety matters. A health and safety policy is in place, but the governing body has not ratified it and it does not state the review date. Teachers carry out risk assessments before educational visits and the school has undertaken the formal whole-school risk assessment. The site manager takes very good care to ensure that the buildings, equipment and the school grounds are free from health hazards. Teachers and support staff promote hygiene effectively as part of the curriculum.
43. Administrative systems for promoting punctuality and attendance are very good. A computerised attendance system provides excellent management information including overall figures for year groups and individual pupils. The headteacher uses this information effectively to monitor and support pupils whose attendance is unsatisfactory.
44. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are very good. The school promotes behaviour through a system of mutually understood simple school rules, which are incorporated into the behaviour policy. Most pupils know that good behaviour is expected of them. Pupils from different social backgrounds are taught to respect one another and they respond positively by working and playing together. Younger pupils and those who are in need of additional help, such as physically impaired pupils, are fully supported during the playtime. Mid-day staff operate effective systems for recording and monitoring incidents of misbehaviour or perceived bullying and they receive very good support from the headteacher and other teaching staff during break time.
45. Assessment procedures for children in the nursery are unsatisfactory. Staff do not evaluate children's learning well enough during lessons by recording adequately what children know, are able to do and what they understand. Therefore, they have too little information to help them plan future learning opportunities, which ensure that children make sufficient progress. Assessment procedures for children in Reception are very good. Children are assessed at the beginning of the reception class and the entry testing information is used well to organise children into ability groups. It is constantly reviewed by the Foundation Stage co-ordinator. Teachers assess children at the end of the reception year so that they can measure the progress children make. Children's personal development is also assessed throughout the Foundation Stage. The thoroughness with which this is undertaken in both reception classes ensures staff have a very good knowledge and understanding of each child's strengths and areas for further

development. Staff comment upon attributes, such as how well a child forms relationships with others and how motivated they are to learn.

46. Assessment procedures for pupils in Years 1 to 6 are good and day-to-day assessment is used satisfactorily to plan lessons that cater for the pupils' varying needs. There have been significant improvements in assessment procedures since the time of the last inspection when it was a key issue for action.
47. The school implements good assessment procedures to identify pupils with special educational needs and comply with the Code of Practice for special educational needs. Teachers use the information very effectively and consistently for reviewing the appropriateness of pupils being retained on the school's special educational needs register or deciding what further help they may require. This results in a significant percentage of pupils making such good progress they no longer need additional help with their learning. This good practice is to be commended. At the time of the inspection only one pupil had a statement of special educational needs and the school was meeting the statutory requirements outlined in the document.
48. The school introduces new procedures sensitively and systematically. Teachers place an emphasis upon the development of monitoring and tracking pupils' achievements in literacy, numeracy, science and information and communication technology. Evidence from the inspection confirms teachers' predictions about the positive impact this has on raising standards in the national tests. Teachers use assessment well to identify pupils who may need extra help and also to identify higher attaining pupils who need harder work. This contributes to the good progress pupils make. Assessment records in English and mathematics are very good because they contain precise information about what pupils do well and what they need to do next. Co-ordinators for other subjects have yet to initiate and implement procedures for monitoring pupils' progress and achievements in the subjects for which they are responsible. Portfolios of samples of pupils' work are not in place to provide teachers with information about the quality of pupils' work throughout the school. The school is aware of the need to match pupils' work to National Curriculum levels in these subjects in order to more closely evaluate how standards within the school reflect those found in other schools.
49. At the time of the inspection, the school had not used any of its assessment strategies to track the achievements of pupils who start the school other than in nursery or reception, or used the information to compare with the achievements of the pupils who have always been at Millbrook. It is clear that plans are in place to use information to monitor both of these groups of pupils and also the achievements of boys and girls, plus any other minority groups, such as pupils in care or who speak English as an additional language, represented within the school. This development is planned to feature prominently in the new school improvement plan.
50. Teachers know their pupils very well and report annually to parents on how their child is developing personally as well as academically. The school has good formal records that note how pupils demonstrate qualities such as persistence, application, co-operation with others, the ability to concentrate and be self-confident. This is a good system and one that is to be commended. It contributes significantly to raising pupils' self-esteem and promoting positive attitudes to learning.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

51. Parents are very pleased with the school and what it provides and achieves. They consider that the standards are good and that their children make good progress. Parents agree that the school promotes very good values and that therefore, their children develop positive attitudes to school and make good progress. The inspection findings confirm these views. Twelve parents attending the meeting represents about the average for a primary school in a typical context of this school.
52. The school is committed to working closely with all parents. There is a good range of meetings including parents' evenings, curriculum evenings and introductory meetings for new parents. Parents feel home visits, prior to children starting school, from class teachers in the nursery are very helpful. Information sheets and newsletters keep parents well informed about forthcoming events in school and about the content of the curriculum, so that those who cannot get into school regularly are nonetheless able to support their children at home. A weekly newsletter is proving useful for improving attendance and punctuality. The school values consultation with parents and takes their views into account. Parents receive a brief termly report and a full annual report. The annual reports include targets for improvement. They are of a satisfactory standard. Some parents express concern about the lack of extra-curricular activities. After looking at the school's practices, inspectors agree with parents' views and confirm that, other than some sporting provision, there are limited opportunities for pupils for educational visits.
53. Good links between parents and school contribute to pupils' positive attitudes to school. This contributes significantly towards improving pupils' attendance rates and punctuality. Easy access to the class teachers and the headteacher for parents ensures prompt attention to suggestions and concerns.
54. Many parents support their children at home. These parents monitor the school reading diaries and help their children with special topics. Parents are involved in their children's target setting and they regularly attend review meetings. Parents of pupils with statements of special educational needs are appropriately involved in annual review meetings. They are invited to contribute, both in writing and verbally, to the discussions about the continuing needs of their child and the progress they have made since the previous review. However, the school's procedures for consulting all parents of pupils at the School Action Plus³ stage of the Code of Practice for special educational needs and who have individual education plans is not always implemented rigorously. The tendency is to inform parents rather than involve them in identifying their needs and contributing to setting targets and working to achieve these both at school and at home. Older pupils are also not always involved in contributing to this process.
55. There is a flourishing parents' association. It organises many social events and raises substantial amounts of money for school funds and has contributed to major developments, including substantial equipment for the pupils' play area. Other events and social gatherings, such as the Valentine Disco, Craft Fayre and Summer Fete, provide further opportunities for parents and pupils to become involved in the life of the school.

³ Stages of special educational needs range from Stage 1, when limited additional support is provided for pupils entirely from within the school, to Stage 5, which ensures that a pupil has a statement outlining his or her needs and shows what additional and specific support that pupil will receive. Stages 3, 4 and 5 involve external specialists as well as staff within the school.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

56. The school is very well led by the headteacher, new at the start of this academic year, who provides clear educational direction and influential and supportive leadership. The leadership and management of the school are better than that reported on in the last inspection. By teaching regularly, the headteacher leads from the front to promote good teaching. The deputy headteacher, who, together with the headteacher, provides a very good senior management team for the school, very ably supports her. There are appropriate school aims in which the pursuit of excellence and high standards are central to what the school tries to achieve. There is a very positive ethos in the school, which reflects the school's commitment to a very effective learning environment, very good relationships and equality of opportunity for all.
57. There exists a very good team spirit among all staff and there is a shared commitment to achieve high standards. They have the capacity to improve the school further. The headteacher and deputy headteacher monitor, evaluate and support teaching and learning effectively. The headteacher monitors very closely standards pupils achieve. She makes very good use of the results of the monitoring to set targets for improvement. Subject co-ordinators provide good leadership overall. There is a weakness in the co-ordination of geography.
58. The special educational needs work of the school is very good. It is very well led and managed by the special educational needs co-ordinator. She is a very experienced teacher who has a direct teaching remit for working with many lower attaining pupils. This provides her with very good opportunities to directly monitor and evaluate the progress pupils make as a result of the help they receive within school. The policy and procedures for special educational needs are pending review in the light of recent legislative changes. The school is well informed about the implications these will have and works closely with the local education authority to implement a speedy response. There is a named governor with responsibility for this aspect of the school's work.
59. The governing body meets regularly and fulfils its statutory requirements. The headteacher keeps them informed about the life of the school and the standards and quality of education pupils receive. Governors visit school regularly and have first-hand experience of how the school runs. The chair of governors works closely and effectively with the school and there are good, positive relationships between the staff and governors. Consequently, governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The governors are well organised, but their various roles need greater clarification so they are able to support the school even further. For example, the governor with responsibility for special educational needs has no involvement in monitoring the quality of special educational needs provision or devising any criteria for assessing the value of this element of the school's work or how the school uses the devolved budget for special educational needs. Governors are aware of this and are in the process of organising relevant training. The performance management arrangements are sound and meet requirements.
60. The headteacher is in the process of revising the school development plan and has established clear and appropriate priorities. The current school development plan is satisfactory. However, there is no clear link between the school development plan and the budget setting process. There is no long-term outline financial forecast based on trends in pupil numbers, staff salaries or costs of maintaining buildings or replenishing resources. This is particularly relevant in the context of the school's declining budget. The school spends effectively the funds provided for pupils with special educational needs. The school applies satisfactorily the principle of best value. The day-to-day administration of the school is very good. The financial control at the school is good and all the recommendations of the latest audit report - albeit July 1998 - have been

implemented. The school ensures it allocates its grant for staff training to support targets in the school development plan and in this way relates them directly to pupils' learning. The school makes good use of new technology in its administration and running of the school. It has the potential to be a good provider of initial teacher training.

61. The school has sufficient teachers with appropriate qualifications and experience to teach the curriculum and to provide for all areas of learning for pupils. Staffing is good overall and teachers are supported well by trained nursery assistants in the nursery and reception classes. The school has put substantial resources into training teaching support assistants, who provide very good support for the teachers. All staff work effectively as a close knit team. Adequate training is provided for developing their expertise to raise standards. For example, extensive one-to-one training in information and communication technology was delivered for teachers and the support staff.
62. There have been improvements to the accommodation since the previous inspection. The computer suite provides a valuable resource area for the school. However, the quality and quantity of books in the library is unsatisfactory. The school has identified this short fall. There are plans to improve the outdoor play area further and the 'Friends of Millbrook' have set a target to raise substantial funds for this project.
63. The site manager and cleaners keep the school immaculately clean. The kitchen staff comply with the health and hygiene regulations and are proud to be a part of the school community.
64. Resources for learning are just adequate in most subject areas, except in design and technology, geography, history, physical education and the nursery class where they are unsatisfactory. The library has the potential to provide a good resource for small groups and individual learning, but was rarely seen being used during the inspection. There is a distinct lack of good quality artefacts in religious education.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

65. **The headteacher and staff, in conjunction with the governing body, should:**

- raise attainment in design and technology by:
 - a structured development of skills, knowledge and understanding as identified in the school's recently completed programme of work for the subject;
 - the allocation of an appropriate amount of time to the teaching of the subject;
 - the provision relevant in-service training for the staff;(Paragraphs 2-3, 23, 26, 64 and 124-129)
- continue to take steps to improve the attendance of pupils; (Paragraphs 15 and 43)
- improve assessment procedures in subjects other than English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology as part of the school's strategies for raising standards further. (Paragraphs 45, 48-49, 122, 129, 133, 140, 152, 156 and 161)

66. **The headteacher and governors should improve long term financial planning by:**

- ensuring there is a clear link between school development planning and the budget setting process;
 - providing an outline financial forecast for the next three years or more, based on trends in pupil numbers, staff salaries and costs of maintaining buildings and resources. (Paragraph 60)
-

67. **In addition to the above key issues the less important areas for development are:**

- the clarification of the specific roles of the governors; (Paragraphs 58 and 59)
- the putting in place of a consistent good quality approach to the marking of pupils' work and evaluation of lessons; (Paragraph 23)
- the improvement in the range of library books available, learning resources for children in the Foundation Stage and for the teaching of design technology, geography, history, physical education and religious education for pupils in Years 1 to 6. (Paragraphs 18, 62, 64, 70, 94, 100, 129, 134, 156 and 162)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	65
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	32

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
Number	4	22	17	20	2	0	0
Percentage	6	34	26	31	3	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 one percentage point.

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)	26	248
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	89

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	76

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	11
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	29

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.0
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2001	22	15	37

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	18	17	21
	Girls	15	15	15
	Total	33	32	36
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	89 (82)	86 (86)	97 (91)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	17	21	18
	Girls	15	15	15
	Total	32	36	33
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	86 (86)	97 (91)	89 (91)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2001	22	28	50

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	16	14	19
	Girls	22	20	22
	Total	38	34	41
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	76 (64)	68 (69)	82 (93)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	17	16	19
	Girls	23	20	21
	Total	40	36	40
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	80 (60)	72 (79)	80 (85)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	1
Black – other	0
Indian	1
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	1
White	244
Any other minority ethnic group	1

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR– Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	11.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.7
Average class size	27.4

Education support staff: YR– Y6

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	74

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	25
Number of pupils per FTE adult	12

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	1

FTE means full-time equivalent.

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.

Financial information

Financial year	2000-01
	£
Total income	576,537
Total expenditure	559,716
Expenditure per pupil	1,750
Balance brought forward from previous year	14,763
Balance carried forward to next year	31,584

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate 17.3%

Number of questionnaires sent out	295
Number of questionnaires returned	51

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	59	41	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	57	39	2	2	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	50	48	0	2	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	43	43	10	2	2
The teaching is good.	63	33	0	2	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	47	43	8	2	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	71	27	0	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	82	14	4	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	43	45	10	2	0
The school is well led and managed.	57	35	0	2	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	62	34	4	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	22	30	28	8	12

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

68. At the time of the inspection, children attended the nursery on a part-time basis. There are places for 26 children, both morning and afternoon. In addition, 52 children, who are of reception age are taught in two additional classes. In the report they will be referred to as the nursery class and the reception classes, in order to distinguish what they are taught and learn throughout this stage of their education. The children's attainment when they join the nursery class is below that expected of children this age. Many children have limited speaking and listening skills and some come to school with little social experience or breadth of knowledge.
69. The teaching and learning in the nursery class is satisfactory in all six areas of learning and they make satisfactory progress. Staff work together successfully and give the children in their care effective support. Adults manage the class appropriately and have realistic expectations of behaviour and performance.
70. The staff assess the children's progress and development unsatisfactorily. However, if there are any concerns, teachers inform parents so that they can offer their children extra support at home. The nursery classroom is suitably organised, but has an unsatisfactory range of resources. The outside play area is inadequate in size and does not provide a bright or stimulating environment. It is not used as a carefully planned resource that contributes to all six areas of learning.
71. In the reception classes, the children make very good progress as a result of very good quality teaching and learning. There has been an improvement in the quality of teaching since the last inspection. Staff have very good relationships with the children. Work is well planned to cover the six areas of learning for the Foundation Stage. The teachers assess the children's progress regularly and keep detailed records of what they can and cannot do. They use entry-testing information when planning the next stage of learning and draw comparisons between the school's results and those nationally. Each child has a detailed record of achievement, which starts in the nursery and continues through Foundation Stage. It provides the Year 1 teacher with valuable information.
72. Assessment data and teachers' records show that in most years children achieve nationally expected standards in all areas of learning, except in physical development. In this area they attain below nationally expected standards. However, the children currently in the reception class achieve higher standards and by the time they enter Year 1 will attain nationally expected standards in all areas of learning. All children by the time they enter Year 1 have made good progress. Children who have been identified with special educational needs make good progress as a result of the extra help and support they receive in class. This represents an improvement in standards since the last inspection.

Personal, social and emotional development

73. Children in the nursery begin to demonstrate confidence and an awareness of school routines. They establish satisfactory relationships with their teacher and other adults who help them. Children in the reception classes have very good relationships with all of the adults who teach them. They are provided with very good role models by staff, who work together very well and create a calm and happy atmosphere. The children quickly learn to take turns and work and play well together in pairs and groups.

74. When playing outside, most children in the nursery happily share toys and take turns using larger pieces of equipment. The children respond very well to the praise and encouragement they are given. Most put on hats, coats and gloves independently when it is time to go home. Snack time provides the children with an important social activity to which they adapt very well.
75. In the reception classes, the teachers very successfully in emphasising the importance of friendship use early morning and registration activities. In discussion sessions, the children are keen to answer questions and are good at listening to one another. In art activities they demonstrate initiative and independence when finding their aprons and selecting resources. Children in the Foundation Stage are thoughtful, kind, aware of the needs of others and very happily follow the established classroom routines.

Communication, language and literacy

76. Many of the children join the nursery class with limited speaking skills. However, for most children, this quickly develops through activities, such as the role-play in the 'Cave', and discussions about what they have made from construction materials, sand, water and paint. Staff encourage children to talk and share experiences when they first come to school in the morning. The children are very keen to tell their news to the adults and other children. Story time sessions are successful because they introduce children to the excitement of books. During the inspection, sharing a story, 'We're all going on a bear hunt' created excitement and interest with several of the children able to suggest an ending. They understand that books give them information or provide them with stories. A small minority of children in the nursery identify single letter sounds and during one lesson they were keen to find words beginning with 's', which was the letter of the week. During a discussion activity, a group of children talked enthusiastically about why they would need Wellingtons, torches and helmets to go caving. They were eager to get safely kitted out before they embarked on their role-play activity. When they play outside, individuals enjoy the opportunity to take responsibility as the traffic warden or police officer organising car parking and no waiting areas through strategically placing red fluorescent cones. They then pursue any lawbreakers with determination.
77. In the reception classes, most children know letter sounds and nearly all write their names. Staff encourage them to do so on every piece of work. Their letter formation is usually accurate and they begin to understand the importance of keeping letter size the same. They read with increasing confidence and the more able read with some expression. One child particularly enjoyed reading 'The Go Kart.' Children write simple words and begin to write their own stories and news. Most know that a capital letter starts a sentence, but are less confident to explain the importance of a full stop. Children really enjoy listening to poems, songs and rhymes. They join in with songs such as 'If You're Happy and You Know It', 'Bob the Builder' and 'Let's Make a Cake', performing actions with confidence and enthusiasm.

Mathematical development

78. Staff give the nursery children opportunities to count and become used to the idea of numbers. When they play outside children know which wheeled vehicles are bigger and smaller and count the number of steps on the slide. In the classroom, children count various objects and put them in patterns correctly. They know the shape and names of some numbers through handling two- and three-dimensional numbers and by placing them in correct sequences. Water play activities include the use of measuring jugs and sand play includes moulding the sand into different shapes. During registration, children sometimes take turns to count how many people are in school that day and how many are absent.

79. In the reception classes, the children begin to gain a more formal understanding of number. Most count confidently to 10 and some count beyond. A few children find two numbers that add up to 10, with a small number achieving more than this, for example, adding three numbers to make numbers up to 20. Most children sort objects by different criteria such as big, small, tall or short and put themselves into different groups on the basis of gender or eye colour. The children recognise and name simple two-dimensional shapes, such as a circle and a square. They show a satisfactory understanding of terms like more than, less than and longer and shorter. They begin to use simple block charts and graphs to collate information, such as what are their favourite foods.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

80. Staff give the children in the nursery various opportunities to learn about the world in which they live. The different colours, textures and smells of food fascinate the children, especially those of which they are unfamiliar. Whilst not all respond positively to the suggestion that they should eat fruit for a snack, some understand that it is better for their health than eating a sweet or biscuit. Within the topic they study there is opportunity for the children to discuss the world around them and places they have visited. A minority of children recall their experiences of going on holiday. However, they have no concept of distance or time and when asked how far they had to travel to a destination the response was always similar, 'oh not far, I just went to sleep and when I woke up I was there.' Staff plan and organise occasional activities that enrich the children's experiences, such as a visit to Chester Zoo to see real animals such as elephants, lions and monkeys. This helps the children learn how to care for other creatures.
81. Children make use of computers to play simple games, which familiarise them with the keyboard and mouse. Some use is also made of photography as a means of recording children's work and experiences.
82. In the reception classes, the children explore the features of waterproof materials. Through firsthand experiences they predict which materials would be waterproof or absorbent. After testing several fabric samples, including wool and plastic, children could give reasons why they would choose plastic rather than wool to make a waterproof coat. Other learning activities provide children with the opportunity to observe similarities and differences in plants and flowers and know, for example, they all grow from seeds. They name correctly their own body parts and know how they have grown since being a baby. They develop a knowledge and understanding about the weather through keeping a daily record and complete it by adding various symbols to represent the sun, wind, rain and clouds.
83. Most children are confident when they use computers. They use a mouse to move objects around the screen and can name parts of the computer. They have used an art package to create their own designs and they place descriptive text within the picture. They also confidently operate other equipment found in the classroom, such as tape recorders and listening centres. Throughout the Foundation Stage, the children demonstrate an increasing and refreshing curiosity about the world around them.

Physical development

84. Staff give children in the Foundation Stage satisfactory opportunities to develop skills of co-ordination. In the nursery the children build models out of commercially produced plastic building kits and find ways to fix them together effectively. They demonstrate good manipulative skills when using modelling clay and wet sand. They use a very limited variety of toys outside to learn how to pedal cars and climb on play equipment. They are not aware of the effect of exercise on their bodies, but do realise that exercise is good for

them. They develop confidence when they use apparatus such as slides and steps. They learn to throw and catch a variety of balls and beanbags.

85. In the reception classes, the children effectively build upon what they have learned in the nursery class. They know how to hold and control pencils and use scissors successfully. They find more difficulty in using spatulas for spreading glue. The children kick balls to one another with increasing accuracy. In indoor physical education lessons they practice and extend effectively the physical skills they have learned in the nursery. The children develop the use of small apparatus for balancing activities and to extend the range of their movements. The teachers use vocabulary very effectively in order to promote children's natural curiosity to travel imaginatively around the hall using different body parts or by walking, running, skipping and hopping as they pretend to be 'Going on a bear hunt'. In the reception classes, children explore outside play equipment by balancing on 'wiggly ropes', weaving in and out of obstacles without knocking them down and crawling through tunnels. They move with confidence, imagination and in safety whilst demonstrating appropriate levels of control and co-ordination.

Creative development

86. Staff give children in the nursery class an acceptable range of creative experiences. Painting is available as one of their daily activities of choice. The children are uninhibited when painting bright colours boldly. They are keen to explain what they have painted and most name the colours they use. They sustain interest when using their fingers and hands to draw shapes and make patterns. Opportunities to print and make collages further promote their creativity. Imaginative role-play takes place not only in the classroom, but also when playing outside using climbing apparatus and wheeled toys. The 'policeman' is keen to stop the speeding cars whilst the children cross the road.
87. Opportunities for children in the nursery to engage in musical activities are less well planned. Too few instruments are readily available for children to spontaneously pick up and play. As a result they have little knowledge of the names of instruments or how they are used to create sounds. The rain stick on display in the music corner of the classroom is always in demand and children demonstrate great enthusiasm for creating their own musical patterns. Opportunities to sing traditional songs and nursery rhymes are lacking. In discussions with the children they name and sing the introductions to Hickory Dickory Dock, Baa Baa Black Sheep and Twinkle Twinkle Little Star - three of their favourite rhymes.
88. In the reception classes, musical opportunities are more plentiful. Teachers plan these effectively to promote children's musical talents by linking activities to other areas of learning. During assembly, for example, children thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to listen to a piece of 'happy' music and to name their own favourite - 'Bob the Builder' seemed especially popular in this respect.
89. Visitors to the school also enhance children's learning. For example, the Clydebuilt Theatre Company presented Jack and the Beanstalk using puppets and mime. This stimulated the children's imagination and creative thinking. Teachers further used the activity to develop children's literacy skills through discussion.
90. Throughout the day, children in the reception classes engage in planned opportunities to play with small world toys adapting them to a variety of roles. They develop their competence by using tools for creative activities. For example, they use scissors, paintbrushes and a variety of mark-making instruments. As result, they express and communicate their intended ideas confidently.

ENGLISH

91. Although there have been fluctuations over the years since the previous inspection, the trend has been of standards rising in line with the national averages. The finding of the inspection is that the school's standards have been maintained and in some features improved. Standards by the end of Year 2 are in line with the national average in reading and writing. Pupils make good progress in speaking and listening, and in reading in Years 1 and 2. They make satisfactory progress in writing. In Years 3 to 6, progress is good in speaking and listening and in reading. In Year 6, pupils are making particularly good progress in their writing. This is because teachers encourage the pupils to write across a broad range of styles and develop well their ability to write at length. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support from teachers and teaching assistants and they make good progress. For example, in one lesson, pupils worked specifically on tasks drawn from their individual education plans.
92. Pupils listen attentively to their teachers throughout the school. This is due to the good ethos for learning that has been established and the very good relationships between teachers and pupils. The great majority are eager to answer questions and join in discussion. A good example of this was in a lively assembly for the whole school led by the curate of the local church, where most pupils enthusiastically responded to questions about 'hands'. Teachers' good questioning often draws extended answers from pupils when they express their ideas in complete sentences. Pupils listen carefully to each other in discussion. In a lesson about Buddhism, pupils spoke thoughtfully about how Buddhist principles are relevant to present day life. Younger pupils in an art lesson responded animatedly to the teacher's questioning on how to draw fruit or their teddy.
93. In Years 1 and 2, pupils build well on the good foundation in reading laid down in the reception classes. Systematic teaching ensures that pupils develop recognition of an expanding range of words. Good emphasis on punctuation marks means that pupils understand their significance in reading. They also learn how to tackle unfamiliar words so that in Year 2 they read books appropriate to their level of attainment with accuracy and some confidence. The pupils show good understanding of their reading as they tell what has happened in the story and how it may end. They readily name and describe book features, such as author, illustrator, title and cover. Most pupils know the purpose of a dictionary and explain how to find an unknown word. Their reading diaries show that they regularly read at home. All say they enjoy reading; many name a favourite book or story and give good reasons.
94. By the end of Year 6, pupils read with accuracy and expression from a variety of texts including novels, poetry and newspaper reports. Higher attaining pupils give good accounts of excerpts they read, for example about energy and particles. Pupils talk with enthusiasm about their favourite books and authors. The current unsatisfactory library provision in the school presents a severe limitation on pupils' access to information books and is restricting their skills in researching information for themselves. Pupils of lower attainment read with satisfactory confidence and accuracy. They tackle unfamiliar words competently and show understanding of what they have read. Sound and frequent teaching of reading, individually and in groups, means that good progress is being made throughout the junior classes. The range of attainment between pupils of different levels is not wide.
95. Pupils' writing in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory. They mostly write in properly constructed sentences with capital letters and full stops. Some correctly extend their sentences using words like 'because' and 'when'. Spelling of common words is good and pupils make recognisable attempts at less familiar words. Many pupils are able to express their ideas in extended writing of several sentences. Their use of language is often good, as when a pupil wrote about a tangerine that was 'as orange as the sun'. Handwriting is developing

satisfactorily into a legible joined-up style though there is some inconsistency. Pupils' written work is usually carefully presented.

96. In the junior classes, pupils build well on this sound learning. In Year 5, good discussion takes place about different 'genres' in writing. Pupils read the story of 'Pandora's Box' and distinguish carefully between the characteristics of fable, myth and legend. They show satisfactory knowledge of parts of speech, such as adjectives and adverbs, and produce good lists of synonyms to replace the word 'beautiful'. In Year 6, pupils cleverly take a passage of descriptive writing about a cottage in the countryside and by changing the style of language, make it the basis for a ghost story. The strength of pupils' writing, particularly in Year 6, is its range and variety. Good teaching and direction helps pupils to write with individuality in imaginative stories, newspaper reports, poems and descriptions. Pupils are beginning to enjoy the use of language to express their ideas and feelings. There is, however, some weakness in spelling despite the use of 'spelling dictionaries' and spelling tests.
97. Displays around the school reflect the range of pupils' writing as well as showing good links with other subjects. For example, photographs of the locality are accompanied by good descriptive writing and pupils' family pictures have reminiscences of school life in former times. Most pupils develop a legible style of handwriting and take pride in the neat presentation of their work.
98. Teaching is good overall in both Years 1 and 2 and in Years 3 to 6. The structure and principles of the literacy hour are well embedded and the consistency of teachers' approach to its teaching has been fundamental in raising standards. A commercial scheme is also in use. Whilst this provides support for the teaching of grammar and vocabulary, over-reliance on worksheets is detrimental to pupils' own writing. Teachers plan their work thoroughly and their planning shows clearly how pupils' learning should progress over each unit of work. However, planning does not include evaluation of the ongoing teaching and learning.
99. Strengths of teaching lie in teachers' good subject knowledge, their confidence and enthusiasm for the subject. They teach literacy skills consistently and with constant reinforcement. This helps to ensure that pupils can express themselves successfully both orally and in writing. When teaching is occasionally less satisfactory, teachers' questioning does not allow pupils to develop their answers sufficiently. Pupils' tasks are insufficiently matched to their ability and higher attaining pupils are not stretched. Teachers have very good relationships with the pupils and high expectations of their work and behaviour. This produces a very receptive atmosphere for learning. As a result, pupils are eager to learn, try their best and concentrate well throughout lessons. There are good assessment procedures. Teachers record individual pupils' attainment at regular intervals, including test results. Portfolios of work assessed according to National Certificate standards assist in this. However, insufficient use is made of this information in teachers' short-term planning. Teachers' marking is mostly very good. They write detailed comments on pupils' written work showing interest and appreciation in its content and also providing good advice of how pupils can improve.
100. There are examples of pupils' work using information and communication technology in evidence, for example, in pupils' writing using different fonts, sizes and colours. There are many examples of good use of computers by pupils to word process work. Classroom resources are satisfactory. The library is still inadequate in the number and range of its books. Its furnishing and layout do not create a space where pupils can read for pleasure or independently research information. Although the refurbishment of the library is part of the school's current action plan, it is now an urgent requirement. The subject co-ordinator provides good leadership.

MATHEMATICS

101. Pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 attain above average standards in numeracy and all areas of mathematics - number, algebra, space, shape and measures, and data handling. The 2001 national test paints a similar picture for pupils, who, by the end of Year 2, attained above average standards. Pupils by the end of Year 6 attained close to the national average. In comparison with the results of similar schools, pupils' results were well above average across the school. The trend in results since the last inspection where pupils across the school achieved average standards has been upwards. Teaching is good and this, supported by the good assessment of pupils' individual performances, is having a positive effect on standards. Putting pupils into ability sets, from the age of eight, supports well the very good achievements of less-able, average and more-able pupils.
102. The marked differences between the performance of the younger boys and girls, in the 2001 national tests, have been successfully addressed. The school has made a thorough analysis of the reasons for this and there are now no marked differences in the performances of boys and girls across the school. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and included in lessons where they make good progress.
103. By the age of 7, pupils have a sound knowledge of place value up to 100, with some pupils developing confidently the ability to solve problems and use numbers beyond this. For example, pupils in a Year 2 class quickly calculate mentally ways of making 40, including finding fractions of the number. When calculating money sums, they show a good understanding of breaking larger amounts down into fives and then adding on, or subtracting, the remaining pence. Pupils know the properties of two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes and use data to construct simple graphs and to list information in tables. By the age of 11, pupils work out calculations in their heads quickly. They use their well-developed mental skills to quickly and accurately work out problems involving the four rules of number, including long multiplication and division with remainders. Pupils calculate fractions and decimals correctly and use and interpret a range of diagrams and charts. Across the school, pupils show a good ability to check their results and make reliable estimates. The setting of work by teachers that involves real-life problems is a feature in many lessons.
104. While the overall quality of teaching and learning is good throughout the school, there are frequent examples of very good or, more rarely, excellent teaching. Pupils in a Years 5 and 6 higher ability group illustrated their very accurate mental calculations when working out such fractions as eight hundredths of six thousand, two fifths of £1, four fifths of two litres and five sixths of twelve kilometres. Excellent teaching supported them. The analysis of pupils' work shows a good coverage of the subject, with pupils given relevant tasks to stretch their abilities, supported by a good use of homework.
105. The teachers are familiar and secure with the National Numeracy Strategy, which they apply very effectively. There is very good management of pupils behaviour. Lessons proceed at a good pace with a good level of challenge across the lesson. Pupils knowledge of their own learning is well developed with careful explanations, matched to their individual needs. Teachers share with the pupils what they are expected to learn in lessons and they encourage them, as they get older, to set their own targets. They use good assessment procedures to record the pupils' progress, with tests being frequently used to assess what they can do, know and understand. Teachers use a good range of mathematical vocabulary and this provides pupils with the words to make clear explanations of the process involved in making calculations. Pupils show a very good attitude to the subject, working quickly with good levels of understanding and accuracy and very good levels of enthusiasm and motivation. Teachers provide relevant resources that match the pupils' needs in particular lessons. However, a number of activities for younger pupils up to the age of seven are based, too often, on worksheets taken from the

commercial scheme. These frequently repeat previously learnt skills and insufficiently extend their achievements.

106. The school uses information and communication technology effectively, in particular for the presentation of data and its analysis. There is a more limited range of opportunities for the use of mathematics in other subjects. In science it is used well for the recording of temperature and measurements. It is less frequently used in history for the recording of chronological information and it is under-used in physical education for the recording and evaluation of physical performances.
107. The school has made a good improvement since the last inspection. Teachers reviewed the mathematics curriculum and purchased new relevant resources to support pupils' learning. Teaching has improved and there is now a better provision for all pupils, arising from the good use of assessments so work matches accurately to individual needs of pupils. Assessment informs teachers well of the younger pupils' abilities, but due to the over reliance on the adopted scheme, they do not always develop tasks sufficiently to stretch the pupils' attainments further. Across the school, teachers do not evaluate each lesson and make modifications to the next lessons if required. Teachers give good attention to developing pupils' skills in using and applying mathematics.
108. The very experienced and well-qualified co-ordinator has a clear view of further developmental needs and provides good leadership. Through effective monitoring of pupils' work and teachers' planning she has a clear picture of standards within the subject. The effective recent monitoring of teaching by the headteacher has been well applied to raise standards, which continue to rise.

SCIENCE

109. Inspection evidence indicates that standards of attainment in science are in line with those normally found in Year 2 and above those found in Year 6 nationally. This is an improvement in comparison with the school's results in the most recent national tests. The school attains highly in comparison with similar schools. Teachers give pupils many opportunities to carry out scientific investigations and enquiries. They pay good attention to developing pupils' scientific language skills. The good quality of teaching has a positive impact on the standards achieved and is the chief reason for the higher standards now compared with the 2001 national test results. Pupils achieve very well by the time they leave the school. There is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls. Work set at correct levels and additional support ensures that pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Standards by the end of Year 6 are higher than they were at the time of the last inspection. There are more pupils attaining a level higher than expected of pupils in Year 6 - currently about 30 per cent achieve this.
110. By the end of Year 2, pupils have good investigative skills because of the way teachers plan lessons. Teachers encourage pupils to think for themselves and observe. In Year 1 work on sound, pupils had to observe and report what happened when they placed their mouth next to an inflated balloon and spoke. Pupils showed a good awareness of appropriate vocabulary by using the word 'vibrates'. They explained clearly what this meant. Practical problems help pupils to develop their scientific knowledge and thinking. In Year 2 work, pupils grow plants and record what happens. The teacher developed pupils' literacy skills by ensuring the written accounts were completed accurately. For example, one pupil wrote, 'The beans have not grown but the cutting and the bulb have grown'. A very good feature of a Years 1/2 lesson was the support pupils with special educational needs received from the teacher. She planned her intervention in the pupils' learning so that she was available when they were required to record their findings. This ensured all pupils were fully included in all parts of the lesson. By the end of the lesson all pupils had an accurate record of what they thought made the sounds when they shook

the various boxes. Year 2 pupils have a good understanding of the importance of having a healthy body through good eating habits, exercise and sleep. They also know that some drugs help them recover from illness, but some drugs are harmful. There is a good link between science and health education. Pupils develop good scientific vocabulary because teachers reinforce key words both when speaking and by displaying them in the classrooms.

111. As pupils move through the school, teachers use pupils' previous knowledge to develop learning. In investigations, teachers expect pupils to use their prior knowledge in making predictions. When they make a prediction, teachers ask them to explain why they have made it. This was very well illustrated when Year 6 pupils investigated whether all solids dissolve in water to give a solution. Pupils develop their recording skills well by using pen and paper, but less well using computers. By the end of Year 6, pupils explain clearly what they are going to do, what they did and what the result is. If the result is different from that predicted, they explain the difference. For example, they clearly showed this in their investigative work on magnetism. They have a very good knowledge of how to conduct a fair test. In Year 4, work on life processes and living things, pupils have a good understanding and knowledge of the function of the skeleton and the purpose of bones and joints. Year 5 pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of the properties of liquids, solids and gases. When writing about physical changes, pupils use the correct scientific terms, including evaporation and condensation. Progress is very good. Higher attaining Year 6 pupils, at the start of the year, used simple tables to record their work. After half a term they produced well-written accounts. The presentation of work is good, reflecting pupils' very good attitudes to learning.
112. The teaching and learning are good. It is sometimes excellent and never less than satisfactory. Teachers plan work well, usually starting with an investigation, which develops pupils' knowledge and understanding of the topic. Teachers' planning also ensures pupils learn basic scientific skills well. They do this by planning work that builds and consolidates successfully pupils' prior learning. Teachers use their subject knowledge well to ask questions about their investigations. This means pupils think about what they are doing and this in turn extends their understanding. In a Year 4 lesson, pupils consolidated their knowledge and understanding of bones and joints through skilled questioning by the teacher. Teachers resource their lessons very effectively. In a Year 5 lesson on dissection of fruits, the lesson was very imaginatively resourced with a large range of exotic and common fruits. This highly motivated the pupils to want to investigate how seeds vary from fruit to fruit. The pupils' learning was enjoyable as well as effective. The very good class control and relationships with pupils allow teachers to concentrate on imparting knowledge and giving additional support when necessary. This also means pupils waste little time and complete a lot of work in lessons. This was very evident in Year 2 lesson when pupils investigated sound. Pupils listened and watched intently and by the end of the lesson they recognised and named a range of sounds. They also developed their ability to compare loudness or pitch of sound.
113. Most teachers develop effectively pupils' literacy skills in science. They place appropriate emphasis on the development of scientific vocabulary. Pupils write reports and teachers ensure pupils pay proper attention to grammar and punctuation. A particularly good example of this was the Year 6 accounts of their experiments about making and collecting gases. One pupil wrote, 'Once the baking powder was added the vinegar began to froth up and create a gas'. Teachers develop pupils listening and speaking skills well. Pupils discuss their ideas, confident that their classmates will listen to what they say. In a Year 5 lesson, pupils reacted enthusiastically to their dissection of fruits. They were highly motivated and thus keen to relate what they had found out. The teacher extended their learning by insisting on the use of 'expressive adjectives' to describe their findings.

114. Teachers develop satisfactorily pupils' numeracy skills. Teachers give pupils opportunities to estimate and measure. For example, in Year 3's 'soil experiment', pupils weighed accurately 80 grams of soil while investigating whether water drains more quickly through one type of soil than another. Year 6 measured accurately to find out the different properties of three main rock types. They had to measure the dry and wet mass accurately to ensure a fair test. Pupils use a variety of graphs and charts to record their work. Teachers use computers satisfactorily to support pupils' learning through the use of a narrow range of programs. The school is in the process of increasing the range of subject-specific programs for science.
115. There is good management of the subject by the science co-ordinator. She has worked very effectively to ensure that there are good standards in the subject. Assessment procedures are good and help guarantee step-by-step development of skills as pupils move through the school.

ART AND DESIGN

116. By the age of 7, pupils' work in art, including those with special educational needs, is generally of a standard expected for their age. Pupils make steady progress in their art lessons, which results in progress over time being satisfactory. By the time pupils are 11 they continue to produce satisfactory standards of work and make satisfactory progress. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to that of their classmates.
117. Through cross-curricular links with other subjects, teachers provide pupils with opportunities to observe objects and record their observations to a sound standard when they use pencil crayons, felt pens, chalk and pastels. The range of work systematically promotes the development of most skills associated with the subject. Pupils' ability to appraise and evaluate their work is satisfactory. Four art lessons were observed during the period of the inspection. Judgements, therefore, also take into account evidence gained from an evaluation of teachers' planning, school documents, display, scrutiny of pupils' work and discussion with staff and pupils.
118. Pupils aged 6 and 7 explore satisfactorily the media of paint and pastels by mixing colours, examining texture and application using a variety of tools including brushes of various sizes and shapes, their hands and simple shapes for printing. They use paint and collage well to illustrate various themes and as part of many other subjects. To illustrate their work in English they made collages and painted pictures of a bear's adventures at the seaside and to reinforce their work in religious education they constructed stained glass windows from cellophane and black paper following a visit to St. Chad's Church. This work is of a good standard. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 do not have sketch books, so this precludes opportunities to make links between what pupils produce in art lessons based upon preparatory work, such as testing the effects of different types of pencil, crayon or shade matching. Throughout Years 1 and 2, pupils show respect for and pride in their work, especially when it is displayed in the corridor and in their classrooms.
119. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 continue to steadily develop their skills, knowledge and understanding of the subject. For example, Year 6 pupils study the work of the Victorian gentry. In the lesson observed, pupils were amazed at the skill required to master the art of quilling and how such skills were part of every Victorian lady's repertoire. The introduction to the lesson included good opportunities for pupils to appraise the work of a present day artist who designs and makes quilled greetings cards. As a result all pupils were highly motivated and keen to have a go themselves. By the end of the lesson they achieved work of a high standard. Younger pupils effectively learn to appreciate the work of more contemporary artists. During a visit to the local gallery they showed great interest in the work of Petra McCarthy, who uses plastic as a vessel to float puddles of vibrant paint in order to make an impact of colour on the spectator. These positive attitudes are

typical in all art lessons and pupils' behaviour is good. Pupils are familiar with explaining and discussing different techniques.

120. In discussion, Year 6 pupils recalled a range of work they had enjoyed as they progressed through the school. Of particular note were the opportunities they had been given to use fabric paints and batik and to explore the medium of marble painting. Other pupils recalled a visit, some time ago, to another school. It was linked to their study of Judaism in religious education. The thing that made one of the biggest impacts was their recollection of the beautiful ornate fabrics and intricate designs of some of the artefacts. All pupils gain good experience from working in both two and three - dimensional materials including clay and textiles, but pupils have had no experience of more unusual crafts, such as silk screen printing or jewellery making. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of the work of well-known artists is vague. With some encouragement they recalled L.S. Lowry and his work based on scenes around Manchester. They named the Mona Lisa and knew it was painted by Leonardo da Vinci, but could not recall any work by Van Gogh.
121. The standard of teaching is satisfactory. However, over time, some teachers do not always place enough emphasis upon teaching skills, knowledge and understanding of artistic techniques, but more upon using art as an activity related to other subjects. This is more evident in classes where teachers are less confident in their own artistic expertise. However, teachers attach great importance to celebrating pupils' achievements by displaying their day-to-day efforts sensitively and creatively. Examples of high quality work produced by the pupils are well annotated and clearly attributable to individuals within classes.
122. Systems are not yet in place for monitoring classroom practice. No portfolios of pupils' work to inform teachers about standards to assist them in planning for the development of skills, knowledge and understanding have been developed. Systems and the use of assessment are not yet informing curriculum planning to ensure continuity and progression and breadth and balance of experience. Not all teachers make good use of the national guidance for the subject and prefer to use other material as the basis for their lesson planning. The co-ordinator is aware that this is affecting standards in some classes and is eager to ensure colleagues plan systematically using the same source of guidance. Opportunities for art to contribute to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils are good. Year 1 and 2 pupils, for example, know Renoir and Braque are French artists and would say 'bonjour' and not 'hello' in greeting. Teachers make satisfactory use of computers to support pupils' learning. More use could, however, be made of visiting artists, especially from non-western cultures, to add variety to pupils learning experiences. The co-ordinator is aware of the value and importance of using sketchbooks and this practice is established in Years 3 to 6, but not in Years 1 and 2.
123. Since the time of the last inspection the school has maintained satisfactory standards of teaching and learning. It is now well placed to address areas for further development.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

124. Standards of pupils' work at the ages of 7 and 11 are unsatisfactory. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make too little progress, partly because learning opportunities are limited due to an unsatisfactory level of resources within the school for pupils to use in their lessons. No design technology lessons were taught during the inspection; therefore, judgements take into account a range of other evidence available in the school. Since the last inspection, standards of pupils' work have not improved.
125. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve average standards in the work they produce in their lessons, but opportunities to experience a wide range of learning activities are curtailed

by an inadequacy of materials. Added to this, there are too few books or other sources of ideas for teachers to use to help them plan their lessons. Teachers are not confident about their own knowledge and understanding of the subject or how to promote pupils' learning effectively. In spite of using the national guidance document to help plan what they are going to teach, their ideas about how to make lessons meaningful are unsatisfactory. Because of this insecurity of subject knowledge, lessons often do not take place or what pupils are to learn is sometimes included as part of art and design lessons. On these infrequent occasions, teaching promotes and encourages pupils to create their own designs and to some extent evaluate the success of their ideas. In discussion, pupils in Year 3 could not recall having used any tools to construct, assemble or make products when they were in Years 1 and 2.

126. Teaching and learning in Years 3 to 6 are unsatisfactory, principally because the range of learning experiences pupils receive is extremely limited. Most teachers have a poor level of personal knowledge and understanding of the subject; therefore, they are unable to teach pupils the basic skills, techniques, processes and knowledge they require. Teachers are not familiar with the quality and standard of work their pupils should achieve. Because these expectations are too low, pupils are not made to work hard enough to make sufficient progress.
127. The co-ordinator is new to the post and has no expertise in this area of the curriculum. Although the policy for the subject needs updating, a good long-term plan has been devised. For each year group there is a clear termly focus. Programmes of study are clearly identified, as are links with other subjects, especially information and communication technology. Good advice is included to help teachers assess pupils' work and the range of resources needed for the lesson is explicit.
128. If teachers use this good quality planning, pupils would receive their entitlement to a good range of quality learning opportunities. In discussion with Year 6 pupils, they say they enjoy the practical aspects of the subject. They like to work together safely and are sensible. They discuss their work objectively, offer and receive help willingly, whilst being sensitive in how they discuss the work of others in the class. However, their limited experiences mean that in discussion about their work they are not sufficiently confident to suggest how to use resources such as electrical components, information and communication technology control or mouldable materials. More recently they have combined design and technology with work in science when they used motors to power fairground rides they had designed. However, some of their classmates became disillusioned when the finished product did not work and they could not discover why.
129. Since the last inspection the lack of resources, an up to date policy and the implementation of planning to fully reflect the National Curriculum, together with a lack of assessment procedures are factors that depress standards. Whilst design technology now appears as part of the planned curriculum on class timetables, there are no monitoring procedures in place to ensure lessons take place and pupils produce satisfactory standards of work. Teachers who lack confidence in teaching the subject are further disadvantaged as they have no opportunity to share the more effective practice of competent colleagues. In spite of all these difficulties, teachers are committed to providing the best education they can for their pupils and are keen to avail themselves of personal training to help develop their own skills and confidence.

GEOGRAPHY

130. The last time the school was inspected standards by the end of Years 2 and 6 were average and these have been maintained.
131. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of local places. Satisfactory teaching, which emphasises fieldwork, but does not sufficiently use their written and numeracy skills, supports their work. Samples of completed work provide good examples of pupils conducting investigations in their local area. They make drawings of what they see, supported with a range of photographs of local places. In Year 1, they start by mapping a route to school from where they live. In Year 2, they progress to complete maps, arising from their observations of the local area and develop an awareness of localities beyond their own and how people influence the environment. Excellent teaching in a Year 2 lesson enabled pupils to discuss and be aware of the advantages and disadvantages of living on an island. The teacher, using a map of the British Isles, contrasted how people would live on the mainland with people on an island off the coast of Scotland. Here the pupils, both from their verbal and written comments, showed a good awareness of localities beyond their own, expressing clearly the main environmental features and how these would affect people. They showed excellent attitudes, working at a very good pace, with high levels of motivation and enthusiasm.
132. Teaching is more variable by the age of 11, but is again satisfactory. Samples of work from Years 5 and 6 produced evidence of good teaching where the pupils made a detailed study of the National Parks in England. They successfully identified the difference in the lifestyles of people in Kirkby and the Lake District, writing on tourism in the lakes and urban and rural attractions. Pupils use data well in their studies of rivers and rainfall. In a lesson seen in Year 5, the pupils successfully advanced their studies of rain and understand such geographical words as absorption, evaporation and saturation and what happens to water on different surfaces. Overall the teaching in the lesson was satisfactory, but the task the teacher gave her pupils was too easy and they quickly completed it, some losing interest. This was quickly restored by the teacher providing more relevant detail and with a good use of question and answer.
133. Samples of work produced some evidence of pupils not always progressing in their studies as they went from Year 2 to Years 3 and 4. In these years there was an over-reliance on studies around the environment of the school. This lack of progress is due to some extent to the same teacher taking Years 3 and 4. It is mainly due to the unsatisfactory procedures and use of assessment to inform curriculum planning. There is no means of recording the pupils' progress matched to the geography programme of study and their level of attainment. Teachers are not yet evaluating the success of their weekly lesson plans and using their findings to influence further short-term planning.
134. The headteacher monitors teaching, but the subject is managed on an ad hoc basis. There is no distinct budget for the subject and there has been no audit of resources, which are unsatisfactory.

HISTORY

135. By the end of Years 2 and 6, the pupils reach average levels. Average standards have been maintained since the last inspection.
136. By the age of 7, pupils satisfactorily develop their understanding and knowledge of the lives of people in the past; for example, they make comparisons with homes from the past and the present day. Pupils in a Years 1/2 class made good progress in learning, supported by good teaching, about the inventor of the telephone, Alexander Graham Bell. When presented with images of six telephones from his first telephone, they successfully

put them in order according to their period in time, from his first box telephone in 1826 to the present day. They showed very good attitudes and enthusiasm for their work, clearly stating the differences between the ways the telephones worked.

137. At age 11, pupils consolidate well their knowledge of how people lived across time, starting in Years 3 and 4 with studies on ancient Egypt and the Anglo Saxons, progressing in Years 5 and 6 with studies of the Victorians, life in the forties and in post-war Britain. For example, pupils in a Year 6 class learnt very well the difference between the rich and poor in Victoria times. Through very good teaching, the teacher developed pupils' confidence so they could describe the characteristics of the lives of such people. The pupils responded very well to their tasks, working with very good levels of motivation.
138. By contrast, throughout the school there is insufficient attention given to the use of time lines to enable pupils to develop their understanding of chronology and to recognise that past time can be divided into periods with similarities and differences between themes, by the use of relevant terms and dates. Samples of previous work in Year 5 produced evidence of this being done, but opportunities to do this are not adequately developed throughout the school.
139. The quality of teaching is satisfactory, with some very good teaching seen in Years 5 and 6. Teachers effectively plan and manage their lessons. They use good strategies to manage their pupils and to maintain their interest. They do not sufficiently evaluate their lessons as they progress or use their evaluations to influence the content of further lessons.
140. The newly appointed co-ordinator has a good awareness of the developmental need of the subject and has conducted an audit of resources. The absence of a specific budget allocated to the subject resources is unsatisfactory. There are no clearly defined procedures for the assessment of pupils' attainments. The procedures and use of assessment to guide curriculum planning is unsatisfactory. The co-ordinator has insufficient time to monitor and evaluate the subject and to assist staff with its development.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

141. There has been a very significant improvement since the school was last inspected. Then, attainment was below the national expectations and the acquisition of skills across the school was unsatisfactory. Planning for the subject was poor. The quality of teaching was unsatisfactory with the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum not fulfilled. Resources were unsatisfactory.
142. Now, it is clear that standards are rising very quickly. Pupils' achievement is very good and by the end of Year 2, standards are above national expectations and in line by the end of Year 6. The key to this very good improvement is the priority placed on improving provision. A considerable investment in time and money has included staff training and the school plans even more in the future. The quality of teaching is very good. Teachers are more confident and competent when they teach the subject. Lesson planning is good and ensures pupils' work becomes harder as they move through the school and that skills they learn develop in an appropriate order. The school now fulfils the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum. The quality of resources is much better and the accommodation has also improved. There is now a separate information and communication technology suite with 16 multi-media computers. The co-ordinator leads the subject very well and has clear plans for the subject's continued development, together with the ability, support and commitment to implement them successfully.

143. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 use computers very confidently. Pupils log on and off correctly. They enter their name and password. They access appropriate sites on the Internet. For example, the Years 1/2 class navigated their way through a history site using hyperlinks. They found information about home life in Victorian times. Year 1 and 2 pupils correctly use art packages to create interesting pictures by using primary colours. They word process work accurately to accompany the pictures. Year 2 pupils use a CD-ROM very confidently to access information about Queen Elizabeth II. They also word process to a good standard work about famous people. In learning about computerised control, they move the floor turtle around a defined route by correctly programming it.
144. Pupils in Year 3 to 6 develop their earlier skills very well. In Year 3, they develop their word processing skills very effectively to produce their own newspaper 'The Big Cat Mewspaper'. Year 5 pupils use spreadsheets to produce accurate graphs that show the diversity of facilities in the town centre. They further extend their word processing skills to produce good quality flyers entitled 'Welcome to Kirkby'. Pupils use effectively a screen turtle to construct on-screen shapes and letters. They correctly enter commands into the workbook to construct a square and the more difficult letter E.
145. Teachers develop pupils' literacy skills well during word-processing exercises. Year 1 and 2 pupils use a program to write and re-draft their work on screen. Year 5 pupils enhanced their poetry writing with good quality poems entitled 'Hubble, bubble, toil and trouble'. Their word-processed newspaper reports entitled 'Dark Lord Voldemart's disappearance' were of very good quality. Year 6 pupils use computers extensively to write their work. They produced New Year resolutions and work entitled 'An assortment of awfully amusing alliterations'. Pupils also develop their numeracy skills. Year 6 pupils use spreadsheets to produce a graph from which they accurately find square numbers and square roots. In their geography work, Year 5 pupils produce high quality graph work to record their fieldwork findings.
146. Teachers have high expectations for what pupils can achieve and therefore, plan work to extend pupils' learning. For example, Year 6 pupils put together a multi-media presentation for younger children by using a specialised program. They very skilfully introduced animation into their presentation. During their work in pairs, pupils co-operate well, sharing out activities fairly and persevere when they encounter difficulties. For example, in a very good Year 3 lesson, pupils worked well together, and individually, to produce good quality work on databases. They accessed a database, posing relevant questions to find out creatures that have no wings.
147. The school teaches information and communication technology as a discrete subject to all classes, with further time allocated for pupils to develop these skills. Recent assessment procedures are of a good quality and ensure teachers assess pupils' regularly.

MUSIC

148. Standards in music are satisfactory at the end of Years 2 and 6. This is a similar finding to that of the previous inspection. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 sing a number of songs by heart with enthusiasm and a good sense of pitch. Pupils in Year 1 listen to a lively recording of the song 'Here comes the Elephant'. They begin to move almost involuntarily to its rhythm and soon pick up the words and melody from the tape. They quickly learn to sing the song accurately and enthusiastically. They add rhythmic actions appropriate to the words and then clap the pulse. In all this work they show a good sense of rhythm. Pupils choose and play untuned percussion instruments to accompany the song while half the class perform it as 'the choir'. Year 2 pupils listen to a rhythmical piece of taped music and play along with it with rhythm sticks. They hold the pulse well. They join in with a taped version of 'Here we go round the Mulberry Bush', perform

actions and strongly reinforce the rhythm with their rhythm sticks. When the song is transformed on the tape to 'Rock around the Mulberry Bush' pupils sing with enthusiasm and with satisfactory tone and diction. Asked to say which version they prefer, they all vote for the 'Rock' version giving good reasons: faster beat, livelier rhythm and modern words.

149. Older pupils successfully improvise rhythmic patterns using claps, clicks and stamps, which they combine to make an effective 'body percussion' composition. In a good lesson, Year 6 pupils sang 'Row the Boat' to which they added a four-part rhythmic accompaniment that they clapped. The pupils coped well with the complexity of this activity. Dividing into groups they then performed the accompaniment using untuned instruments. Each group successfully performed to the others, individual pupils holding their parts well. The pupils appreciated each other's efforts.
150. Singing is a strength of the school. Pupils sing particularly well in assembly. They sing with good tone, clear diction and secure intonation. In class, they also sing enthusiastically and show good development of the feeling for rhythm and beat. In all the lessons observed during the inspection, pupils made satisfactory progress, overtaking the objectives of the lesson. Pupils make satisfactory progress over time, particularly in singing, rhythmic work and appraising. There is little evidence of composition work involving the use of the range of the school's melodic instruments.
151. Pupils clearly enjoy music lessons and are anxious to participate fully, including those with special educational needs. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are often very good. They handle instruments with care and observe the rules about when to play and when not to play. When working in groups they collaborate successfully, sharing ideas and instruments sensibly.
152. Teaching is good. In Years 1 and 2, teachers' good relationships with their classes promotes eager responses and the desire to perform songs, movement and rhythm successfully. Teachers' planning is based on nationally produced material adapted for the school. Lesson plans are satisfactory, showing objectives and the activities to overtake them. Teachers make good use of a commercial resource, which provides taped material to support the development of pupils' performing and listening skills. Lessons offer pupils a good variety of musical experiences and move at a good pace. A specialist teacher has recently commenced teaching Years 5 and 6. She has established a very good rapport with the pupils and her expertise is already raising standards of pupils' performance and knowledge, as well as widening their musical experience. There are no formal systems of assessment in use. The previous report mentioned a recorder group, guitar club and choir. These are no longer in existence, but pupils have the opportunity to learn to play keyboard and clarinet from visiting music staff. Pupils attend the school's singing club. They also sing in the Knowsley Choir, which is held in the school and from time to time participate in concerts organised by the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

153. During the inspection, inspectors observed lessons in games taught to pupils in Year 3, educational gymnastics to pupils in Year 5 and dance to pupils in Year 2. The teachers' planning for the subject ensures there is satisfactory attention to all areas of the curriculum throughout the year. Standards in the lessons observed were in line with national expectations. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. There is no significant difference in the standards between boys and girls. Progress over time slows because some pupils regularly have no suitable kit. Pupils in some lessons do not have appropriate dress or footwear. Some pupils regularly miss a large part of a lesson because they attend music tuition. These factors reflect a

lack of high expectations within the subject. This is also reflected in the poor state of some of the physical education equipment, especially the gymnastic mats. However, there are high expectations for what pupils can achieve in swimming. Standards in swimming are high.

154. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teachers have due regard for safety and involve pupils in appropriate warm-up and cooling-down activities. Year 2 pupils develop satisfactorily their ability to move with control and imagination in response to music. Pupils are motivated and interested in the subject through good demonstrations by teachers. Pupils make satisfactory use of space and work well collaboratively when asked by the teacher to do so. They demonstrate a satisfactory range of imaginative movements. Pupils' progress slows because the pace of the lesson is too slow. There are protracted pauses between activities, for example in the lesson involving 'shark demonstration'. A strong feature of dance lessons is the full involvement of pupils with special educational needs because teachers take care to monitor carefully their performance.
155. In a Year 5 gymnastics lesson, pupils made good progress because the teacher demonstrated secure subject knowledge. There were clear explanations and instructions that were understood easily by the pupils. This meant that pupils performed a good range of symmetrical and asymmetrical movements. Their performance improved further through good use of demonstration and evaluation of the movements. The teacher increased the level of challenge so pupils developed a sequence of shapes that flowed together from low, medium and high levels with increasing complexity.
156. The role of the physical education co-ordinator is very underdeveloped. There is no secure knowledge of standards throughout the school or of the quality of teaching. The school policy for teaching physical education is very dated and there is no coherent plan for improving resources within the subject. There are no assessment procedures in place for physical education. Therefore, there has been no improvement since the last inspection in the quality of physical education provision.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

157. Pupils' attainment is in line with the targets of the Knowsley Agreed Syllabus. This is a similar finding to that of the last inspection. Pupils develop a sound knowledge of world faiths, including Christianity, Buddhism, Judaism and Islam, and discuss religious ideas responsibly and with interest. They study the lives of influential people in history, such as Albert Schweitzer, Florence Nightingale and Martin Luther King, and consider how religious belief shaped their humanitarian work. Pupils with special educational needs play a full part in lessons, contributing to discussions and making good progress. Religious education makes a strong contribution to pupils' spiritual development as well as increasing their awareness of other cultures.
158. Year 1 pupils learn about the Chinese New Year and discuss the characteristics of the animals connected with this annual celebration. Wearing masks prepared by the teacher they act out 'The Animals' Race' story, which illustrates why each new year introduces a different animal. The teacher links the activity well with a discussion about Chinese culture, introducing pupils to a new year greeting in Chinese, showing Chinese letters and chopsticks. She explains to the pupils that the Chinese community in Liverpool will shortly celebrate the New Year and that they could see the Dragon Dance being performed. In Year 2, pupils recall the recent Christingle service held in the local church and its meaning. They show good knowledge of church furnishings and services as they describe baptisms and weddings. They know that, as well as being used for these celebrations, the church is a place where Christians worship regularly.

159. Older pupils in a good lesson about Buddhism discuss how Buddhist principles of self-control and care for others are relevant to today's world. They reflect quietly on how they can demonstrate these principles and suggest their ideas to the class. In a written task, many pupils give thoughtful answers to the questions 'How can I care for others; be generous; be wise?' Pupils show sound knowledge of the Buddha's early life using words such as 'meditation', 'solitude' and 'enlightenment'. Year 6 pupils, learning about the Jewish Passover festival, showed a satisfactory recall of the story of the Israelites' exodus from Egypt. Having watched an informative video featuring a Jewish family celebration, the pupils then sampled the ingredients of the seder meal prepared by the teacher. They demonstrated understanding of the symbolism of the different elements of the meal.
160. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good. They are interested in religious ideas and learning about other cultures. They respond well in discussion, making thoughtful suggestions and offering their individual opinions. When asked to reflect on their learning, pupils did so in a calm and receptive manner.
161. Teaching is good. Teachers have a sound knowledge of the locally agreed syllabus and appreciate its practical approach to teaching and learning. They plan lessons well with interesting and challenging activities, which stimulate pupils' interest and enthusiasm. This good planning, together with the careful preparation and use of resources, ensures that pupils' achievement in lessons is at least satisfactory. Teachers question pupils skilfully to initiate discussion. They have high expectations of their pupils' responses and attitudes. The good quality of discussions makes a significant contribution to pupils' speaking and listening. However, although there are examples of pupils' original writing, teachers give insufficient opportunity for pupils to write either descriptively or expressing their own ideas. Assessment is confined to teachers' observation and marking of work. The co-ordinator scrutinises teachers' planning and has informal discussion with them. Her influence on the development of teaching and learning is limited by her part-time status and her teaching commitment, which does not at present include religious education. The school has insufficient resources of artefacts to support the teaching.