

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **ROBY PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Huyton, Merseyside

LEA area: Knowsley

Unique reference number: 104420

Headteacher: Mr E Cohen

Reporting inspector: Mr R Spinks  
2783

Dates of inspection: 11 – 15 March 2002

Inspection number: 196812

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

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Easton Road  
Huyton  
Merseyside

Postcode: L36 4NY

Telephone number: 0151 477 8340

Fax number: 0151 477 8341

Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr J Churchill

Date of previous inspection: 5 May 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
2783	Mr R Spinks	Registered inspector	Information and communication technology	What sort of school is it?
			Physical education	The school's results and pupils' achievements
				How well is the school led and managed?
				What should the school do to improve further?
9714	Mr D Blanchflower	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?
18346	Mr R Bristow	Team inspector	Geography	How well are pupils taught?
			Foundation Stage	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
24758	Mrs D Townsend	Team inspector	English	
			Special educational needs	
			Music	
22182	Miss F Robinson	Team inspector	Mathematics	
			Art and design	
			Design and technology	
			Equal opportunities	
14569	Mrs J Cheadle	Team inspector	Science	
			History	
			Religious education	

The inspection contractor was:

Staffordshire and Midlands Consortium

The Kingston Centre

Fairway

Stafford

ST16 3TW

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Roby Park Primary School is situated to the west of Huyton in Knowsley and draws its pupils from a wide area including some pupils from Liverpool. The school caters for pupils aged four to eleven. There are 346 pupils on the roll and 40 who attend the nursery part-time. The school is larger than similar schools nationally. Approximately 50 per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is well above national averages. Less than one per cent of pupils have English as a second language which is well below the national average. 37.5 per cent of pupils are identified as having special educational needs by the school which is well above the national average and the percentage with statements of need is broadly average. Pupils with special educational needs have a range of difficulties but the majority have general learning difficulties whilst a few have specific difficulties such as dyslexia and a larger than average number have emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Pupils come from a wide variety of backgrounds but many suffer some form of disadvantage. On average pupils attainment on entry to the school is below average.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

Roby Park Primary and Nursery School is an effective school with some good features. Standards are above average by the end of the juniors in mathematics and science. Overall, teaching is now good although the impact of this has not yet been felt in all subjects of the curriculum. The school has been managed effectively in addressing the key issues from the previous inspection, although the role of some subject co-ordinators in monitoring and improving standards and the quality of education are under-developed. The governors are effectively contributing to the management of the school and the school provides satisfactory value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- Good teaching.
- Very good behaviour and pupils' positive attitudes to the school and learning.
- The very good support for pupils with special educational needs.
- Standards in mathematics and science by the end of the juniors.
- The effective start to pupils' education provided by the nursery and reception classes.
- The commitment of governors to their responsibilities and their work in ensuring the principles of best value are achieved.

#### **What could be improved**

- Standards in English and music.
- The planning for the longer-term development of the school and the identification of clear goals and the criteria for success.
- The effectiveness of some subject co-ordinators in monitoring standards and quality of education and ensuring the effective monitoring of pupils' progress and the use of the assessment information gained to raise standards.

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

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has improved significantly since the last inspection in May 1997. Standards have improved in most subjects but particularly in mathematics, science, information and communication technology and design and technology by the end of the juniors. Teachers' planning has improved although assessment procedures remain inconsistent and information from assessments is not always used sufficiently to promote higher standards. There has been a considerable improvement in pupils' attitudes and behaviour and there are now more opportunities for the spiritual and cultural development of pupils both within assemblies and the subjects of the curriculum. With a clear vision for the future development of the school, the current managers and staff have the capacity to sustain and continue the improvements since the last inspection.

## 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	E	D	E	D
mathematics	C	D	B	A
science	A	C	A	A*

**Key**

well above average      A

above average            B

average                    C

below average            D

well below average      E

On entry to the nursery children are attaining standards which are below those normally expected of this age group.

By the age of five, pupils have made progress especially in mathematical skills and personal and social development but standards remain below average. By the age of seven pupils continue to make progress to attain standards closer to those found nationally in mathematics. In the year 2001 tests and assessments for seven-year-olds, pupils attained standards in reading and writing, which were well below the national average whilst standards in mathematics were below average. Standards in science were well below the average. When compared with schools having a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals, standards in reading and writing were below average and in mathematics close to the average. Results show some improvement over the last three years at a rate just below that found nationally.

Overall, by the age of eleven pupils attain standards, which are typical for their age. In the year 2001 national tests and assessments for eleven-year-olds, pupils attained standards in English which were well below the national average. In mathematics standards were above average and in science well above the average. In comparison with similar schools standards were below average in

English, well above average in mathematics and very high in science. Science results placed the school in the top five per cent of the group of similar schools. The general trend in results over the last three years is of improving standards at a rate similar to the national figures.

From a detailed scrutiny of pupils' work over the last year, direct observations of their work in lessons, hearing pupils read and discussing their work with them, inspectors judge that most pupils are attaining standards above those expected in mathematics, science, art and design and design and technology. Standards in English and music are below average. Standards in the other subjects of the curriculum are similar to those normally found. Higher attaining pupils in particular are beginning to attain at the higher levels of which they are capable especially in mathematics and science. Pupils make generally good progress to achieve these standards. The school has set appropriate targets for improving pupils' attainment, based upon a range of assessment information. The standards of work seen in information and communication technology were typical of those expected and pupils are beginning to use their skills to support learning in the other subjects of the curriculum. Standards in numeracy were above those found nationally. However, literacy skills are below average. Overall, pupils make good progress over the whole of their education at Roby Park Primary School from entry to the nursery to final attainment at the end of Year 6.

### **PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Attitudes to the school	Very good: Pupils are keen to come to school and work hard.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good: Pupils are polite and courteous. They play well together at playtime and lunchtime.
Personal development and relationships	Very good: Relationships are very good and pupils develop into responsible young people.
Attendance	Satisfactory: The school is working hard to sustain recent improvements.

This is a strong aspect of the school's work. Pupils arrive punctually and begin work quickly. They concentrate well in lessons and show good levels of independence, working well with the minimum supervision. Behaviour was consistently very good during the inspection as a result of the high expectations of adults in the school.

### **TEACHING AND LEARNING**

<b>Teaching of pupils in:</b>	<b>Nursery and Reception</b>	<b>Years 1 – 2</b>	<b>Years 3 – 6</b>
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.*

Overall, the quality of teaching is good throughout the school. In all, inspectors observed 68 whole

or part lessons. In 63 lessons teaching was judged to be satisfactory or better with teaching judged to be good in 40 and very good in 17. Only five unsatisfactory lessons were seen. Teaching was consistently good and very good in the nursery and reception classes, which ensures that pupils make a good start to their education. The teaching of English was satisfactory but teachers did not always extend pupils' use of literacy skills in other subjects. The teaching of mathematics was good and numeracy skills were taught and used effectively by teachers in many subjects of the curriculum. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and use a range of teaching methods well. Lessons are effectively planned although teachers' marking of pupils' work does not always guide what they plan for pupils to learn next. Where teaching is unsatisfactory teachers do not always plan work which enables pupils to make sufficient progress. The in-class support staff are generally used well to support pupils' learning, especially those pupils with special educational needs. All pupils respond well to the good teaching they receive. They make at least good progress, however, the marking of their work does not always tell them how well they are doing or what they need to do to get better.

### **OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good: The curriculum meets statutory requirements and is enhanced by a range of extracurricular activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good: The support for these pupils both in lessons and when withdrawn for individual or small group work is very good.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good: Pupils' social and moral development is very good whilst spiritual and cultural development are satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good: The school provides a safe and welcoming environment in which pupils are encouraged to learn.

Parents support the work of the school. Similar numbers of parents to those normally found assist in school, on trips and for sporting events. However, the reports parents receive about their child's progress do not indicate sufficiently what pupils need to do to improve. Overall, the curriculum shows good breadth and balance meeting the needs of all pupils. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and they have full access to all aspects of learning.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory: The overall development of the school is satisfactory but targeted developments do not always have a clear purpose and are not supported by criteria against which to measure successful implementation.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good: Governors are well informed and effectively link the school's development plan to the budget and are meeting the 'best value' principles.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory: The school uses a range of information but is not sufficiently rigorous in identifying specific areas for improvement.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory: The school uses the resources available to it effectively to support pupils' learning.

The school has effectively addressed the many key issues identified in the previous inspection report. However, areas for future development, whilst meeting the general school aim to improve standards, are not sufficiently rigorous and are not always clearly defined to enable success to be evaluated. There are sufficient teachers and support staff to support all pupils' learning, but some are not deployed to best effect. There are sufficient resources for all subjects of the curriculum and the school buildings and grounds provide a very clean and welcoming learning environment. The school evaluates its effectiveness using national and local data; it has established a process of seeking opinions from both parents and pupils. It has set reasonably challenging targets and so meets the principles of 'best value'.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children make good progress.</li> <li>• Pupils' good behaviour.</li> <li>• The school is well managed.</li> <li>• The personal development of pupils.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The use of homework to support learning.</li> <li>• The school could work more closely with parents.</li> <li>• Parents could be better informed about their child's progress.</li> </ul>

Inspectors agree with parents' views that this is an effective school where pupils make progress and develop a very good range of personal skills and understanding. Behaviour is consistently very good. Inspectors found that homework is used appropriately to support pupils' learning and the amount pupils are expected to do is similar to that found in most primary schools. Annual reports to parents about their child's progress could be more informative by indicating more clearly what pupils need to do to improve their standards and the progress they make.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and pupils' achievements**

1. Inspectors based their judgements on an analysis of test and assessment results, direct observations of pupils in lessons, hearing pupils read and a detailed scrutiny of pupils' present and past work. Discussions were held with pupils where other evidence was limited to establish what pupils knew and could do.
2. The early assessment of children on entry to the Nursery indicates that their attainment is below that normally found. By the time these children enter the Reception classes they have made good progress and are attaining standards closer to those expected. Many have had access to pre-school experiences in nurseries and show developing social awareness.
3. By the end of their Reception Year current children are attaining standards which are average in mathematical learning and personal and social development, and below the average in all other areas of learning.
4. By the age of seven current pupils are on course to attain standards, which are in line with those normally found in all subjects except English and literacy. In the 2001 tests and assessments for seven-year-olds, overall standards in reading and writing were well below the national average. Standards in mathematics were below average. The proportion of pupils attaining the expected Level 2 was close to the average in writing and well below average in reading. The proportions attaining the higher Level 3 was below average in reading and writing. In mathematics the proportion attaining the expected Level 2 was close to the average and the proportion attaining the higher Level 3 was well below average. In science the proportion attaining the expected Level 2 was well below average and the higher Level 3 was close to the national average. The attainment of girls in reading and writing was lower than the attainment of boys at Level 2 and above. Boys and girls attained similar standards in mathematics at Level 2 and above. Results have improved at a rate similar to that found nationally over the last three years.
5. In comparison with similar schools using national benchmark information standards in reading and mathematics were above average and writing close to the average. Standards in science were close to the average.
6. From a review of pupils' current work they are attaining standards, which are similar to those expected nationally except for English where standards are lower. Standards in design and technology are above those normally found.
7. By the age of eleven pupils are attaining standards which are close to those normally expected in most subjects except English and music which are below those expected. In the 2001 tests and assessments for eleven-year-olds the percentage of pupils attaining the expected Level 4 was well below the national average for English, above average for

mathematics and very high for science. The percentage attaining the higher Level 5 was well below average for English and well above average for mathematics and science. Using national benchmark information standards were well below the national average for English, above average in mathematics and well above average in science. In comparison with similar schools the proportion of pupils attaining at least the expected Level 4 was close to the average for English, well above average for mathematics and very high for science. The percentage of pupils attaining the higher Level 5 was below average for English, well above average for mathematics and very high for science.

8. Over the last three years standards in English, mathematics and science have improved at a rate similar to that found nationally, however, standards in English remain below those expected. When pupils' attainment at the end of the infants is taken into account progress in the juniors is very good in mathematics and science but unsatisfactory in English.
9. The school has set realistic and challenging targets for pupil attainment based upon a range of assessment information.
10. From a scrutiny of pupils' work and their work in lessons inspectors judge that current pupils are attaining below average standards in English and literacy and above average standards in mathematics, numeracy and science.
11. Standards in information and communication technology are similar to those found nationally. Pupils in the juniors are beginning to access information to support learning in a number of subjects through the Internet.
12. Pupils are attaining standards above those expected in art and design and design and technology. Standards in religious education, geography, history and physical education are typical of those expected in both the infants and juniors. Standards in music are below those expected in the juniors and there was insufficient evidence to judge music standards in the infants.
13. Pupils with special educational needs achieve standards appropriate for their age and ability. Pupils are well behaved, enjoy their activities and have good attitudes to learning, wishing to succeed. They take a pride in their activities and have good self-esteem.
14. Overall, pupils are achieving well. Current juniors entered the school with lower levels of attainment than average and are making at least satisfactory progress, particularly in their developing use of numeracy skills.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

15. The pupils' attitudes to school and their behaviour are a strength of the school. They are enthusiastic and respond well to the opportunities provided for them and take pride in their achievements. Pupils respond with interest to the teaching especially where this is matched closely to their needs and interests. Pupils develop self-confidence and good levels of personal responsibility as they progress through the school. Attendance is satisfactory

- overall.
16. Pupils' behaviour throughout the school is very good. The majority of pupils are keen to come to school. They arrive early at the start of the day and get very involved in the range of activities offered by the school including the pre-school writing practice session. Pupils have a very positive attitude to learning throughout the school, concentrate well in lessons and are motivated learners. They work with good effort for prolonged periods and show immense pride in the work they produce. Relationships between all members of the school community are very good and serve to stimulate and encourage pupils to work with confidence and enjoyment. Pupils play together in a co-operative and friendly manner. They are polite and respect the views of others. They are generally very attentive in class, and work effectively on group tasks as well as independently. The mixed year groups in the same class work well together and share their knowledge in a mutually helpful way. The parents recognise the high expectations of the teachers, which ensure good behaviour as well as motivating good performance by the pupils.
  17. Pupils are trustworthy, polite and courteous. They greet visitors cordially. They are proud of their school and take great care of it. Pupils show respect for the building and the equipment it contains.
  18. Behaviour in the playground during the inspection was very good. Pupils know the rules for good behaviour and adhere to those rules. They play together as friends and are kind towards each other at playtimes. They organise themselves to play games and sit in friendship groups on the seats in the outdoor areas.
  19. Pupils of all ages willingly take responsibility in the classroom and around the school. They collect and deliver registers and clear away equipment after lessons. The recently formed School Council permits the pupils who are elected to the Council to take further responsibility. The Council meeting which was observed during the inspection was an excellent example of pupils of all age groups working together for the good of all members of the school community. The meeting clearly illustrated that the pupils involved were aware of other people's views and concerns and those involved demonstrated a good understanding of the complexities of reaching informed and meaningful decisions. The diverse responsibilities given to the pupils serve to promote their personal development and instil a sense of community and citizenship.
  20. Bullying is almost unheard of in the school, but pupils are well aware of the action they should take were it to occur. Equally the school experiences few instances of sexism or racism. The school had two exclusions during the previous academic year. This is much lower than the 27 exclusions at the time of the previous inspection and is an indication of the improvement in behaviour since that inspection.
  21. The school attendance levels have improved slightly since the last inspection and are now just below the national average. Attendance registers are completed promptly and the school meets statutory requirements for keeping attendance records. The vast majority of pupils arrive well before the start of lessons and have acceptable attendance records. A minority of pupils arrive late for school, most arriving just after morning lessons start.



## HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

22. Children below the age of five in the Foundation Stage, and those in Years 1 and 2 are taught in their age group classes. Pupils in Years 3 and 4, and Years 5 and 6 are grouped together in mixed age classes. Pupils in infant and junior classes are taught by their own class teacher for most subjects, with the exception of English and mathematics when pupils are grouped after considering previous attainment. This provides opportunities for a sharper focus to teaching and learning.
23. Overall the quality of teaching is good with almost four out of every five lessons being good or better. Pupils respond well to their teaching with most pupils making at least satisfactory progress, and a high proportion making good or better progress. The good progress made has resulted in improved standards since the last inspection for pupils by the age of eleven. Standards in English remain below those considered to be typical nationally by the age of eleven. Standards for mathematics and science are judged to be above those normally found. Learning experiences in other subjects, with the exception of music, are judged to be typical of what would be expected nationally for pupils by the age of eleven.
24. During the inspection 68 whole or part lessons were observed. All classes were observed for their literacy and numeracy lessons. The teaching observed was at least satisfactory in 93 per cent of lessons; 84 per cent of teaching was judged to be good or better with 25 per cent judged to be very good. Only five lessons were judged to be less than satisfactory.
25. The teaching of children under-five was consistently good, with almost one in three lessons being very good. Teachers have developed a good understanding of how children in this age group learn and plan appropriate experiences to enable them to make at least good progress. Effective teamwork by teaching and non-teaching staff enables children to build on their skills, knowledge and understanding. Children are given many opportunities to develop early reading and writing skills.
26. The teaching in the infants is good overall. In total 23 lessons were observed of which six were very good, fifteen good, one was satisfactory and one unsatisfactory. The most effective teaching is provided when teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach and lessons are planned effectively. They use a range of different approaches to deliver enjoyable lessons and they set very good examples for their pupils. Teachers organise their classrooms well and manage pupils very well so that behaviour is always at least good. Pupils are highly motivated; they work hard and usually make good progress as in the Year 1 activity when pupils discussed number patterns to 20 or in the Year 2 design and technology lesson where they used a template to produce finger puppets.
27. The teaching in the juniors is good overall. In total 38 lessons were seen of which nine were very good, twenty good and five satisfactory. Four lessons were judged to be unsatisfactory. In three out of every four lessons which were good or better, teachers had secure subject knowledge and planned lessons that challenged pupils to achieve. Pupils were attentive and worked hard to complete their tasks. Consequently, they made good

progress. Where teaching is very good, teachers enthuse and motivate their pupils by making learning interesting and fun. Pupils thrived on the brisk pace to learning and achieved high standards when activities challenged them to investigate and make appropriate deductions as in a Year 5 / 6 lesson when investigating germination and growth.

28. Teachers plan effectively to ensure that pupils in parallel classes share similar experiences. Although pupils' work is marked regularly, the quality of marking is inconsistent. Some teachers clearly identify what pupils know and can do and then set clear targets for further development whilst others use effective praise but do not indicate what pupils need to do to improve. Although teachers record gains in skills, knowledge and understanding, there is little evidence that teachers use the information they gain from evaluating and marking pupils' work, to plan what they should teach next.
29. Generally, teachers deliver the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies effectively and use national guidelines to plan experiences which build, term on term and year on year, on the skills knowledge and understanding which pupils have previously experienced.
30. The teaching of literacy is consistently good in both the infants and juniors, with all eleven out of the thirteen literacy lessons seen judged to be good. One lesson was judged to be very good and one less than satisfactory. Many children enter the school with communication and language experiences that are judged to be below what is typical for children on entry to the nursery and reception classes. Consequently, teachers plan to provide frequent and regular opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking and listening, reading and writing skills. Teachers encourage pupils to share their ideas and pupils listen and learn from their peers and teachers in informal and formal situations.
31. Teaching in mathematics was consistently good or better. Out of the ten lessons observed four were judged to be good and six were judged to be very good with a higher proportion of very good teaching in the junior classes. Teachers use pupils' numeracy skills to enhance their learning in other subjects such as when measuring precisely in design and technology; presenting data collected in their science lessons as bar charts and line graphs; or using co-ordinates to develop mapping skills in geography.
32. The teaching of pupils with a range of special educational needs was good. They are given very good support and individual education plans are targeted carefully to help pupils learn. Teachers use a wide range of successful strategies to motivate, involve and challenge these pupils and the progress made is recorded conscientiously. Pupils, including those with physical needs are provided with the full range of curricular and extracurricular experiences. When pupils receive additional support outside the classroom, this is usually arranged so that tasks set match those being provided for others in the classroom.
33. It was not possible for inspectors to observe lessons in other subjects of the curriculum in every class. However, they observed a representative sample for most subjects in both the infants and juniors. The quality of teaching in the non-core subjects was more variable with some unsatisfactory teaching in music where the work presented to pupils was not always well matched to their needs indicating the limited use of assessment of pupils' work to guide

teachers' planning. This allowed the pace of learning to slow down, pupils were less motivated and the quality of learning was less effective which resulted in pupils making less progress.

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

34. The curriculum provided by the school for pupils aged five to eleven has improved since the last inspection and is now good. National Curriculum requirements are fully met including those for religious education and collective worship. The curriculum is now planned consistently well so that all pupils receive their entitlement and have access to the range of curriculum experiences, with skills, knowledge and understanding taught in a systematic and progressive way. There are now clear guidelines for teachers to identify what pupils are to be taught each week, each term and each year. The use of national guidelines for planning in all subject areas has improved the balance of the curriculum since the last inspection. There has been an appropriate emphasis on the time allocated to English, science and mathematics and a positive response to the increasing demands of information and communication technology. National guidelines are now used to promote a range of experiences which detail what pupils should learn next.
35. Provision for subjects such as history, geography and art and design, remains satisfactory. Design and technology has improved significantly and physical education is given a good proportion of the time available. The provision for music is unsatisfactory. Generally, there is insufficient monitoring to ensure that pupils have regular opportunities to use and develop their skills in music. Subject co-ordinators do not check sufficiently to ensure that pupils develop their skills, knowledge and understanding in a frequent and regular way.
36. The school provides religious education for all pupils in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus and parents have been informed about their right to withdraw their children. The school complies with statutory requirements by providing a daily act of collective worship. Arrangements for personal and social education are satisfactory, and are most effective, for example, when pupils are given opportunities to share their experiences, views and opinions in groups during circle time. Provision for health education, which includes sex education and the raising of awareness about the use and misuse of drugs, is satisfactory. It is linked to the programmes of study for science. The benefits of a healthy life style are taught well. Roby Park has been included in the first group of the Knowsley's initiative for 'Healthy Schools' with two representatives on the local 'task force'.
37. The aims of the school give a high priority to enabling all pupils to experience the good range of curriculum activities. Teachers plan effectively in terms to provide for pupils of similar ages in different classes. A policy is in place which values pupils of all abilities and backgrounds. Where pupils have opportunities to develop additional skills such as learning a musical instrument, they are withdrawn from their classes at times where the progress they make in normal lessons is not compromised.
38. The school uses national initiatives to promote learning and so improve standards for targeted groups of pupils. The Early Literacy Strategy in Year 1 and additional literacy

groups in Years 3 and 4, and mathematics groups in Year 5 have proved to be beneficial, as have 'booster' groups for Year 6 pupils in English, mathematics and science. In addition community links provide opportunities for higher attaining pupils to extend their mathematical skills on Saturday mornings.

39. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is now very good. Planning takes very good account of the significant group of pupils on the register of special educational needs whose individual education plans clearly identify how gains in skills, understanding and knowledge in subjects such as literacy and mathematics will be made. In the best lessons observed, the work provided for this group was well structured and classroom assistants supported pupils effectively. There is no wheelchair access to the upper floor in the juniors.
40. The national guidance, introduced since the last inspection, for the teaching of literacy and numeracy have been given due emphasis and have contributed to an improvement in the quality of teaching and learning especially in the juniors. Pupils are given good opportunities to write using a wide range of styles, such as non-chronological writing in history and geography; lists, recipes and menus in design and technology and a range of recording styles in science. The very good levels of behaviour and the very good relationships have contributed effectively to improving pupils' listening skills.
41. Overall, opportunities such as circle time, when pupils are encouraged to increase their confidence in speaking skills to share opinions, are now being extended and used to good effect. Opportunities for pupils to develop their study skills and which challenge pupils to carry out independent study are satisfactory. These research skills are increasingly well developed using the school library and the Internet.
42. Mathematical skills are promoted satisfactorily across the curriculum. Skills are promoted through using charts, diagrams and graphs in science; time lines in history help the pupils to develop a greater understanding of how their experiences link with those of the past; and co-ordinates are used appropriately in geography to locate position in the development of mapping skills. Overall, information and communication technology skills are used satisfactorily to support learning. The collecting of information and the subsequent recording and amending of data before representing in a graphical form is satisfactory. There is an appropriate range of software to support learning in history and geography.
43. There are satisfactory community links and opportunities are welcomed to extend and enrich the quality of the curriculum. Pupils are taken out to investigate the locality making well-planned visits to shops, churches and museums. Visitors, such as groups designed to improve knowledge and understanding about road safety and drugs misuse; 'people who help us', parents and church representatives all contribute to widening the horizons of many pupils. The school is proud of its community links especially those developed through playgroup provision. The 'Knee High' group which meets on two mornings in the school hall, provides a good range of experiences for pre-school aged children and the breakfast club was well attended. Parents were most appreciative of the benefits of the Year 2 visit to the local Children's Hospital to check the health of their 'teddies'.

44. Provision for out-of-school activities available to all pupils during the period of the inspection was satisfactory. Sporting clubs, which are seasonal such as football, netball, cricket and athletics, add to the range of planned opportunities. The school is indebted to the number of enthusiastic parents and members of the school community who give so generously of their time. Inter-school activities and tournaments are provided for both boys and girls. Parents appreciate that these activities add to a child's personal and social development, as well as improving physical skills.
45. The school has developed positive links with the secondary school to which most pupils transfer. Planned visits by parents and pupils, sporting links, sharing of resources, and an exchange of staff, which encourages a greater curricular understanding, ensure that pupils are well prepared for a smooth transition to the next stage of their education. There are good links with the 'cluster' of local schools, with the consequent sharing of resources and expertise. Regular courses update those members of staff managing areas of the curriculum. Work experience is offered to students and links with the Community College provides diploma courses in childcare. Links with universities contribute to the training of teachers for the future.
46. Overall, the provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, with each aspect having improved since the last inspection.
47. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. Daily acts of collective worship contribute effectively to pupils' spiritual development and opportunities are created for pupils to reflect on aspects of their lives. There are planned strategies for pupils to deal with human experiences such as suffering and opportunities created to reflect on feelings and emotions such as love and caring. Good strategies are used to encourage pupils to consider their achievements. For example, Year 6 pupils were asked to reflect on what they had learned during a science lesson and what they knew now that they didn't know before.
48. Provision for pupils' moral development is very good and all adults are committed to using consistent strategies to make pupils more responsible for their own behaviour. Each class debates its own rules and all pupils are aware of what is acceptable and the sanctions and rewards available. Behaviour within classrooms was consistently very good, as was the behaviour outside the classroom, particularly in the playground. The few incidents of inappropriate behaviour were responded to positively and consistently well, and there were no incidents of bullying or racism during the inspection week. The consistent high expectation of good behaviour is reinforced by pupils being reminded regularly of the need to show respect, be well mannered, helpful, caring and polite by all members of the school community. The very good overall behaviour has contributed significantly to the improvement in the quality of teaching and learning since the last inspection, especially in the juniors.
49. Provision for pupils' social development is very good. Relationships are a strong feature of the school. Pupils work well together and value the contributions and feelings of others. All pupils benefit socially from being valued and fully included in all activities, regardless of age, gender or ability. Pupils are given responsibility as when carrying out duties in the classroom

or across the school. The School Council encourages pupils to share opinions and to make decisions on how to improve their school, and in circle time pupils express opinions and consider the views and values of others. Residential experience for older pupils has contributed to improving pupils' personal and social skills. Pupils have a very good understanding of how to relate to others in society and how to become good citizens. They have experienced visits by the fire, police and health services. Citizenship is well developed and contributes to pupils' personal, social and cultural skills. Roby Park is an 'Eco' school and pupils plan to improve the quality of the immediate environment. Pupils discuss environmental issues such as road safety, traffic calming and litter collection.

50. Provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. A good range of visits and visitors has provided pupils of all ages with a good awareness of their own culture. Pupils are made more aware of the legacies of civilisations and societies beyond their living memory. Pupils understand how the Olympics and democracy have been handed down by the Ancient Greeks. They experience music from a range of composers from the past to modern days in an organised way. In geography, pupils consider the similarities and differences between societies in India and Africa, and plans are underway to support those less fortunate in Namibia. Although pupils have reflected on other cultures during religious education and school assemblies, their understanding of the richness of the multicultural society in which they live is limited as is their awareness and insight into the customs and values of other beliefs.

#### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

51. The ethos of the school is warm and caring. The school succeeds in its aim of providing a safe haven for all pupils. The sensitive and caring way that the school looks after its pupils has a positive effect upon their learning. There is good provision for pupils' welfare. The school is secure with the main entrance doors controlled by the school office staff. All other doors are also locked during school hours and can only be opened from inside. Regular fire drills are held and first aid and fire equipment properly maintained. Appropriate numbers of staff are trained in first aid.
52. Child protection procedures are in place with the headteacher being the designated person. Appropriate training in child protection procedures has been given to staff. Procedures for reporting accidents and health hazards are also in place. The school maintains careful records of pupil welfare, including medical records.
53. The school has effective health and safety procedures. Regular checks are made on the safety of buildings, grounds and equipment. There are formal records of fire equipment inspections. The teachers and support staff promote hygiene effectively as part of the curriculum and there is good attention to health, safety and hygiene matters throughout the school.
54. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and all statutory requirements are met. The level of care and support given by teaching and non-teaching staff is of a high standard and is strength of the school. Needs are identified early and

- outside agencies are used very effectively. The school understands the new Code of Practice. All stages are in place.
55. The recently introduced circle time was seen to good effect during the inspection and will in the future undoubtedly play a major part in enhancing the already good support that the school provides for its pupils. The buddy system, which provides pupils with a responsible and trusted friend to turn to during breaks and lunchtime, is a good system for eliminating oppressive behaviour and helping pupils feel safe and secure.
56. The school has good procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour. Non-teaching staff are fully involved in these procedures and play an active role. The lunchtime supervisors take great pride in their work and have effective and clear procedures. They also award prizes for good behaviour at lunchtimes. Teachers use praise well and pupils respond accordingly. Assemblies are well used to reinforce good behaviour and to instil social values. An assembly observed during the inspection had, as its theme, love and caring for others and was a good example of how the school takes every opportunity to promote good behaviour and positive attitudes.
57. The school does not have formal procedures for monitoring pupils' personal development but teacher knowledge of individual pupils ensures that pupils are effectively monitored and appropriate action taken. Pupils do not have individual records of achievement.
58. The help given in the classroom by support staff has a positive impact on the progress made by all pupils including those with special educational needs. Support staff have the skills required to provide effective support. They have a good awareness of the personal as well as academic needs of the pupils and the good relationships they have with the pupils provide a positive context for encouragement and guidance. The school has been particularly successful in ensuring that all non-teaching staff in the school feel valued and play an active role in the pupils' education. The support provided by learning support assistants was particularly good. In a Year 2 English lesson the learning support assistant was observed providing good support for special educational needs pupils. Teachers are aware of high ability pupils in a class. However, formal systems to identify and monitor these pupils specifically are not yet in place.
59. The school attendance levels have improved slightly since the last inspection but have been consistently below the national average. Administrative procedures to monitor attendance and punctuality are good. Attendance statistics are computer generated so permitting the school access to a large amount of statistical information. The school based learning mentors use this information to target specific groups of pupils with poor attendance records. The learning mentors play the lead role in improving attendance but do not always target all pupils with poor attendance records. The school discourages the taking of holidays in term time but large numbers of pupils still do so. This practice has a detrimental impact on the pupils' education.
60. At the time of the last inspection assessment procedures were unsatisfactory and were inconsistently used to give a sharper focus to teaching and learning. Since the last inspection no system has been introduced to give clear guidance to subject co-ordinators as to how to

- increase the pace of learning by checking what pupils are to learn next. This lack of direction has affected standards and delayed progress for some pupils.
61. There are systems in place in the Foundation Stage to check what children know understand and can do at the end of the nursery and reception years. There are no systems in place to record gains which children make in skills, knowledge and understanding as each week, term and year passes. Although accurate observations are made of individuals and groups of children, progress is not recorded against the recommended targets (stepping stones) so that it is not possible to measure progress nor identify what children need to learn next. The national recommendation is that achievements are recorded at the beginning and then again at the end of the Reception Year (baseline). This not only evaluates the effectiveness of teaching and learning but also predicts what children should achieve in national assessments at the age of seven.
  62. There are clear procedures in place to check attainment in English and mathematics in each of the infant and junior classes, but this information is not used effectively to set more challenging targets for what children should learn next. Statutory assessment at the ages of seven and eleven is met fully and national optional testing is carried out in Years 3, 4 and 5. Subject co-ordinators do not rigorously analyse the results of testing to identify areas of success nor do they identify areas which need addressing consistently well. Consequently, there is lack of direction in how pupils' learning is to progress. Procedures for assessing the needs of the pupils with special educational needs are good and individual educational plans detail ways in which pupils should make good progress.
  63. Teachers question pupils effectively and use the summary session at the end of lessons to check understanding. Marking is carried out regularly but often only celebrates achievement rather than informing pupils and how they can improve further. Although teachers know their pupils well, there are no consistent procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development, other than in the nursery and reception classes. In many lessons, pupils are required to reflect on the quality of their learning and also challenged to comment as to how they might improve their learning especially in design and technology and physical education.

#### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

64. The school has established good links that permit parents to play an active role in their children's learning. The vast majority of parents who responded to the questionnaire expressed very positive views of the school and indicated that their children liked the school, were making good progress and that behaviour was very good. They also indicated that the school had high expectations for the children to work hard and achieve their best. Equally they felt the school helped the children to become mature and responsible citizens. The school has implemented a home-school agreement effectively, which details responsibilities of staff and parents in promoting the academic and personal development of the pupils. The Foundation Stage staff also provide Portage group work for parents. It is clear from this inspection that much has been achieved since the last inspection to bring about a better partnership between the school and parents.



65. The parents indicate that the quantity and provision of homework was appropriate and contributed to the quality of learning. They appreciated the use of the reading diary and homework book as a means of communication between the home and school.
66. The reports to parents provide details of past work and the pupils' achievements over the past year. They do, however, lack targets and specific information on what is needed to bring about improvement in pupils' attainment in individual curriculum areas. Parents could by request discuss the report with class teachers. Two parents' open evenings are held each year in the autumn and spring terms and parents welcomed these opportunities to speak to staff. Parents unanimously agreed that they are made welcome in the school and that teachers are approachable and always willing to meet with parents.
67. Parents, of pupils with educational needs are involved at all stages of the Code of Practice and participate fully in review procedures. When needs are reviewed, parents and pupils are invited to contribute. Parents are very supportive of the work of the school.
68. The school issues regular information newsletters that fully inform parents of the life of the school. The School Prospectus and Governors' Annual Report to parents fully meet all legal requirements. The prospectus makes parents aware of the need to ensure full attendance and indicates procedures for reporting absences. Parents are asked not to take holidays in term time but many parents do and in so doing deprive their children of essential education. The school has a dedicated teacher with responsibility for parental links. Questionnaires have been issued to parents and pupils to assist the school in providing the education required.
69. The Home-School Association within the school is long established and plays a key role in permitting parents to be actively involved in the life of the school. The association has a wider remit than just fund raising. It organises a number of social activities for the pupils including regular discos, which serve to enrich their personal development. It also finances the Year 6 leavers visit to the bowling alley and McDonalds each year. The large amount of money the association raises is used to provide additional resources for the school including library books and CD players for classes.
70. A number of parents assist in classrooms and make a very meaningful contribution to the life of the school. Some parents assist on a number of days each week. Parents indicate that parental involvement in the school is now much greater than at the time of the previous inspection.
71. The school accommodates the 'Knee High' pre-school group which caters for children from birth to school entry. The group that meets on Tuesday and Friday mornings is well run on a voluntary basis by four members of the local community. The group organises an appropriate range of activities for the children. The children and parents gain considerable enjoyment and social interaction from participating in the group. A member of the school staff has been delegated to play a co-ordinating role with the group but contact is minimal and the learning experiences of the children in the group are not structured to ensure a smooth transfer into the school nursery unit. The headteacher provides musical accompaniment to the singing at the end of each group session, and this activity is clearly

enjoyed by both the parents and the young children.

72. The school has effective procedures for admitting children to the nursery, which include a number of pre-visits by the children and their parents. A helpful booklet is provided to assist parents with children entering the nursery. Entry is effectively managed on a phased basis over several weeks. The school does not currently make home visits to children entering the nursery but indicates its intention to introduce such visits.

## **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

73. The school is well led by a committed headteacher. He has established a clear aim for the work of the school to continue to improve standards and the quality of education since the last inspection. As the leader of a team of senior managers he has ensured that most of the Key Issues identified at the last inspection have been effectively addressed. This is shown well by the marked improvement in pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development. The school now has appropriate priorities for future development. Some targets for future development lack sufficient detail for the school to evaluate whether they have been successfully achieved. At this time the work of subject co-ordinators is not sufficiently developed particularly with respect to monitoring the work of the school and then using the information gained to raise standards still further.
74. The school's aims are clearly reflected in its daily work. The very good relationships and very good behaviour of pupils, their concentration and hard work and their care for one another all positively enhance their learning and the standards they achieve.
75. The headteacher and senior managers do not have a sufficiently clear vision for the future development of the whole school. This has resulted in a number of changes and developments which have taken place in isolation. For example, the recent decision to revert to mixed ability classes for science did not sufficiently address the balance between the organisational needs of the school and the need to raise standards in science in the infants or the need to raise standards in English.
76. The senior managers and the governors share a commitment to develop Roby Park Primary School still further. The school has the capacity to sustain the current improvement and to continue to improve the quality of education and the standards pupils attain.
77. The governing body effectively carries out its role. Governors are committed to their work. There is an effective committee structure, which enables the governing body to work more efficiently.
78. Governors have begun to monitor the work of the school and are beginning to have a clear picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses, for example the special educational needs and literacy governors are aware of the many issues facing the school in these areas. They are well informed by managers and are beginning to set challenging priorities for the future development of the school. They are involved in producing the school development plan and have established a secure process for linking the plan with setting the school's budget.

79. The school has carried out some classroom monitoring by senior managers to improve the quality of teaching in literacy. The school has not yet identified clearly in senior managers' and subject co-ordinators' job descriptions their monitoring role and how this would impact further on improving the quality of pupils' classroom experiences and the progress they make.
80. The recent national assessment information has been evaluated to measure the overall effectiveness of the school. The headteacher also compares the school's effectiveness with the data available for similar schools.
81. Subject co-ordinators are not using the analysis of pupils' national assessments sufficiently in English, mathematics and science to identify specific weaknesses in pupils' attainment across the whole range of the national curriculum for these subjects. They also do not use teachers' ongoing assessment of pupils' attainment to ensure that the work provided for pupils enables them to make the maximum progress
82. The governors have established clear procedures for the performance management of staff and have set clear and challenging targets for the headteacher to achieve.
83. There are effective and efficient systems of financial control. The good use of computer systems by the administrative staff ensures that regular budgetary information is available for senior managers and governors so that they can monitor spending and ensure that agreed priorities are being met.
84. The governors are fully aware of the principles of best value. All spending is carefully considered and targeted. Recent developments such as improvements to the school grounds have been fully costed. Governors seek to ensure good value for money in the school's purchases. Spending is directed through the school development plan, which is produced through consultation with the senior managers. As a result of the progress pupils are making in attaining higher standards, the good quality teaching and the effective use of resources, the school gives satisfactory value for money.
85. There are sufficient well-qualified and experienced teachers to deliver the curriculum. Pupils, with special educational needs, are effectively supported by both teachers and classroom support assistants so that they make good progress. However, some teachers do not always make the most use of their support and occasionally support assistants are listening to the teacher and not having a direct input to pupils' learning. The learning mentors provide good additional support for pupils and their families. The school makes effective use of some parent to support aspects of its work in classrooms, for example hearing pupils read.
86. The school building provides a good range of accommodation. There are sufficient classrooms and the hall provides a good space for indoor physical education. The building is in good decorative order. The cleaning staff are very effective and the school provides a welcoming environment for pupils to learn and play. A range of displays of pupils' work

further enhances the school environment. There are very good, safe, outdoor play areas for younger pupils, areas for pupils to sit quietly and the playground is marked out for imaginative play. The school grounds provide a very good environment for pupils to work and play. The extensive grassed area is used for playing games, for example football and in the summer provides a large play area for pupils at lunchtime.

## **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

87. In order to raise standards and continue the recent improvements in the school the senior managers and governors should:

- (1) Raise standards in English by ensuring that teaching fully meets the needs of pupils and that literacy skills are developed through all subjects of the curriculum.

*(Further references to these issues can be found in the numbered paragraphs of the full report 4, 6, 7, 8, 10, 114, 115, 116, 118, 119, 122, 124)*

- (2) Raise standards in music by:
  - a) ensuring the consistent delivery of the adopted programme;
  - b) improving monitoring by the co-ordinator;
- b) providing teachers with training.

*(Further references to these issues can be found in the numbered paragraphs of the full report 7, 12, 33, 35, 191, 192, 197)*

- (3) Improve the quality of the school's development planning:
  - a) by ensuring that targets are clearly stated;
  - b) the desired outcomes are identified clearly;
  - c) the criteria for success are stated;
- c) the implementation of any new development is rigorously evaluated as to its impact on raising standards.

*(Further references to these issues can be found in the numbered paragraphs of the full report 73, 75, 78)*

- (4) Improve the effectiveness of some co-ordinators in raising standards by ensuring that they monitor the work in their subject especially with regard to:
  - a) marking and assessment;
  - b) the progress pupils are making;
  - c) the planning of the work pupils are to do.

*(Further references to these issues can be found in the numbered paragraphs of the full*

*report 28, 60, 61, 62, 63, 66, 81, 91, 125, 151, 154, 164, 174)*

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### *Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection*

Number of lessons observed	68
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	116

### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection*

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	17	40	6	5	0	0
Percentage	0	25	59	9	7	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*

<b>Pupils on the school's roll</b>	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	20	326
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	155

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

<b>Special educational needs</b>	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	7
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	5	125

<b>English as an additional language</b>	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	1

<b>Pupil mobility in the last school year</b>	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	24
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	28

## Attendance

### Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.6
National comparative data	5.6

### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.4
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	28	22	50

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	20	24	25
	Girls	18	20	21
	Total	38	44	46
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	76 (76)	88 (76)	92 (86)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	22	25	20
	Girls	19	21	18
	Total	41	46	38
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	82 (78)	92 (76)	76 (71)
	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	19	27	46

<b>National Curriculum Test/Task Results</b>		<b>English</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>Science</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	15	19
	Girls	17	23	27
	Total	28	38	46
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	61 (69)	83 (71)	100 (93)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

<b>Teachers' Assessments</b>		<b>English</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>Science</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	12	15
	Girls	18	19	25
	Total	27	31	40
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	59 (69)	67 (67)	87 (72)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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



**Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	282
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)	17
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19.2 : 1
Average class size	27.2

**Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	11.0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	199.75

**Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20.0 : 1
Total number of education support staff	1.0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	32.5
Number of pupils per FTE adult	10.0 : 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	2	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	2000-1
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	£
Total income	761202
Total expenditure	748654
Expenditure per pupil	2140
Balance brought forward from previous year	-12082
Balance carried forward to next year	466

***Recruitment of teachers***

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	5.0
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	5.0
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## *Results of the survey of parents and carers*

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	346
Number of questionnaires returned	223

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	55	39	4	0	2
My child is making good progress in school.	56	36	4	1	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	41	48	5	0	6
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	44	42	9	1	4
The teaching is good.	56	36	2	0	5
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	44	43	11	0	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	54	38	6	1	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	61	37	1	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	39	44	11	1	4
The school is well led and managed.	48	43	4	0	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	50	45	2	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	44	39	9	1	5

## **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**

88. The curriculum planned for children below the age of five (Foundation Stage) is good in both the nursery and the reception classes. All children make at least satisfactory progress including those with special educational needs, with a significant group making good progress.
89. On entry to the nursery class, children are attaining standards, which vary from well below that which is typical nationally for children of this age, to a small proportion being considered typical for children aged four. The nursery class provides education for forty-one children on a part-time basis, twenty-four children in the morning and seventeen in the afternoon. Each group experiences similar learning experiences. The morning group has ten children aged three who will remain in the Nursery next year.
90. Good written information, together with opportunities for children to visit school in order to sample daily routines including those at dinnertime, ensures that children are well prepared for learning in the nursery. Information is collected from parents and by observation so that the teacher and nursery nurse are building up a picture of what children know, understand and can do when they start school. This information is recorded, and gains in skills and knowledge are identified so that progress can be identified. On entry to the reception class, commonly used assessment strategies are usually planned to identify what progress has been made by the beginning and again at the end of their Reception Year. This data shows the rate of improvement in children's skills and knowledge when compared with other Knowsley schools as well as planning what is to be learned next.
91. Although satisfactory procedures have been recently introduced to enable teaching and non-teaching staff to record progress for individual children on an ongoing basis there is no overall system which enables teachers to plot where a child might be on the 'stepping stones' to achieving the nationally agreed early learning goals for children in the Foundation Stage. These 'stepping stones', indicate where a child started from, where they are, and where they are to go to next. Without such a system teachers are not able to plan for teaching and learning to be even more challenging and progress to be more thorough. The decision not to check what children can do at the end of the Reception Year in 2001, means that there is no prediction of what the present Year 1 pupils might achieve at the end of Year 2.
92. During the week of the inspection, support in the nursery and reception classes was very good. Teachers, nursery nurses and learning support assistants worked together impressively to provide a stimulating learning environment and to make learning fun. Teaching and non-teaching staff work enthusiastically as a team to plan for improvement. Together they are committed to raise standards and improve the quality of teaching and learning for all children. Their involvement in attending courses both locally and nationally has added to their expertise in providing appropriately challenging activities for children

below the age of five linked to the recommended six early learning goals. The quality of learning has improved significantly since the last inspection. In addition to the learning focus for each group, adults recognised the pressing need to develop communication and language skills.

93. Overall, teaching of all aspects of the curriculum was never less than good, and some very good teaching was observed in the nursery and reception years. Where teaching was at its most effective, activities were planned which promoted learning experiences which built on previous skills, knowledge and understanding. There was a sensitive balance between direct teaching and opportunities for children to explore, investigate and learn from each other. The programme covers each of the six learning areas which develop the personal and emotional needs; communication, language and literacy skills; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world and physical and creative development of pupils. This balance encouraged children to make choices and to become more independent in their learning. Careful observation and records ensured that each child experienced the different learning areas in turn.
94. The quality of learning is most effective when all available adults demonstrate their good subject knowledge by focusing on one of the specific curricular areas, which is then interlinked to all other areas of learning. This was particularly evident in the nursery when an activity planned to prepare a jelly resulted in a quality learning experience which extended communication skills. Very good questioning, and skilful direction by the nursery nurse encouraged children to use their senses to feel and smell the jelly. They made observational comments such as: *'it's squashy'* *'it's wobbly'* *'it smells like lemons'*. They counted the pieces, and shared their knowledge and understanding of the world by talking about the need for cleanliness and what difference they would expect if they dropped the glass bowl, or the plastic jug: *'It will cut my finger'* or *'it will bounce'*. One child commented on how jelly became a liquid when mixed with hot water and another said: *'Orange juice is a liquid'*. Adults are most adept at encouraging children to talk and then making the most of their experience.
95. The accommodation for the Foundation Stage and the range of resources contribute to the good quality of learning and the good progress made. Rooms are colourful and displays contribute well to the learning environment. Rooms are divided into learning 'zones' where children are encouraged to use and apply their skills. There is strength in the way in which learning is managed and organised consistently well in both the reception and nursery teaching areas. There are well planned, secure outdoor learning areas where children experience opportunities for good physical development.

### **Personal, social and emotional development**

96. There are good links with parents to introduce children into the nursery class, and these links are extended to invite parents and their babies into the classroom. A significant proportion of children enter the school with immature social skills. However, they soon feel safe and secure and thrive on very good relationships with adults who value them as individuals. They become more confident as they realise that their contributions are being valued and

many are comfortable with the increasing number of known adults they work with. Children learn the teachers' structured routines quickly. Even the least confident are developing good relationships and responding increasingly more positively. They are eager and enthusiastic to learn.

97. Children share common routines in the nursery and reception classes and consequently are well prepared for the move to the reception classes. They share and work together and are developing respect for each other. They are very well behaved and know right from wrong. Most listen to, and are sensitive to the needs of others. Children are learning to concentrate and persevere with their learning and seek help when required. All staff have very high expectations of children's behaviour. Most children respond well, learn to know what is right and wrong quickly and understand why they should behave in the correct way. Adults have high expectations and encourage children to make decisions and become more independent.
98. Children enjoy their learning, and are eager to come to school. This is a strength of the Foundation Stage and provides a very good basis for the good quality of learning which is evident for children in both nursery and reception classes. By the time children leave the Reception Classes, many will have reached the expected early learning goals.

### **Communication, language and literacy**

99. There are many children whose standards in this area are well below those considered typical for children when they join the nursery class.
100. Activities to encourage speaking and listening skills and to speak in sentences are well planned. Teaching and non-teaching staff are skilled in asking questions to encourage a richer language and a greater understanding. For example, in water play activity in the nursery children talked about the ducks 'floating' and knew that the bird's colour was the same as the daffodils they had investigated earlier. Children who were used to speaking in single words responded positively when encouraged to speak in sentences. For example, when choosing their learning area, 'clinic' became '*I would like to play in the clinic*' when prompted by the teacher. The teacher is aware of the value of using every possible adult to manage groups of children and strengthen their communication skills.
101. In the reception classes, children used words such as '*above, below and through*' when throwing beanbags, and were motivated to express their thoughts when making gingerbread. Speaking and listening skills are extended in the reception class where experiences are planned for children to visit the 'supermarket' and write letters in the 'office area'. Children showed improved listening skills when repeating simple rhythms during a music activity.
102. Children in the nursery class use their writing area confidently as they demonstrate early writing skills by making marks. These skills are developed effectively so that in the reception class children copy simple sentences, which they had planned previously with the teacher's help. Very good direct story telling in a reception class widened children's experiences. Children re-told the story of *Billy Goats Gruff*, and identified the

beginning, middle and end of the story. Children were challenged to share their ideas with a friend (talking partners) and all children were able to contribute orally. However, only a small group was able to write simple sentences, with another sequencing the story pictorially.

103. Most nursery children know that reading goes from left to right and turn the pages of a book carefully. A group of lower ability children enjoyed talking about their books. Many children in the nursery write their own names. Good, clear notices and labels identify the required learning areas for the six early learning goals. In the reception class, all but a small number recognise words in their reading books and know some if not all of the initial sounds of letters. Similarly a small group of higher attaining children will have achieved the early learning goal by the end of the year. A group of children in a reception class was fascinated when sharing traditional stories with a nursery nurse. Most knew the story of *Hansel and Gretel* and *Little Red Riding Hood*, which had been used as shared books in class activities but no one could identify *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* nor *Robin Hood*.
104. Although standards overall are below the level considered to be typical for children below the age of five the quality of teaching in this area is good and consequently children make good progress. Approximately one in three children are on course to achieve the early learning goals by the time they move from the Foundation Stage so fewer children than typically found will be ready to access the challenges of the National Curriculum. Teachers and support staff plan together to respond to the needs of children particularly those with speech problems enabling them to make good progress.

### **Mathematical development**

105. When children enter the nursery class, attainment in mathematics for many is below that which is considered typical for children of a similar age. Only a small number of children have above average attainment on entry. Singing games such as '*five little ducks*' and '*five speckled frogs*' help to reinforce number and make learning fun. Many children count collectively to 10 and know the names of simple shapes such as circles, squares and triangles. They use vocabulary such as '*big and small*' and '*heavy and light*' correctly.
106. Children in the reception class count from 0 to 10 and know how to order numbers including which number is '*next*' or '*one more*' or '*one less*'. Computer programs, which encourage children to sequence numbers and explore patterns to 10, reinforce learning well. Mathematical development is encouraged at other times, for example when marking the register the teacher challenged children to calculate how many were absent and similarly a few children knew that ten and ten makes twenty when adding together the number of children staying for lunch. Children are encouraged to count to ten by following footprints when queuing for milk. These are effective strategies for developing children's understanding of number.
107. The teaching of mathematics seen was at least good. The decision to plan to the needs of the Early Numeracy Strategy has added an extra pace to teaching and learning and is

contributing to the good progress made. In one reception class the decision to split the class into two groups to experience the introduction of repeating patterns made the learning experience more relevant for both higher and lower attaining children. Consequently, higher attaining children experienced challenging patterns using three shapes whilst lower attaining children developed patterns from two shapes. By the end of the Foundation Stage many of the children will be on course to achieve the early learning goal and be ready to access the National Curriculum in mathematical development.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

108. Teachers build on children's natural curiosity and help them to understand the world in which they live. The school environment is used well and opportunities are planned to promote the use of all senses, such as when feeling different textures of tree barks. In the nursery children flew their '*kites*' (plastic bags) enthusiastically and were aware of the benefits of the wind, '*Look the wind is blowing it*'. They practise road safety when learning outside. Trikes, scooters and bikes stop at traffic lights, visit the fast food 'drive through' and stop to purchase petrol. Displays and photographs highlight visits within the local community and visitors to the school which include people who help us. There is a very good range of resources, which encourage children to develop, for example, a good understanding of the differences between land and water creatures. Children visit the '*clinic*' to weigh their babies and collect prescriptions from the doctor.
109. Reception children have visited the local supermarket to purchase ingredients and have made ginger bread. They chant rhythms and make musical instruments. They use the computer, and listening centre as well as the telephone in the '*office area*'. Children are well absorbed in their own culture such as when celebrating Christmas and Easter. Children have also developed an understanding about cultures and beliefs through listening to traditional stories. Scientific ideas are well developed in both the nursery and reception classes for instance when investigating the force of the wind or how to make different sounds.

### **Physical development**

110. Opportunities for physical development have improved significantly since the last inspection with a wide range of challenging resources now available. There is evidence of increasing physical control from the nursery to the reception classes. The two outdoor learning areas are well used and pupils now have planned access to the outdoor environment every day. In the nursery area alternative arrangements are provided for balancing and climbing when it is too wet. Planning highlights focused skill development and children are well supervised in secure areas.
111. Nursery children responded to music well when skipping and marching to different rhythms. In the playground, reception children are beginning to show greater control and awareness of space. Children follow instructions sensibly. Physical development is given a high priority with all children having frequent opportunities to develop their skills. Children with special



educational needs experience the full range of activities. Many children will have exceeded the early learning goal by the time they leave the Foundation Stage.

112. Fine motor skills are developed through handling small objects such as when cutting play dough, exploring different textures, managing jigsaws, and working with construction sets. One child made an aeroplane with wings that *'flap'*, whilst another *'made a woodpecker'*. Children used scissors safely and there is a wide and varied selection of media such as crayons, play dough, and paints for them to use. A group of children made puppets with movable arms and legs using card and paper fasteners, and others threaded pasta confidently on a string to produce repetitive patterns showing their increasing dexterity.

### **Creative development**

113. Evidence from lesson observation, display and photographs indicates that teachers provide children with a rich environment for creative development in which skills are built upon step by step. A large proportion of children will achieve the early learning goal on leaving the Foundation Stage. Nursery children enjoy singing and reception children were proud of the musical 'shakers' they made using peas, beans and lentils to create loud and soft sounds. Children demonstrated good listening skills when challenged to repeat rhythms. When singing in the Foundation Stage assembly, children joined in enthusiastically with nursery children joining in the actions as the singing proceeded. More opportunities have been created since the last inspection for pupils to experience the mixing of paint. Texture is explored when using their senses and a variety of vegetables and fruits are explored to print on a variety of surfaces to support sequences in mathematics. Pupils are highly motivated by these exciting activities and they are most eager to share their experiences.

### **ENGLISH**

114. Overall, standards in English for pupils at age seven and eleven are well below average. In the 2001 national tests and assessments for eleven-year-olds the school's results in English were well below the national average. When compared with similar schools, results in English are, overall, below average.
115. The evidence gathered during inspection through observing lessons, examining pupils' books and talking to pupils shows that standards are below those typically found at the age of seven and eleven. The majority of pupils enter the school with attainment much lower than that typical for their age group.
116. In the year 2001 tests and assessments for seven-year-olds the school's results in reading and writing were below the national average. When compared with similar schools, results in reading were above average. In writing, results were well below average.
117. By the age of seven pupils are able to listen carefully and contribute orally in lessons with adults and other pupils. However, their speaking and listening skills are, overall, below average. Where pupils are required to take part in more extended discussion standards are higher. For example, in a Year 1 class, pupils listened with interest and understanding during

story time. A number were spellbound throughout. The teacher emphasised the importance of good communication skills when speaking for example the need to, *'talk eye to eye'*. In a Year 1 literacy lesson the pupils talked well in pairs and there was good and appropriate level of discussion when helping each other. Most pupils demonstrated good listening skills. For example, in a shared reading and writing exercise the pupils were asked to give the teacher a sentence about scooters and gave *'Children rode the scooters'* and *'The children can ride the scooters down the hill'*. Also in a Year 1 lesson pupils were able to tell in detail the story of Palm Sunday. They took part in stimulating discussions using a good range of vocabulary and showing good subject knowledge.

118. By the age of eleven standards in speaking and listening are generally below those normally found. Pupils are generally confident in answering questions. For example in a Year 5 and 6 geography lesson in which pupils were learning about the uses of and the *'universal need'* for water. They were able to use the correct key vocabulary showing their knowledge and understanding of the water cycle. In lessons where pupils have the opportunity to develop their speaking and listening skills in groups progress is good. For example, pupils in a Year 5 and 6 art and design lesson took part in well-informed discussions about their hat design. Also in a Year 3 and 4 literacy lesson pupils were given very good opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills when talking about compound words. For example looking at *snow* and *flake*, one pupil very confidently stated *'Put the words together and you can make snowflake.'*
119. Attainment in reading is below that typically found for pupils who are seven years old. Higher attaining pupils read a variety of texts both accurately and with fluency. They are able to read independently and silently. They can also read clearly, fluently and with appropriate expression. They understand the main points and can retell using their own words. They are able to talk about the characters and the plot. They read fiction and non-fiction books and can express preferences. Lower attaining readers recognised familiar words and were able to use a range of reading strategies, for example, they use knowledge of initial letter sounds and pictures to understand the story. They can identify their favourite and the most interesting aspects of their books. Pupils read from commercial reading schemes and other materials. The pupils' reading books were suitably matched to their level of ability. The pupils enjoy reading and take books home regularly. They read at home by themselves and with others. The pupils have home reading diaries.
120. By the age of eleven pupils have attained standards in reading that are typical of those normally found. Higher attaining pupils are able to give very good résumés of the story so far with superb expression and excellent explanations of words such as, *'precipitation'* and *'extinguished.'* They were able to give reasons why they like certain books, for example one pupil commented *'I like a book when the unexpected happens, not the obvious'*. Lower attaining pupils read with little expression and use phonic cues to aid word recognition. They are able to self-monitor and make corrections to their reading. They are able to make predictions of events in the story and show understanding of the words: index, author, publisher and illustrator. When recalling a story they do so in simple detail for example, *'He said, ... She said, ... and then...'*. Pupils use illustrations to recall events in the story. Pupils are overall, confident when discussing reading. When hearing junior pupils

read a few made reference to the poor quality and low interest level of books in classrooms. The lower attaining pupils have less confidence when reading.

121. Pupils have school 'Individual Reading Records' on which they write evaluative comments about books they have read for example, '*exciting, dramatic, scary.*' Pupils also have 'Home Support Reading Records' in which pupils record the dates and title of books read.
122. Attainment in writing is below the national standard expected from pupils of seven and eleven years of age. Pupils start school with low levels of attainment and overall, make good progress in developing their writing skills. Higher attaining pupils in Year 1 are able to find words in dictionary and copy these into their books. A small group of higher attainers were able to write on the lines using the appropriate spacing between words. They were also able to write in simple sentences for example, '*I stayed in bed.*' In a Year 2 lesson most pupils were able to write in short, simple sentences. For example pupils were writing about why it is good to have hair, one pupil wrote '*It protects my head.*' By the end of Year 2 higher attaining pupils show an understanding of aspects of speech and grammar in writing. Most of the pupils were able to speak and write simple sentences in singular, plural, past and present tenses using words, '*is, are, was and were.*' In a Year 3 and 4 class pupils were learning about ordering of sentences in instructional writing, for example, '*Having a bath*', '*Cleaning your teeth*'. They were able to understand compound words. The lower attaining pupils showed an understanding of sound blends when reading for example, *chat, trick, small, think, and ship*. More able pupils in Year 6 show an understanding of punctuation and are able to use it correctly. They have a good sense of paragraphing and can write more complex sentences. Pupils are able to take notes and use technical language for example, *germinate* when talking about the '*Life cycle of a pea*'. In another Year 6 class, pupils showed an understanding of technical language used in non-fiction texts. The pupils were learning about the importance of key words for example *erupt, molten, crater, lava, magma*, in a text about volcanoes. A small group of pupils made good use of the class computers in their literacy lesson whilst others were writing sentences about the life of a sunflower, for example one pupil wrote, '*Roots absorb the water to make the sunflower grow.*' Below average writers in Year 6 work hard to understand how to find information from non-fiction books and make factual reports. They generally lack confidence in writing sentences. The use of joined handwriting is inconsistent throughout the school. The presentation of work in pupils' books is variable and often it is of a low standard.
123. Pupils take part in extra handwriting lessons. These lessons take place before morning registration. For example in a Year 5/6 class pupils used joined handwriting when copying words for example, *station, explosion, and pollination*. Their handwriting, written in pencil, was legibly formed, consistent in size and generally fluent.
124. The writing observed in lessons and in pupils' books indicates that progress overall, is less than satisfactory in writing. There is limited amount of writing in books especially free writing. There is a limited amount of writing and the quality and content lacks challenge and depth.

125. The marking of pupils' books is satisfactory. In both the infants and the juniors there are examples of supportive marking relating to content, pupils' attainment and effort. However, there is too little indication of what pupils need to do to improve. All teachers have English pupil portfolios in which there are samples of pupils' compositions, handwriting and spelling tests. The work is generally undated and is not sufficient to enable the tracking of pupil progress.
126. Overall, the quality of teaching observed in English lessons was good. This is an improvement since the last inspection.
127. In total 13 English lessons were observed. In one lesson teaching was judged to be very good. In eleven lessons teaching was judged to be good and in one lesson teaching was judged to be unsatisfactory. The quality of teaching in the infant classes was good. Six lessons were observed. All six lessons were judged to be good. Overall, the quality of teaching in the junior classes was good. Seven lessons were observed. In one lesson teaching was judged to be very good. In five lessons teaching was judged to be good and in one lesson teaching was judged to be unsatisfactory.
128. Teachers have developed the use of the National Literacy Strategy and this has improved the quality of teaching by providing a more structured approach. Where teaching is good teachers have a sound subject knowledge on which they base effective lessons delivered at a brisk pace. Where teachers' subject knowledge is limited lessons are slower and less challenging and teaching is unsatisfactory. Pupils respond well to their lessons and are making generally good progress. However, in the juniors teachers do not ensure that all pupils writing is joined up and legible.
129. Pupils who have been identified as having special educational needs make good progress. They are well supported and work is well matched to their needs. Teachers and support assistants make good use of assessment to support pupil progress. Very good teaching and assessment support is provided by the Local Education Authority for the teaching of English for pupils with special educational needs. Educational inclusion is strength in the teaching of English.
130. The National Literacy Strategy for developing pupils' skills in reading and writing has been established within the school. The literacy strategy has improved teachers' subject knowledge and teaching skills.
131. Overall, resources for English are broadly satisfactory. There are good, commercially produced displays in classrooms to support the teaching of grammar and spelling. The school has a number of good quality 'Big Books'. There are also a number of good quality guided group reader sets of fiction and non-fiction for all pupils. Most classrooms have readily accessible good quality dictionaries and thesauruses. Class library fiction stock is limited. The library based non-fiction is also of limited quality and a number of books are old and worn. The class library areas do not encourage pupils' interest in using books.
132. The English co-ordinator is a skilled practitioner. She has provided members of staff with guidance, support and training in various aspects of teaching English. This is resulting in

good teaching overall. She recognises the need for further staff training, especially newly appointed staff. There has been monitoring of English teaching within the school. The co-ordinator is aware of the strengths and weaknesses in the teaching of English. She understands the need to raise attainment in writing and is committed to raising standards for all.

## **MATHEMATICS**

133. Overall, standards in mathematics are above average. This represents very good improvement since the last inspection report which indicated that attainment in mathematics was below the national average at age seven and eleven and that most pupils were making unsatisfactory progress.
134. In the 2001 national assessments for seven-year-olds attainment in mathematics at age seven was above the national average at the expected Level 2+ and close to the national average for the higher Level 3 compared to similar schools. Compared to all schools it was close to the national average at Level 2+ and well below the national average for the higher Level 3. Standards continue to rise in the infants, in spite of children's attainment on entry to school being below average.
135. Pupils' performance at age eleven is above the national average for both the expected Level 4 and the higher Level 5. The trend of results over the last three years is broadly in line with the national trend. In comparison with similar schools pupils' performance is well above average at Level 4 and the higher Level 5. The school met its targets at both key stages last year. The school's tracking systems show that the great majority of pupils make at least good progress in mathematics, between the ages of seven and eleven.
136. On the evidence available at the time of the inspection, pupils in the current Year 2 are attaining standards in mathematics, which are in line with those expected nationally. At eleven, standards are above average, with some pupils consistently achieving at higher levels. Overall, standards have improved in the last four years. This reflects the clear improvement in the quality of teaching particularly in the juniors where most of the teaching is now very good. The benefits arise from stable staffing, the significant amount of time spent on mathematics, the structure and consistency provided by the numeracy initiative and the high quality of the planning.
137. The school has implemented the National Numeracy Strategy successfully and all teachers are using the structure well. Pupils have a good access to the breadth of the National Curriculum in mathematics, and there is a good balance between the different aspects of mathematics. In the infants pupils acquire a secure foundation in mathematics especially number. They add and subtract accurately with numbers of increasing size and estimate and measure accurately. They successfully perform simple multiplication calculations based upon familiar tables and recognise time and clock-faces. They have a good understanding of symmetry and accurately and carefully produce simple tally and bar charts. Throughout

Years 1 and 2 there is a strong emphasis on practical mathematical activities. Most of the current Year 2 pupils are working at or towards Level 2, and some are working at the higher Level 3.

138. By the age of seven, high attaining pupils understand place value of number to hundreds, tens and units, begin to explore numbers to 1000 and mentally recall table facts to 3, 4 and 5 times. Pupils of average ability use number to 100 understand place value to tens and units. They also recognise patterns relating to the two, five and ten times tables. Most Year 2 pupils identify common two and three-dimensional shapes. They recognise odd and even numbers and use doubles and near doubles to solve addition problems. They have good mental skills and solve money problems using sound strategies. Lower attaining pupils practise simple addition and subtraction with numbers up to 10 and sequence larger numbers.
139. The emphasis upon number continues in Years 3 to 6. The scrutiny of pupils' work indicated that the oldest pupils have had experiences of, and work accurately with fractions, decimals and percentages, long multiplication, prime numbers and factors, the attributes of two and three-dimensional shapes. They have a good understanding of area and perimeter of regular shapes by formula, reflective and rotational symmetry, mode, median and mean, graphs and frequency bar charts. There is a good balance between the elements of the curriculum. The quality of presentation of pupils' work is good across the school.
140. By the end of Year 6, pupils have a good understanding of place value to more than 1000 and use fractions and percentages confidently. Pupils multiply and divide decimals to two places, and know how to use and interpret co-ordinates. They calculate the mode, median and mean, and have a good understanding of ratio and proportion. Average attaining pupils multiply three-digit figures by two-digit figures. They measure perimeters and calculate areas of shapes. In discussions, pupils showed a good understanding of place value including decimal fractions. Lower attaining pupils have a good understanding of the place value of numbers but are less confident when using a range of strategies to multiply large numbers. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well by teachers and learning support assistants. These pupils are managed well by teaching staff who recognise their needs and respond appropriately. Good progress is maintained in Years 3 to 6 as a result of teaching that is consistently very good.
141. By the end of Year 6, pupils are familiar with, and can interpret confidently, bar charts and line graphs. These activities are linked appropriately to other areas of the curriculum, particularly in science and geography. There is good use of practical activities. Provision for investigative work remains a positive feature.
142. The oldest pupils show a satisfactory grasp of tables and of the strategies necessary for accurate mental calculations. Teachers recognise the importance of these skills and provide regular opportunities for practice. The development of mental mathematics is well established, for example in Year 6 where pupils were successfully handling inverse operations to add and subtract four-digit numbers.

143. The quality of teaching of mathematics seen was always good for Years 1 and 2 and examples of very good teaching were seen in both year groups. The overall quality of teaching in Years 3 to 6 was very good. This is enhanced by the work of learning support staff. Teachers' subject knowledge is very good. Expectations are high throughout the school. There has been an increased focus recently on meeting the needs of potential higher attainers in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6. Where teaching is best, teachers communicate their enthusiasm for the subject, so inspiring pupils to greater efforts. There is very effective use of both whole-class teaching and group work within each class. The quality of teachers' planning is very good. Learning objectives are almost always shared with the pupils as the session begins and this is very effective across the school.
144. The quality of learning is good up to the age of seven, and very good for the older pupils. Teachers have a clear grasp of the standards, which pupils should be achieving, and progress is increasingly brisk. There is evidence of appropriately challenging work being provided for the higher attaining pupils throughout the school. The most effective learning is promoted by clear objectives identified in planning (and reiterated to the pupils), high expectations by teachers and the lively pace of the better lessons. These factors, together with the good support provided for pupils with special educational needs, underpin the good improvement in standards in mathematics across the school.
145. Pupils have very positive attitudes towards mathematics. When the teaching is stimulating they are attentive and co-operative. They work well together.
146. Information and communication technology is making a significant contribution to the teaching of mathematics, especially in the data-handling element of the mathematics curriculum. Formal procedures for assessing pupils' progress are satisfactory, and there were several positive instances of teachers' informal assessment influencing the planning of future work. Teachers regularly use standardised and other test materials to focus their planning. The quality of marking is satisfactory overall. The pilot process of setting targets for pupils in Years 2, 5 and 6 are improving standards in these year groups. There is a general emphasis upon the systematic presentation of written work.
147. The co-ordinator provides very good leadership for the subject and has a clear view of the standards being attained. There has been a regular programme of monitoring of mathematics teaching and the school is well resourced for this subject.

## **SCIENCE**

148. Overall, standards in science are high by the end of the juniors. In the 2001 assessments made by the teacher, the percentage of pupils who attained the expected level for seven-year-olds was well below the national average. The percentage of pupils who attained the higher level was in line with that found nationally. When compared with similar schools, the pupils' results are below the national average and at the higher level, they are above those expected for the age group.
149. In the 2001 national assessments and tests, the percentage of pupils who attained the expected level for eleven-year-olds, was very high. The percentage of pupils attaining the

higher level was similarly, very high. Evidence gathered during the inspection confirms this. Progress across the juniors is consistently good. This is as a direct result of clearly planned learning experiences by teachers with extensive subject knowledge.

150. Evidence gathered during the inspection, including talking with the Year 2 pupils, suggests that standards of attainment are now in line with those usually found for this age group. The school is placing greater emphasis on investigative aspects of the subject and this is beginning to have a positive impact on the standards achieved.
151. Overall the quality of teaching in science is good. During the inspection, there was some good teaching in both Years 1 and 2. In a good Year 2 lesson, where pupils were exploring the way that adding first water then borax to PVA adhesive affected it, the teacher asked searching questions and encouraged pupils to make detailed observations of the different materials. They used appropriate scientific language such as '*viscous*' and '*liquid*' to describe the substance and, by the end of the lesson, the pupils could explain how the substance had changed; they understood that it would not be possible to get the adhesive back into its original form and described this as '*irreversible change*'. In Year 1, the teacher's clear structure and the effectively planned activities enabled pupils to make detailed observations of tadpoles as they learn about the life cycle of a frog. This good teaching successfully engages pupils in their learning and they respond with enthusiasm especially when using the microscope. In the one unsatisfactory lesson observed in the infants, the activities following the teacher's initial input were inappropriate. Pupils could not complete the given task. They lost interest and some inappropriate behaviour resulted. Pupils failed to build on their previous knowledge and a valuable learning opportunity was lost.
152. Teaching seen in the juniors was never less than satisfactory and often good. Where teaching was good, or very good, pupils were engaged in practical activities and challenged to build on previous learning by thinking and drawing conclusions about what they observed. This emphasis on the investigative aspects of the subject has a positive effect on the standards achieved, progress made and the obvious interest which pupils show in their learning. For example, in a Year 5/6 lesson, pupils were able to talk confidently about the basic requirements for germination. They were able to explain that '*seeds germinate and roots grow towards the water and develop root hairs to absorb water and nutriment from the soil*'. The well-organised lesson, which included the dissecting of a flower by the teacher, enabled the pupils to examine and name parts of a flower. They were completely absorbed in their observations, remarking in wonder '*you can really see the anther on this daffodil*'.
153. A computer programme was used to extend the pupils range of learning about flowers. This work took a number of pupils to a higher level of attainment. In a Year 3/4 lesson about friction, the teacher skilfully engaged pupils in discussion and extended their thinking so that they were able to suggest how to carry out a 'fair' investigation. All pupils were challenged throughout the lesson, and most pupils concentrated well. By the end of the lesson they were able to explain the need to measure the angle of incline and could identify which surface had the most friction.



154. The co-ordinator has very good subject knowledge and this has a positive impact on the standards of science throughout the school. She supports her colleagues by offering advice on the teaching of science and suggesting appropriate resources to support their work. Developing teachers' skills in assessment of science in the infants has been identified by the school as a priority. There have been insufficient opportunities provided for the co-ordinator to work with staff in the infants.
155. The school has recently returned to teaching science in mixed ability class groups in the juniors. It is important therefore to ensure that all teachers have the appropriate knowledge and level of expertise to provide challenge for all pupils.
156. Resources for the teaching of science are satisfactory. Displays around the school reflect pupils' current and past work. A particularly effective display recalled the work on the Solar System by Year 5/6 pupils. The school grounds are used as a learning resource; for example when hunting for mini beasts and for observation during the autumn time.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

157. Attainment has improved since the last inspection and is now above average at the end of Year 6. It is in line with expectations for pupils of this age by Year 2. There have been good improvements in the curriculum, planning, display work and the teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subject have improved. The co-ordinator has worked very hard to develop good teaching and effective learning throughout the school.
158. All pupils are fully involved in all aspects of art and design, and all pupils including those with special educational needs, make good progress. They enjoy the subject and concentrate hard.
159. Year 1 pupils were investigating the possibilities of a range of materials and processes. From a variety of materials they were exploring the effects of folding, scrunching, tearing, cutting and pleating. Good direct teaching by the teacher resulted in pupils creating some colourful flowers out of feathers, paper and fabrics. They demonstrated some good cutting and sticking skills and good use of materials by the pupils resulted in them creating attractive collage flower pictures out of pasta and materials. Pupils were able to select and match appropriate colours well especially in their attractive observational drawings of a vase of flowers. Year 2 pupils usefully explore shapes and patterns with good links with mathematics. They are developing a secure knowledge of mixing colours and good direct teaching enables pupils to apply these skills well in their painting and models.
160. In Years 3 and 4 pupils understood how to control pencil and watercolours in order to record degrees of shade and tone. Pupils of all abilities skilfully print patterns on papers and create interesting models for their school environment. Good direct teaching enables them to develop their skills well. The lessons are well planned and there is good challenge for pupils of all abilities.

161. In Years 5 and 6 pupils used collage materials well to develop ideas for pattern, texture and colour in their hat designs. Good teaching enabled pupils to use their life-size sketches as a template for their collage. They made well-informed decisions concerning collage materials and soon decided which would suite their hat the best. No use was made of information and communication technology in this lesson, however the pupils brought their learning in English, history and geography to their designs of hats.
162. In the two lessons observed, the quality of teaching was good overall. Teachers have a clear understanding of the skills they want pupils to learn. Pupils are given valuable opportunities to explore their own ideas and to experiment. Where teaching is good there is good teacher subject knowledge and good skills tuition, for example when pupils create collages and models. Teachers use questions well to remind pupils of their previous learning. Pupils make satisfactory use of information and communication technology to support their learning, for example in pattern work.
163. The co-ordinator has good knowledge and enthusiasm for the subject, which she passes on to her colleagues. Effective links have been established with other schools and resulted in good examples of pupils' work being exhibited alongside the work of pupils from other schools, in the local library. Junior age pupils who belong to the art club created a wonderful whirlpool sculpture, while the youngest children created an imaginative letter 'I' for the exhibition.
164. The art and design policy has been recently reviewed and the curriculum is planned well to give pupils experience of different techniques and media including working with three-dimensional materials. The co-ordinator monitors planning, but has not yet had the opportunity to monitor the teaching in art and design. In addition there is no effective record of tracking pupils' progress in the development of art and design skills.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

165. Four lessons were observed in design and technology and provided useful evidence of work that is going on in design and technology. Further evidence was collected through an interview with the subject co-ordinator, scrutiny of pupils' work, conversations with pupils and looking at displays around the school.
166. At the time of the previous inspection the attainment of the seven- and eleven-year-olds was unsatisfactory and they made unsatisfactory progress. In this inspection it was judged that by the ages of seven and eleven, standards of attainment are above those expected for pupils of this age. The curriculum is significantly better than it was, and the co-ordinator has worked very hard to develop good teaching and effective learning throughout the school. He has been very successful, and feels that teachers are more confident in delivering the subject with much improved resources.
167. In Year 2 the pupils have made simple drawings of puppets and labelled the parts. There was good use of their basic sewing techniques as they selected materials and tried joining techniques to make their own finger puppets. When they had completed their work, they

showed it and talked about it to the whole class further developing their understanding.

168. Pupils in Year 3 and Year 4 made good progress in deciding which sandwiches they would like to make for a particular occasion. Teachers consolidate pupils' previous knowledge and understanding well, through questioning. Pupils thoroughly enjoy testing and evaluating a wide range of breads and good use is made of information and communication technology to support the pupils' learning. They produce graphs to show which bread they like the best.
169. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have planned and designed model shelters and it was possible to see photographic evidence of some very interesting designs of structures using modelling straws and materials. They have recently completed designing and making a very good range of slippers and discussions with pupils revealed that they had a good understanding of this process. They are currently designing a piece of three-dimensional headwear and were observed using card as the basic structure. Good teaching and clear explanations enabled pupils to make good progress. Pupils with special educational needs also made good progress.
170. In the lessons seen, teaching in design and technology was good throughout the school. The best teaching was characterised by good planning, which ensured that the tasks were suitably matched to the needs of the pupils. Skilful use of questioning was used to consolidate pupils' knowledge and understanding of the topics and good management of pupils and high expectations secure good behaviour.
171. Throughout the school pupils' work is well planned, with clear progression in their skills and activities. From the reception class upwards pupils are taught the correct way to handle tools and how to work safely. The strong emphasis on designing, making, evaluating and amending means that pupils, including those with special educational needs, are well motivated to complete their work to good standards. All pupils are fully included in every aspect of the curriculum.
172. Since the last inspection there has been much improvement in the provision of resources and tools and they are satisfactory and sufficient to deliver the present curriculum. The co-ordinator has identified the need to acquire a 'traffic light' system to develop pupils' knowledge of 'control' in Year 6.
173. All pupils have full access to the curriculum and make good progress. Inclusion is well assured as all pupils have access to the full range of design and technology experiences. Pupils show an enthusiasm for their work and attitudes and behaviour were good in the lessons observed.
174. The co-ordinator has had a very positive impact on standards. He monitors teachers' planning and is able to provide support and advice for his colleagues. However, as yet there are no opportunities offered for monitoring classroom practice. In addition there is no effective record of tracking pupils' progress in the development of design and technology skills. Without these it is not possible for the co-ordinator to have an accurate overview of

pupils' capabilities and attainment.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

175. A judgement on standards has been made after having observed five lessons, spoken to pupils and the subject co-ordinator; scrutinised teachers' planning and pupils' previous and current work and displays. Evidence indicates that standards are typical for pupils by the age of seven and by the age of eleven. This is an improvement since the last inspection.
176. Curriculum guidelines, based on national recommendations, are now in place, enabling regular and progressive gains in knowledge and understanding term on term, and year on year. In the one lesson observed in the infants pupils identified the continent of Africa and correctly placed the Atlantic and Indian Oceans. Their study of the Kenyan village of Baricho widened their understanding of places and lifestyles. Previous work indicates that pupils have carried out traffic surveys in Year 1 and recorded this information by tallying and charts. Pupils have produced a simple map of the locality and compared Huyton with the fictional Island of Struay in Scotland.
177. In the junior classes there was evidence of a good understanding of the local area in Years 3 and 4, and pupils used aerial photographs well to identify buildings before classifying them into their uses e.g. industry, homes, shops, and leisure. Mapping skills have been extended to include accurate keys and many pupils are aware of Huyton in relation to a map of the British Isles, Europe and the World. In Years 5 and 6, pupils have made a well-planned visit to compare the similarities and differences between Huyton and Southport. A study of the rivers has been linked to the historical study of Ancient Greece and the use of the River Nile. Pupils have considered water use and those who kept a diary of use, plotted this information in graphical form using a simple spreadsheet. Pupils have discussed environmental issues such as traffic congestion, and through their status as an 'Eco' school have planned to improve the school grounds and the local environment.
178. Overall the quality of teaching is good. Teaching has improved since the last inspection. In the one lesson observed in Year 2, teaching was good, and in the four lessons seen in the juniors three lessons were good and one was satisfactory. Generally, teachers have good subject knowledge and make learning interesting. Where teaching was less than good, time was so restricted that pupils had insufficient time to carry out their tasks identifying aerial photographs and classifying land use. Overall pupils make good progress.
179. Geography and history are studied alternately throughout the year, and opportunities are promoted to link the subjects. The amount of written work in pupils' books, particularly in the infant classes did not reflect the amount of time allocated to the subject. The subject co-ordinator has not been able to monitor the quality of teaching and learning and she is aware of the need to develop a manageable system to record information about pupils' gains in skills, knowledge and understanding.

## **HISTORY**

180. It was only possible to observe one lesson during the inspection. There is limited evidence available in books of pupils' work in history. Taking into account evidence from discussions with pupils, displays around the school and teachers' planning, standards are judged to be in line with those expected nationally by the age of seven and eleven.
181. Pupils in the infants, for example, learn about times gone by and make comparisons between then and now. They are provided with opportunity to develop a sense of chronology by studying life in Victorian times.
182. During the inspection a lesson was observed in which pupils handled a number of kitchen utensils, including a flat iron and a washboard from the early 1900's. Pupils recorded the information on a number line. The quality of teaching was good. The teacher had very good subject knowledge, together with a clear understanding of the specific skills to be developed. This had a positive impact on pupils' learning. The teacher's questioning was good and through it pupils were able to explain their reason for deciding that one object was older than another. There was a very good range of artefacts, including those borrowed from the Prescott Museum. The placing of a washing line and mangle in the classroom, provided additional motivation. The pupils enjoyed and gained from the experience.
183. Pupils in Year 1 enjoyed a visit to the Prescott Museum, where they took part in a Victorian Christmas. There was evidence that they had listened well as they were able to recall and record events. One pupil's very detailed drawing of Pudding Lane was evidence of his appreciation of the living conditions of the time.
184. In Years 3 and 4, pupils subject knowledge is good. They were able to recall their research of the Egyptians. The life of the Pharaohs was described in some detail, including the embalming of the bodies. They were proud of their ability to write their name and a simple sentence, using hieroglyphics. With the use of videos, books and photographic evidence, they appreciated the discovery of the tomb of Tutankhamun by Howard Carter. They were able to recognise the River Nile as a 'source of life', without which the ancient Egyptians would not have survived. The pupils marvelled at the fact that 'the pyramids, built long before the birth of Christ, are still there to be seen'.
185. With reference to census data of 1890 and a visit to the local area, Years 5 and 6 had made a comparison between present day Huyton and life in the earlier time. Pupils had a good knowledge of the changes that had occurred over time, including the disappearance of crafts such as the blacksmith and wheelwright. They refer to Blue Bell Lane where the Victorian cottages still stand.
186. The newly appointed co-ordinator is both knowledgeable and enthusiastic about her subject. She has drawn up an effective action plan for the development of the subject. This will include planned opportunities for assessment and a greater emphasis on historical enquiry.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

187. Only one lesson of information and communication technology was observed in the juniors during the inspection and this was made up of two short sessions with a Year 5 and 6 class. The school delivers specific information and communication technology in two sessions each week lasting for less than 30 minutes. The first session introduces new skills to be practised during the week and the second session evaluates progress. In addition a wide range of evidence of pupils' work was scrutinised, and discussions held with older pupils who demonstrated the work saved on the school's network system. Pupils were also observed using the computers during lessons in a range of subjects across the school.
188. Overall, by the end of the juniors pupils are attaining standards typical for their age. Pupils in Year 1 were seen using programmes to reinforce their understanding of number bonds to ten. They show good mouse control and this work supports their learning in mathematics. They also use their word processing skills to present some of their written work. Pupils in Year 5 and 6 were developing their skills in using spreadsheets, the current area for learning and skill development. They demonstrated a good understanding of the manipulation of cells within the spreadsheet. Pupils in Year 5 and 6 are beginning to use information gathered from the Internet via the local education authority's Web Site to support their learning in other subjects such as History.
189. In the one lesson observed the teaching was judged to be good. The teacher showed good subject knowledge and the lesson was well planned to develop pupils' knowledge and skills systematically. Such lessons take place in the computer area of the classroom where limited numbers of computers means the short teaching sessions followed by practice and then evaluation is a very effective use of the limited resources. Overall, there are sufficient computers in classrooms for pupils to use. Lessons are well prepared and delivered at a brisk pace that makes the maximum use of the limited time available. Pupils respond well to their information and communication technology lessons and confidently use the skills and knowledge learned to support their learning in the other subjects of the curriculum.
190. Standards in information and communication technology have improved since the last inspection and pupils are making better progress in response to better teaching as they move through the school.

## **MUSIC**

191. Standards of attainment in music at the age of eleven are below national expectations. There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement of the standards of attainment in music at the age of seven.
192. Overall, the quality of teaching is unsatisfactory. Four junior class music lessons taught by school staff were observed during inspection. Two lessons were unsatisfactory and two were satisfactory. In the unsatisfactory lessons the teacher's class control was poor and a number of pupils were not engaged in the lesson. In the satisfactory lessons pupils listened well and showed enthusiasm for the subject.
193. The pupils in a Year 5 and 6 lesson were learning about different sounds and how the

composer Saint Saens used sounds and melodies to represent different animals. The pupils chose instruments to represent the animals in the story. The pupils worked in groups and discussed their untuned percussion instruments and how they were going to organise the sounds for their composition. Pupils spoke about the high, low, loud sounds and the character of the animals in the story. The pupils very quickly composed and ordered the sounds for their composition. They performed their simple group compositions with confidence. This was a very good opportunity for pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills.

194. During inspection week pupils in a Year 3, 4 class and a Year 5, 6 class had similar lessons. They all listened to *The Carnival of the Animals* by Saint Saens and discussed sound pictures. Teachers' planning lacked detail and was not matched sufficiently to the different ages and abilities of the pupils.
195. In another Year 3/4 lesson the teacher demonstrated good questioning skills; for example, when talking about different vocal sounds the teacher asked '*How can we change the timbre of the song?*'. The pupils showed understanding of the word timbre through discussion and a practical explanation.
196. Overall pupils' behaviour and attitudes in the music lessons observed was satisfactory. The pupils have a desire to take part in singing, composing and performing activities. In the very good lessons their behaviour is very good.
197. The school has insufficient teacher and pupil resources to deliver the full programme of study in music. The quality of teaching provided by Knowsley Performing Arts Service is very good. Standards of attainment in singing when pupils are taught by the peripatetic teacher are in line with national expectations.
198. During inspection one music lesson was observed in Year 2. A peripatetic music teacher from Knowsley Performing Arts Service taught singing to the full Year 2 cohort. The teaching was very good and provided very good value for money. The Year 2 pupils sang a number of songs. The repertoire chosen was most appropriate to the age group. The pupils performed with confidence, knowledge, understanding and a wonderful enthusiasm for singing. They demonstrated good observation and listening skills. They had good voice control and were able to listen carefully and copy, with accuracy, the different vocal sounds demonstrated by the teacher. For example, when speaking the chant '*Boom Chicka Boom*' they sang with high, low, loud, quiet, fast, slow and posh voices. The pupils sang songs of varying styles, some with actions and movement.
199. The Year 3 and 4 choir was taught by the peripatetic music teacher from Knowsley Performing Arts Service. The pupils sang a variety of songs. The repertoire was well matched to the pupils' age, ability and interest. They learnt a song about a Mexican volcano called *Popocatepetl*. The choir learnt the words quickly and were able to sing with good expression, diction and pitch.
200. During inspection a small group of pupils from Year 3 was taking part in *Taster* clarinet and

flute lessons. The pupils were in their third week of a six-week programme of introductory lessons. The pupils were taught by a peripatetic woodwind teacher from Knowsley Performing Arts Service. The pupils had excellent attitudes and made very good progress.

201. The music co-ordinator understands the need for staff training in order to develop confidence and competence in the teaching of music in the National Curriculum. She has provided staff support and has management files for the subject.



## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

202. It was only possible for inspectors to observe four lessons of physical education in both the infants and juniors during the inspection. Pupils were also observed at general play during lunchtime and in the after school football club as part of the after school provision.
203. Overall, standards in physical education are similar to those typically found for all age groups. Pupils show developing ball skills where activities are designed to develop catching and throwing skills. Older pupils in the juniors develop their sense of rhythm, movement and balance working in pairs to produce sequences of dance movements to music on the theme of a Brazilian Carnival. Generally, ball skills are developing well and both boys and girls demonstrate good throwing and catching skills by the end of the juniors. However, overall fitness levels are lower than expected and pupils would clearly benefit from more physical exercise. Swimming standards are higher than average as pupils in every year group have swimming instead of games for a period each year.
204. Overall, the quality of teaching is good. Teaching seen was always at least satisfactory and mostly good. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and pay appropriate attention to health and safety with clear warm up and warm down routines. Lessons usually proceed at a good pace. When appropriate teachers make good use of pupil demonstrations and encourage pupils to assess each other's work and offer ideas for improvement. Pupils respond well to their lessons working hard and making clear progress in body control during the lessons seen.
205. The planned curriculum covers all aspects of the national physical education programme. The hall provides a very good resource for indoor activities and the larger than usual playing field is used for a range of outdoor games.
206. The school takes part in a range of competitive games with other schools, for example, during the inspection the school took part in a football competition.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

207. Overall, standards in religious education are satisfactory. There is very little evidence available in books of pupils' work in religious education. The discussions with pupils and evidence from photographs and the work on display, indicates that standards of attainment at seven and eleven are typical of those expected for this age.
208. Discussion with pupils indicates that they are developing a good factual basis of topics they have studied. In both infants and juniors, pupils not only learn about religion, but also learn from it. They are able to relate events and teachings to their own lives. In the infants, pupils become familiar with stories about Jesus, his life and the miracles he performed. They have knowledge of the major Christian festivals of Christmas and Easter. One pupil in Year 1, attempting an explanation of the resurrection, described it as "Jesus was back alive again." In the juniors, in addition to learning more about Christianity, pupils study several aspects of Buddhism and Judaism. They are able to talk about the festival of Hanukkah and aspects of

Jewish family life, including Bar Mitzvah. They are aware of the 'special clothing' the tallith. When pupils are learning about Judaism, the headteacher shares his detailed knowledge about the Jewish faith. They recognise the importance of having respect for other faiths.

209. During the inspection, it was only possible to observe four lessons. Teaching was judged to be good or better in three lessons, unsatisfactory in one lesson. In those lessons judged to be good or better, teachers have good subject knowledge. They use questions to good effect enabling pupils to develop their knowledge and understanding. Teachers engage pupils' interest and seek to extend their thinking. In a very good lesson where pupils were exploring how artists had portrayed the emotions associated with the events of Easter week, there was a high level of pupil participation. They show a mature insight and empathy for the emotions of the people involved. Their very good knowledge of the events enables them to comment on '*the cruelty in the faces of the people*' as Jesus falls and '*Peter looks confused; he didn't expect Jesus to be arrested.*' They note that in the paintings the face of Jesus is always surrounded by light. Their explanation for this is that '*Jesus didn't really die; he's still alive now.*' This was a very well planned lesson by a sensitive teacher who has very high expectations of all her pupils. They responded well, worked hard throughout, listening to each other and building on their previous learning.
210. In the unsatisfactory lesson, there was a lack of clear objectives and a significant number of pupils were not engaged in the lesson. The lesson was too teacher directed and pupils had little opportunity to demonstrate what they knew and understood. The pupil task was an inappropriate colouring activity providing no opportunity for progress in learning.
211. The well planned programme for religious education is based on the Wirral Agreed Syllabus, which has been selected by the school. School assemblies make an important contribution to the school's work in religious education. Themes of the week are chosen to link with appropriate religious festivals, or to promote the personal development of pupils. During the inspection, in a Year 5/6 class assembly, the theme was 'Love.' Pupils listened attentively to the teacher and two pupils read their own prayer to the class. However, pupils did not have an opportunity to reflect or to share their own thoughts and feelings with each other.
212. Clergy from local churches visit the school to lead assemblies or to contribute to a specific aspect of learning. Local churches of all denominations are used as a rich source of learning. A booklet "Welcome to Roby Church", produced by staff from the school and church, provides a useful point of reference for pupils visiting the Church. Pupils are able to recall their visit.
213. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and has good subject knowledge. She supports staff well, particularly by providing a good range of resources to support teaching and learning. Her action plan for further development of the subject includes additional planning support material and a further refinement of the termly planning and discussion with the local education authority religious education adviser on aspects of record keeping.