

INSPECTION REPORT

**GWLADYS STREET COMMUNITY
PRIMARY AND NURSERY SCHOOL**

Liverpool

LEA area: LIVERPOOL

Unique reference number: 104610

Headteacher: Mrs K Maunder

Reporting inspector: Mr M Newell

Dates of inspection: 11th – 14th June 2001

Inspection number: 196985

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Nursery, Infant and Junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 – 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Walton Lane
Liverpool

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr A Garner

Date of previous inspection: March 1997

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Martin Newell 10638	Registered inspector	Equal Opportunities English as an Additional Language. Geography	The school's results and achievements. How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
Barbara Sinclair 9593	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Georgina Beasley 27899	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology	
David Carpenter 31807	Team inspector	Art and design Design technology Religious education	
Eifion Morgan 22556	Team inspector	Science	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
Neville Sherman 16493	Team inspector	English History	
Geraldine Taujanskas 25352	Team inspector	Music Physical education	How well is the school led and managed?
Angela Wilkinson-Tilbrook 10068	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Special educational needs	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is situated close to the city centre of Liverpool. It is a popular school that has been oversubscribed for many years. There are currently 529 pupils on roll, which includes 107 children that attend the nursery on a part-time basis. Forty-five per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is above the national average. Twenty-one per cent of pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs and this is above the national average. The percentage of pupils that have a statement of special educational need is below the national average. There are no pupils in school at an early stage of acquiring English as an additional language. A high percentage of children that attend the nursery transfer to the main school. The attainment of children when they start in the nursery is generally, but not always, well below average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school with some impressive strengths. By the time that pupils leave school they achieve well above average standards in science and above average standards in art and design, design and technology and religious education. Standards in art and design and design and technology are equally good at the end of Key Stage 1. Under the very good leadership of the headteacher and the deputy headteacher, it is a school that knows exactly what it needs to do to improve further. There is an excellent team spirit present in the school, with all teaching and non-teaching staff as well as the Governing Body committed to raising standards and the quality of education that the school provides. Pupils have very good attitudes to school and to work and behaviour is of a high standard. The provision that the school makes for pupils' personal development is very good. The quality of teaching is good throughout the school, with teaching often very good in the nursery. This is a most caring and supportive school, where the individuality of pupils is recognised and celebrated. All these factors make a significant contribution to the quality of pupils' learning and to the good progress that pupils of all abilities make. Taking all factors into account, this is a school that is providing good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils achieve well above average standards in science and above average standards in art and design, design technology and religious education by the time that they leave school. Standards are above average in art and design and design and technology by the end of Key Stage 1.
- The good and at times very good teaching ensures that pupils of all abilities make good progress and learn in an effective manner.
- Pupils behave very well and have very positive attitudes to school. Relationships throughout the school are of a high standard.
- The school makes very good provision for pupils' personal and social development.
- The school provides a good range of learning opportunities both within and outside the formal curriculum.
- The procedures that are in place to ensure pupils' welfare and to assess and track their academic progress are of a good and often very good standard.
- The school works extremely hard in its partnership with parents, which is reflected in the very high levels of parental satisfaction with the quality of education that the school provides.
- The leadership provided by the headteacher and deputy headteacher is very good and has a significant impact on what the school achieves. All staff and governors work together in an impressive manner and show a determination to constantly improve the quality of education that the school provides.

What could be improved

- Standards in English.
- Standards in information and communication technology.
- Pupils' attendance.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made good progress since the last inspection in 1997. Standards have been maintained or improved in most subjects although the school has rightly identified a need for further improvements in English and information and communication technology. Following the last inspection, the school set about tackling the key issues in a systematic and effective manner. The school has successfully addressed the weaknesses in teaching to such an extent that the quality of teaching is now a strength of the school. A very good quality school development plan is now in place that provides a very accurate and detailed analysis of the issues that the school needs to address to improve further. The weaknesses in the Foundation Stage have been tackled well and again this is now another strength of the school. The desire and commitment of all staff and governors to constantly seek to provide the best education for the pupils indicates that this is a school that is very well placed to continue to develop and improve.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	A	C	D	B
mathematics	C	C	C	A
science	B	B	A	A*

Key

very high A*

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

On the basis of the end of Key Stage 2 National Curriculum test results, pupils' attainment in science was well above average, at an average level in mathematics and below average in English. The school performs well when compared to similar schools, particularly in science where the school's results are in the top five per cent of similar schools nationally. Inspection findings show a similar picture, with, however, a greater percentage of pupils exceeding the level expected of 11-year-olds, particularly in mathematics and science. This trend of higher levels of attainment is set to rise again in future years. Pupils of all abilities are making good progress and achieving well at Key Stage 2. The trend of improvement in attainment is at a similar rate to that that found nationally. The apparent dip in standards in English and the difference in attainment between subjects can be explained by the fact that pupils' lack of, use of and understanding of an expressive and expansive vocabulary is impacting far more in English than in the other subjects. The school is already aware of this and has good strategies in place to tackle the issue. The impressive standards in science can be explained by the emphasis that the school places on the development of scientific knowledge and skills and the good and often very good quality of teaching. The targets that the school has set

itself for literacy and numeracy are at an appropriate level and are sufficiently challenging. At the end of Key Stage 1 standards in English and mathematics are below average but at an average level in science. Pupils of all abilities at this key stage are making good strides in their learning and achieving well, given the low level of attainment with which many pupils start school.

Standards in art and design and design and technology are at an above average level at the end of both key stages and pupils exceed the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education at the end of Key Stage 2. Standards in information and communication technology are below average at the end of both key stages. The school has already identified this as an area for improvement and has already put in place a good quality action plan to tackle the issue. Attainment in all other subjects is at an average level at the end of both key stages.

The attainment of many children when they start school is well below average. The children benefit from good and often very good teaching in the Foundation Stage. This results in children making significant strides in their learning. By the time that children start in Year 1, attainment in personal and social development exceeds the nationally recommended Early Learning Goals and meets the required goals in physical development, creative development and in knowledge and understanding of the world. Despite the good progress that children are clearly making in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development their attainment does not reach the Early Learning Goals for these areas of learning.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. The pupils work very well in lessons and show an enthusiasm for all the activities in which they take part. These factors make an important contribution to the quality of learning.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils are very well behaved in class and around the school. They show a real sense of self-discipline and respect for adults and one another.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. The school makes very good provision for the personal development of all pupils. Relationships are very good and contribute significantly to the life and ethos of the school.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. Despite the strenuous efforts of the school to promote good attendance the attendance rate is well below the national average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
80 Lessons seen overall	Good	Good	Good

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

The quality of teaching is good overall and often very good in the nursery. During the inspection 26% of teaching was very good, a further 54% good and the rest satisfactory. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed. Examples of very good teaching were observed in the Foundation Stage and at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Examples of good teaching were observed in every class. Teaching in the Foundation Stage ensures that children learn through practical and investigative activities as well as more formal and structured learning activities. This creates a very positive ethos for learning. Literacy and numeracy are taught

well across the school with many opportunities for pupils to extend their numeracy and literacy skills in other areas of the curriculum. The teaching of science is a particular strength. Pupils' investigative skills are nurtured and developed alongside scientific knowledge. This makes a significant contribution to the very high standards that pupils are achieving by the time that they leave school. Teaching throughout the school is often characterised by good planning, high expectations and effective classroom management and organisation. In the vast majority of lessons the tasks that are set are challenging and this ensures that the needs and potential of pupils of all abilities are recognised and met. The school has already identified the need to further develop teachers' knowledge and expertise in information and communication technology so as to have a bigger impact on the standards that pupils achieve in this area of the curriculum.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The school provides a good range of learning opportunities across the different areas of the curriculum. Pupils' learning is enhanced by the very good range of extra-curricular activities, visits out of school and by visitors to the school.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Individual education plans are well written and contain challenging and achievable targets. Pupils benefit from well-targeted support. All these factors contribute positively to the good progress that pupils make.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good provision is made for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This makes a powerful contribution to pupils' personal development. Positive values and attitudes are consistently promoted and pupils are encouraged to have tolerance and respect for the feelings and needs of others. Much is done to promote pupils' awareness of other traditions and cultures.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good. This is a very caring and supportive school where the individuality of pupils is valued and celebrated. Good procedures are in place to assess and then to track pupils' progress as they move through the school. These procedures impact positively on pupils' learning and achievement.

The school has very good procedures in place to promote good attendance and good behaviour and to track pupils' personal development. The school has worked extremely hard and has been most successful in forming a strong partnership with parents. This partnership constantly encourages parents to support their child's learning both at home and at school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher leads and manages the school very effectively. She is most ably supported by the deputy headteacher. She has played a pivotal role in moving the school forward and in creating an excellent team spirit where all working at the school are committed to providing the best education they can for all pupils.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very good. The governors are deeply committed to the school, fulfil their roles and responsibilities very well and are effective in the manner in which they hold the school to account for the quality of education that it provides.

The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. This is a school that is constantly evaluating its own performance. Detailed analysis of test and assessment data takes place and challenging and appropriate targets are then set. Very good procedures are in place to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning.
The strategic use of resources	Good use is made of the individual strengths and skills of teachers to impact positively on pupils' learning. The principles of best value are applied very well when purchasing goods and services. Financial planning is of a very good standard.
Staffing, accommodation and resources	The school has a good number of teaching and non-teaching staff. The adequacy of accommodation is satisfactory overall but the school does not have a grassed playing field. Resources are satisfactory overall with the library in need of additional high quality fiction and non-fiction books.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The fact that their children enjoy coming to school. • The good quality of teaching and the good progress that their children make. • The standard of behaviour. • The approachability of the staff. • How well the school is led and managed. • The way in which the school helps children to become mature and responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of homework that is set. • Information about how their child is progressing and the way in which the school works with parents. • The range of activities that the school provides outside of lessons.

The inspection findings support the very positive views of the parents. The parents are accurate in their perceptions that this is a good school that is providing a good quality of education for their children. The amount and range of homework tasks that are set are better than found in the majority of primary schools and impact positively on pupils' learning. Homework is therefore judged to be good. The school has done a great deal to forge a strong working partnership with parents and has been successful in its attempts. Many parents make a valuable and valued contribution to their child's learning. In addition to the formal opportunities that are provided for parents to visit school to discuss their child's progress, staff are readily available throughout the year for parents to discuss a child's progress. The written reports that parents receive about their child's progress are well written and provide a clear picture of how well a child is achieving and what to do to improve. These areas of the school's work are therefore judged to be good. The school provides a wide range of activities outside of lessons. In addition to this, the school arranges visits to places of educational interest, residential visits and for visitors to talk and meet the pupils at school. These all bring an added and important dimension to pupils' learning. Provision overall in this area of school life is judged to be very good.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. On the basis of the 2000 end of Key Stage 2 National Curriculum test results, pupils' attainment in science was well above average, at an average level in mathematics and below average in English. The school performs well when compared to similar schools. In science, the school's results are very high and are in the in the top 5% of similar schools nationally. Comparisons with similar schools show attainment in mathematics to be well above average and above average in English. Inspection findings show attainment in science to be well above average, at an average level in mathematics but below average in English. Findings also show that more pupils are exceeding the level expected of 11-year-olds in all three subjects than has been the case in previous years. This is particularly the case in mathematics and science. This trend of higher levels of attainment is set to rise again in future years. Pupils of all abilities are making good progress and achieving well at Key Stage 2. The trend of improvement is similar to that found nationally. The apparent dip in standards in English and the difference in attainment between subjects can be explained by the fact that pupils' lack of, use of and understanding of an expressive and expansive vocabulary is impacting far more in English than in the other subjects. The school is already aware of this and has good strategies in place to tackle the issue. The impressive standards in science are due to the emphasis that the school places on the development of scientific knowledge and skills and the good and often very good quality of teaching. The targets that the school has set itself for literacy and numeracy are at an appropriate level and are sufficiently challenging.
2. Inspection findings show that consistently good teaching in English, mathematics and science are impacting positively on the standards that are being achieved and the strides in learning that pupils of all abilities are making. This, together with a rigorous revision programme, well-targeted support for the less able pupils and the very positive attitudes held by pupils, forms a powerful partnership. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been implemented in a highly effective manner and these are helping pupils to achieve well in relation to their abilities. The higher attainers are being sufficiently challenged and stretched and there is no significant evidence of underachievement.
3. Many pupils start school with poor language skills and, despite the fact that pupils make good progress throughout their time at the school, standards in reading, writing and speaking are below average by the time that they leave school. Standards in listening are at an average level. Pupils listen attentively and follow instructions well. Teaching ensures that pupils are given good opportunities to develop their ability to listen effectively. The opportunities at Key Stage 2 for pupils to listen to their classmates reading aloud their written work at the end of lessons enhance pupils' listening skills. Pupils' speaking skills are not at the same level. Few pupils are able to articulate their thoughts clearly or use an expansive or expressive vocabulary. In writing, pupils are provided with many opportunities to write for a range of audiences and purposes and have a good understanding of the importance of presenting their work neatly and many strive hard to ensure that their work is pleasing to read. However, few pupils' written work is sustained or sufficiently developed into longer pieces of imaginative and creative writing. The pupils' somewhat limited vocabulary hinders their progress in this regard. In reading, pupils at Key Stage 2 continue to develop their sight vocabulary and pupils' enjoyment of many forms of literature

continues to be developed. However, despite the good emphasis placed by teachers on extending pupils' reading skills, their understanding of the works of famous authors is limited and too few pupils read with suitable intonation or expression. Pupils' number skills are at an average level. The effective implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy is improving pupils' ability to calculate accurately and quickly. They have a secure knowledge of shape, space and measures and handle data in an appropriate manner. Pupils' ability to use an appropriate mathematical vocabulary to talk about and explain their work is a weaker element of the subject. Standards in science are well above average. Pupils have a good and often very good level of scientific knowledge across all elements of the subject and pupils have well-developed skills of scientific enquiry. Most have an excellent understanding of the principle of fair testing and apply it in a practical context.

4. The end of Key Stage 1 National Curriculum tests in 2000 show that pupils' attainment is well below average in reading, writing and mathematics. Teacher assessments in science show attainment levels to be at an average level. When compared to similar schools, attainment in reading and writing is at an average level and is below average in mathematics. Inspection findings show standards in listening and science to be at an average level and below average in reading, writing and mathematics. The overall picture at this key stage, however, shows that the quality of teaching is good and the successful implementation of strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy is paying dividends. As a consequence, given the low attainment levels when pupils start school, pupils are making good strides in their learning, are making good progress and achieving well in relation to their ability. Tasks that are set are usually challenging and help to ensure that the higher attainers achieve as well as they can.
5. By the age of seven, pupils attain average standards in listening. Pupils listen attentively and when listening to stories or classmates they show in their responses that they have followed the gist of the story or what has been said. Speaking skills, however, are below average and few pupils have the level of vocabulary to express their views and opinions lucidly. Standards in writing are improving but at present are below average mainly because few pupils are able to write in depth or use written language that holds the attention of the reader. Standards in reading are below average. Despite having a developing awareness of letter sounds, many pupils need support to help them understand and read text that they are unfamiliar with and few have developed the skills of reading with expression. In mathematics, although standards are below average, overall pupils' number skills are secure and they are becoming increasingly competent in their mental agility. An area of weakness is that many pupils are not able to transfer their number skills to written problems and are unsure when problems are presented in different formats. Pupils do not have a good grasp of mathematical language or terminology. In science, standards are at an average level. Pupils have a secure scientific knowledge across all elements of the subject but are not as confident and adept in their practical work or in using an appropriate scientific vocabulary to explain their work.
6. Standards in art and design and design and technology are at an above average level at the end of both key stages and pupils exceed the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education at the end of Key Stage 2. The effective teaching at both key stages in art and design ensures that the direct teaching of specific skills is given a high priority and, as a consequence, pupils at the end of both key stages are showing a good level of competence in both two- and three-dimensional work. In design and technology, the teaching stresses the importance of designing, making and evaluating products using a wide range of materials. Skills, such as cutting and joining, are directly taught. As a result, pupils produce finished products that are of a good

standard and show signs of originality. In religious education, by the time that pupils leave school they have a good understanding of the relationships between Christianity and other major faiths, such as Islam and Sikhism, and they are sensitive to the cultural traditions of other faith communities. Although standards in information and communication technology are now improving at a good rate, they are below the nationally expected level at the end of both key stages. This is because over time the pupils have not been taught the necessary skills and knowledge in a progressive and systematic manner. The school is now addressing this issue. Attainment in all other subjects is at an expected level at the end of both key stages. A common feature of many of these subjects is that the quality of teaching is good, mainly because pupils' prior attainment is being systematically built on and developed. This means that pupils' learning is being enhanced and the progress that they make is good.

7. When children start school attainment is well below average. Many children have poorly developed skills in all areas of learning. This is confirmed by the initial assessments that are conducted at the start of the children's time in the school. The children get a good start in the Foundation Stage. Despite making considerable progress as a result of good and often very good teaching, standards that children achieve at the end of the Foundation Stage are below average in mathematics, and elements of communication, language and literacy. The majority of children, however, achieve the nationally recommended Early Learning Goals in their personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world and in their physical and creative development.
8. The school's provision for pupils who have special educational needs is good and has a positive impact on their progress and achievement. Children with special educational needs are quickly identified when they come into the nursery and if necessary placed on the school's register of special educational need. Throughout the school the good progress that pupils make in literacy and numeracy is due to the practical nature of their individual education plans and the good teaching they receive. In most instances, learning support staff make a valuable contribution to the quality of learning and the good progress that pupils make.
9. This is an improving school where standards are continuing to rise. The good, and on occasions very good, quality of teaching and the very positive attitudes and very good behaviour of the pupils make a significant contribution to this improving pattern of attainment and achievement. The very effective implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy strategies, rigorous procedures to monitor the quality of teaching and learning and initiatives, such as the teaching of literacy and numeracy in ability sets, have also played an important role in improving the quality of pupils' learning. The school is not one for resting on its laurels and is continually striving to improve standards. Inspection evidence indicates that the school is well placed to continue to improve and that the results of 2000 and 2001 will be exceeded in the coming years.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. The attitudes, behaviour and personal development of pupils are very good and make a significant contribution to the quality of pupils' learning and the good progress that they make. This is a further improvement on the last inspection. They respond positively to the broad, balanced curriculum and the good level of teaching provided. Children in the Foundation Stage settle well into the routines of their day. They show high levels of interest in all activities and concentrate well. In both the nursery and reception classes behaviour is consistently good and children have very positive

attitudes to learning. At Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 the pupils maintain high levels of concentration in the majority of lessons and are eager to share their thoughts, work and ideas with both their teachers and classmates. Pupils with special educational needs are given support and encouragement to become involved and included in all aspects of school life and are made to feel valued for their contribution to group and class work.

11. Behaviour throughout the school is very good. During lunch times there is a good level of social interaction between pupils of all ages. Pupils show respect for others in classes and around the school and offer sensitivity to varying views and opinions. There is a dedicated and hard working School Council which meets on a regular basis. The council has been instrumental in establishing various initiatives, such as weekly Council Awards to pupils for good work and kindness to others. The school promotes a strong awareness of citizenship and several pupils have been involved in representing their school in community projects and presentations, including meeting the Prime Minister during his recent visit and interviewing Sir Bob Scott about his bid for the European City of Culture. The Liverpool School Parliament is firmly in place and currently has two representatives from the school taking an active part in this initiative.
12. Personal development and all relationships in school are very good. Adults provide very good role models for pupils and pupils are aware that adults in school are supportive and can help to resolve difficulties. Adults in school work to engender an atmosphere of emotional and physical security in which pupils thrive. Pupils respond well to praise and enjoy working co-operatively. When opportunities are provided for pupils to undertake personal research, pupils respond with great maturity, responsibility and enthusiasm. Pupils take responsibility for tasks in and around the school. Daily classroom routines support this aspect and many pupils fulfil their responsibilities efficiently and cheerfully. The school encourages an awareness of the needs of others and pupils respond to this with maturity and sensitivity. This is reflected in the generous support and understanding of the needs of various local and national charities.
13. Attendance, although still unsatisfactory, has improved marginally since the last inspection. The rate of attendance is below the national average and the rate of unauthorised absence is above the national average. The school has worked hard and conscientiously to improve this aspect and has implemented an impressive range of strategies, such as individual and class awards, to overcome this problem. Despite these best efforts, there are still a number of pupils who do not attend school as often as they should or who arrive late for school. However, the vast majority of pupils are aware of the need to arrive at school on time and make efforts to maintain this good practice. Lessons begin on time and in a purposeful manner. Most parents are aware of the need for regular, prompt attendance and the benefits this gives to their children and make positive efforts to offer their support.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

14. The quality of teaching overall is good. During the inspection 26% of teaching was very good, a further 54% was good and the rest satisfactory. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed. Examples of very good teaching were observed in the Foundation Stage and at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Examples of good teaching were observed in every class. The quality of learning reflects the quality of teaching, and is at its strongest when work enthuses and motivates the pupils, challenges and meets the needs of pupils of differing ability and as a result makes sure that pupils make big strides in their learning. The school shows a readiness to try different strategies to help improve pupils' learning and in turn their achievement. One example has been the

teaching of literacy and numeracy in ability sets. This has proved to be successful in helping to raise standards. Overall, the quality of teaching makes a significant contribution to the quality of pupils' learning and a great strength is the manner in which teachers show a readiness to reflect critically on how they teach in order to improve still further. Inspection findings clearly indicate that the quality of teaching means that the school is well placed to continue to improve the standards that pupils achieve. This is further reflected in the fact that teaching has improved significantly since the time of the last inspection. The unsatisfactory teaching is no longer a feature and there is a much higher incidence of good and, importantly, very good teaching.

15. The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is good overall and is often very good in the nursery. This ensures that children get a really good start to their educational lives and make good and sometimes very good progress towards the nationally recommended Early Learning Goals even though they may not attain them across all areas of learning because of their low level of attainment when they start school. The quality of teaching ensures that activities that are planned are often vibrant and challenging and that opportunities are usually seized upon to promote and extend children's language and communication skills. Opportunities are provided for children to learn through practical and investigative activities as well as more formal activities. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is characterised by effective leadership, good organisation and a wide range of activities that are well matched to the abilities of the children. Staff work closely as a team and are very well deployed. However, there are times in the reception class in the literacy session and circle time, for example, when the role of the classroom assistant is not sufficiently productive.
16. The National Literacy Strategy has been successfully implemented across the school and is having a positive impact on helping to improve standards and enhancing pupils' learning. Pupils of all ages and abilities are responding well to the structure of the strategy. The fact that the lesson objectives are shared with the pupils gives them a greater awareness of what they are expected to learn and also allows them to take a greater responsibility for their own learning. The shared work in most classes is well taught and the summary session at the end of the lesson is being used productively to consolidate and extend pupils' learning. Across the school the careful selection of shared text often enthuses the pupils and helps to sustain their interest for longer periods of time. Phonics are taught well at Key Stage 1 and this helps pupils to develop a greater awareness of letters, sounds and words. Reading skills are taught directly and well which means that pupils are taught a range of strategies to deal with unfamiliar words when they come across them. The weakness is that pupils do not always make best use of these strategies without prompting. Although writing standards are improving, the school has rightly identified the need to place an even greater emphasis on the systematic and progressive direct teaching of writing skills to enable pupils to write creatively, to take notes, to write descriptively using an expressive vocabulary and to write extended pieces of writing which keep the reader hooked from start to finish. At present, pupils find difficulty in sustaining an idea or story line and pieces of work fizzle out after a lively opening. The teaching of handwriting and presentational skills is a particular strength and pupils at both key stages make very good gains in the development of their handwriting skills. The school has high expectations in this regard and effectively ensures not only that pupils are taught early to develop a good early mastery of using joined handwriting, but that their skills are used for all aspects of the pupils' literacy in other subjects.
17. The National Numeracy Strategy has also been introduced in an effective manner and this too has played an important part in helping to raise standards. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers know how to teach basic numeracy skills well. Most lessons

have a good structure that involves a whole class activity, group work and a summary session. The opening mental agility activities that are a feature of all lessons are taught well and with a high degree of pace, fun and challenge. This motivates the pupils and sets the tone for the rest of the lesson. A most positive impact of the strategy is the fact that in most lessons teachers are encouraging the pupils to explore and investigate different ways to solve problems and to try out lots of different strategies. This is effective because it means that the learning of all pupils in the class is being advanced when these strategies are shared with the whole class.

18. The school has introduced teaching by ability groups in literacy and numeracy for some year groups. This is proving to be a successful initiative and is helping to raise standards and the rate at which pupils acquire the necessary skills, knowledge and understanding. The lessons are well organised and more often than not there is an accurate match between the work set and the ability levels of the pupils. In the best teaching in these classes, teachers take account of the small but important degrees of difference in pupils' ability. The questioning is carefully structured so that it challenges the pupils and really gets them to think. Pupils are comfortable and confident with this teaching arrangement and look forward to their lessons knowing that any misconceptions will be dealt with in an understanding but constructive manner. Occasionally, not enough attention is paid to the differing levels of ability within the set ability groups and work is set on a more general rather than individual basis. On these occasions, pupils do not always make the progress of which they are capable. There are some good examples of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills being developed and enhanced in other subjects of the curriculum. In history, for example, at Key Stage 2, pupils are encouraged to write a diary account from a participant's perspective after exploring the impact of the Jarrow Crusade. In geography, pupils are asked to justify differing viewpoints on pollution. Pupils are expected to use the numeracy skills that they have acquired when carrying out practical tasks in science and designing tasks in design and technology. They do this well. Good examples were seen of computers being used to support pupils' learning in other areas of the curriculum but this practice is not as consistent or as effective as it should be and, as a result, the opportunities to enhance and extend pupils' learning are missed.
19. Teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good overall. Where pupils are withdrawn from lessons to attend additional literacy sessions teaching is often good. A very good range of activities is provided for the pupils that helps to ensure that they work with concentration, enjoyment and enthusiasm and as a result make good progress. The school tries to ensure that pupils do not miss important lessons but occasionally there are times when pupils cannot attend science and physical education lessons because of literacy sessions. The learning support assistants generally make a valuable contribution to the quality of pupils' learning because of their incisive questioning and the sensitive and patient attitude that they so often display. This helps to ensure that pupils are fully included in all aspects of lessons and that they take a full and active part in the life of the school as a community. Occasionally the quality of support, intervention and interaction is not at this high level and this restricts pupils' learning. Individual education plans are often of a good standard and contain challenging but achievable targets. These plans are implemented well by teachers. Where pupils have a statement of special educational need, the quality of teaching and support ensures that the provision outlined meets the requirements.
20. At both key stages, teachers generally have a secure subject knowledge in most subjects. When this is the case, teachers' own knowledge and enthusiasm rub off on the pupils and bring an added dimension to the quality of learning. This is particularly the case in subjects, such as art and design, design and technology, history and

geography where the teachers' natural zest and knowledge helps the subjects come to life. The readiness of the school to visit places of interest linked to topics that pupils are studying or to invite visitors to the school adds much to pupils' learning. A strength of the school is that it recognises where there are weaknesses in teachers' knowledge and expertise and ensures that teachers undertake good quality in-service training. An example of this is in information and communication technology where good quality in-service training undertaken by teachers is now beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' learning and the standards that pupils are achieving.

21. The quality of relationships between the pupils and staff is very good and this helps to create an effective learning environment in the vast majority of lessons. Pupils are expected to value the contributions of their classmates and they often do. The balance that is struck between discussion time and recording time is usually about right. Pupils are often provided with opportunities to undertake research tasks and they respond with great enthusiasm. Such opportunities are limited, however, because of the quality of library facilities. The management of pupils is strong across the school. Resources for lessons are well prepared, ensuring that lessons get off to a brisk start. The best teaching makes sure that this pace is maintained and that deadlines are set throughout the lesson that keep the pupils on their toes.
22. The teachers give pupils plenty of verbal support through the lessons and this helps improve pupils' self-esteem as well as pointing out areas for improvement. There are very good examples across the school where the marking of pupils' work is of a high standard and clearly outlines what pupils need to do to improve. Pupils take on board the comments and there is a visible improvement in the standards achieved. All the parents who responded to the questionnaire sent out before the inspection felt that the quality of teaching in the school was good and 99% felt that their child was making good progress. The parents' views are most perceptive and accurate and are fully endorsed by the inspection findings. About 7% of parents expressed some dissatisfaction with the amount of homework that is set. Inspection findings, however, show that the range and amount of homework that is set is better than that found in the majority of primary schools and is therefore judged to be good and brings an added dimension to the quality of pupils' learning.

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

23. The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum for its pupils with a good range of learning opportunities on offer outside the formal curriculum. This combination currently provides an effective and successful platform for pupils' learning. The school meets all statutory requirements in relation to the curriculum and overall the curriculum and other learning opportunities offered to pupils are good. Curriculum provision has improved since the last inspection. Good quality policy documents and schemes of work are in place for all subjects and effectively support and enhance pupils' learning. The school has implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies successfully and this has had a most positive impact on the quality of pupils' learning and the standards that are achieved. During the inspection, good examples were seen of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills being enhanced in other areas of the curriculum, such as history, geography and science.
24. The curriculum that is provided in the Foundation Stage is good. It takes full account of the nationally recommended Early Learning Goals and teachers plan a good range of exciting and challenging learning opportunities that do much to enthuse the children

and add much to the quality of learning. Curriculum planning at Key Stage1 and Key Stage 2 has clear learning objectives and these are shared with the pupils and form part of their evaluation of their own achievements and progress. Teachers in parallel classes plan their work jointly to ensure that pupils in each year group receive similar learning experiences. The school has a good Equal Opportunities policy and addresses the question of educational inclusion in an appropriate manner. No major issues arise concerning gender differences in progress or attainment.

25. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The setting arrangements within the school work well and help to ensure that the pupils progress at a similar rate to their classmates. Pupils have a detailed individual education plan, which contain challenging and achievable targets. These plans are written by the special education needs co-ordinator but targets are agreed at special meetings with the class teacher and parents. These meetings have proved very successful in involving parents in their children's learning. Where pupils have a statement of special educational need, the provision outlined meets the requirements and the annual review is in place.
26. The school's provision for extra-curricular activities is very good. The school provides a good range of after school activities, including games, a cookery club and a guitar club. Visits, for example, to local museums, planetarium and aquarium and visitors to the school, substantially broaden the curriculum for the pupils. There are also planned visits to places of worship in the locality. A recent visit by an Ugandan dancer gave the pupils further insight into African music and dance. All pupils also have opportunities to take part in residential visits. These include outdoor activities at a local centre and environmental activities further afield. These are particularly worthwhile activities that broaden their experience, bring an added dimension to their learning and help to develop pupils' independence as well as their social skills.
27. The school has a well-established programme of personal, social and health education that is firmly based in the curriculum. It is a coherent scheme involving specific time in the timetable, as well being integrated throughout the curriculum in both key stages. For example, very good learning opportunities for pupils to understand the concept of a healthy life style are provided in science with emphasis on healthy eating and the value of exercise. The value of regular exercise is also emphasised in physical education. Drug misuse, including smoking, and the misuse of alcohol are incorporated in the curriculum for the older pupils and they have a well-developed understanding of the possible effects of the misuse of drugs, including prescribed medicines. Sex education is incorporated within the wider context of personal relationships. Overall, the school's provision for enhancing pupils' personal development is very good and is based around the principles of developing pupils' self-esteem and their decision-making skills.
28. The school's provision for pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development is very good and the provision for their moral development is excellent. All adults and pupils within the school respect each other and relate very well to each other and this is an affirmation of the value the school places on every individual. Opportunities are actively sought and planned across the curriculum to enable pupils to reflect on aspects of their own lives and the wonders of the world around them. For example, in a science lesson, pupils were fascinated by the process in human beings that enables them to live in a hostile environment. In a religious education lesson, the teaching focused on stories from different cultures about creation and pupils were intrigued by the many evident similarities. Circle time is used very effectively in both key stages to explore feelings, such as sadness, as when a Year 2 class considered how they might cope if they were feeling very sad. The cross curricular links, well established in the overall planning,

extend pupils' sense of awe and wonder at the world around them and very effectively develop their spirituality.

29. The provision for pupils' moral development is excellent. All adults, including support staff who work in the school, have a consistently high expectation of pupils and pupils respond very well to this. Pupils are actively involved in formulating acceptable codes of behaviour and, even at an early age, they have a well-developed sense of good behaviour to which they adhere without the fear of sanctions or the need for continual reward. Pupils are very well aware of how their actions affect the well being and happiness of others and this is appropriately reinforced through the curriculum. Stories are selected which have moral dilemmas. Moral principles are very effectively developed through morning assemblies. For example, in one such assembly seen during the inspection, the theme was forgiveness and the pupils showed in their answers and conversations that they had understood the very clear moral message that was given. Older pupils have a well-developed understanding of wider moral issues, such as those posed by urban development and pollution.
30. The provision for pupils' social development is very good. The school is an orderly community and pupils are encouraged to be actively involved in the life of the school and in its well being. All pupils feel that they are part of the community and play an active part in maintaining the social order. Pupils' active involvement was well illustrated by incidents considered by the School's Council. Each class in Key Stage 2 names a member to sit on the Council and incidents that any pupil wishes to raise are written in a Council Book and discussed at the School Council meeting. During the inspection some anti-social behaviour in the school playground was discussed. Overall, this was dealt with very maturely without the individual concerned losing self-esteem. These pupils have excellent opportunities to make decisions that affect the life of the school and to consider the implications of their behaviour. Two pupils represent the school on the Liverpool's Children's Parliament. Pupils are taught from an early age to take responsibility and their help and collaboration is evident in classrooms. Pupils accept responsibilities and look for ways they can help. Older pupils take responsibility for younger ones and several former pupils return to the school to meet younger siblings after school.
31. The provision for pupils' cultural development is very good. The school makes very good use of visits and visitors to the school to develop pupils' understanding of the rich variety of cultures in the locality. Visits to local museums further enhance pupils' understanding of the City's rich cultural heritage and the way it has evolved. As part of the religious education curriculum, pupils visit places of worship, including a Mosque, Sikh temple and Jewish synagogue. The art curriculum incorporates the work of famous artists, including probably the best well-known local artist – L S Lowry. Morning assemblies incorporate music from different countries.
32. There are strong links with the local and wider community. The school has established purposeful and beneficial links with Liverpool Hope University College. The college has been involved in the practical setting up of both the Liverpool School Parliament and the Parent School Partnership which is giving in depth support in a wide range of academic, curriculum support and social courses. Active links are in place with the Police, Fire Service, local Churches, Everton Football Club Study Centre and local business and training institutions. This gives a depth and vibrancy to both the formal and extra-curricular activities of the school.
33. There are very good links with secondary schools in the area and every effort is made to ensure co-operation and to offer exchange visits for both staff and pupils. This gives

pupils additional confidence in facing the next stage of their educational development. The school has long established links with a school in Kendal and pupils enjoy exchange of news and views by e-mail and exchange visits where they have the welcome opportunity of meeting their penpals and gaining awareness of geographical details and differences in each other's locations. The school gives realistic, beneficial and valued assistance to both teaching and work experience students. This is appreciated and makes a positive contribution to their career development.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

34. The school provides a very high level of care, support, understanding and empathy for its pupils and this is given a consistently high priority. Every effort is made by teaching, support and non-teaching staff to ensure that pupils receive understanding, care and attention to their individual needs so that they feel valued, secure and respected. This is achieved by the use of a wide range of strategies, which are never intrusive but nevertheless provide an above average level of protection and care. Many of these strengths have been maintained since the last inspection and others have improved.
35. Very good arrangements are in place for child protection. The named teacher responsible undertakes this role in an extremely sensitive, professional and dedicated manner. All members of teaching and non-teaching staff are kept fully informed of changes to legislation and procedures. Health and safety is given a high priority throughout the school and regular, detailed audits and risk assessments are carried out rigorously and with keen attention to detail. Good, clear and fully maintained systems are in place to contact parents and carers in the event of an accident or pupils becoming ill whilst at school.
36. Very good procedures are in place for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development. Pupils enjoy taking an active part in the life of the school. The School Council meets on a regular basis and has clear guidelines of methods of operation and strategies for enabling pupils to develop their personal skills, attributes and academic achievements. A range of weekly awards is available and the Council discusses and agrees the nominees who are then presented with their badges and certificates at a weekly celebration assembly. This is a clear part of the school's policy for developing good citizenship and behaviour and ensures that pupils are introduced to a range of skills which they will need throughout their future academic and social lives and ensures that their views are heard and respected.
37. Teachers are effective in the manner in which they monitor the personal development and well being of pupils with special educational needs. The school identifies these pupils at an early age. Initial targets are set and specific strategies are implemented. If these are not successful then an individual education plan is put in place and the pupil's progress is carefully recorded and reviewed on a regular basis. Learning support staff often make a vital contribution to the learning and the progress that pupils with special needs make and help to ensure that pupils are fully integrated and included in lessons and in the life of the school as a community.
38. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are very good and contribute greatly to the effective learning environment within the school and to supporting pupils' personal development. Very good systems are in place to record pupils' behaviour and set targets for improvement where necessary. There is a positive culture of praise and encouragement in the classroom and the pupils' good behaviour is recognised and celebrated in assemblies. Very good procedures are in place to deal with bullying or oppressive behaviour should it occur. Discussions with pupils show that they feel confident and secure to speak to any adult and that they feel confident that their concerns will be dealt with quickly, and in confidence.
39. Despite the fact that attendance rates are below average, the school has very good procedures in place for monitoring and promoting good attendance. Regular liaison with appropriate outside agencies and the presentation of awards for good attendance are raising awareness and helping to promote the importance of good attendance. The school continually reinforces the benefits of regular and punctual attendance with

parents and pupils alike and is to be commended on the time and effort it devotes to stressing the link between good attendance and effective learning.

40. Procedures for assessing pupils' academic performance are very good. The school has in place a consistent and coherent method of assessment. Teachers informally assess pupils' progress against lesson objectives and this information is used well in lesson preparation. This ensures that tasks are well matched to pupils' ability and prior attainment. Pupils are formally assessed on a half-termly basis and at the end of the year. The end of year assessments in English, mathematics and science are undertaken using standardised tests and include evaluation of pupils' personal development. Other standardised tests are used for different year groups and this enables the school to effectively monitor the progress that pupils are making. Clear targets are set and pupils are given additional support where necessary. Assessment procedures in the Foundation Stage are good and have improved since the previous inspection. Teachers carry out baseline assessment effectively and rigorously and the information is used well to inform teachers' planning.
41. The school analyses in detail the end of key stage National Curriculum test results and this has enabled weaknesses in the teaching and learning to be identified and provides a powerful tool for setting targets for individuals, groups of pupils and year groups. For example, interpretation of data and terminology in science was identified as a weakness in past tests and this has now been incorporated into the teaching. Consequently, pupils' learning has improved and standards have risen. More recently, pupils' written work has been targeted and is now receiving attention. Assessment in the foundation subjects is less thorough. Teachers review pupils' work on a regular basis and analyse it against National Curriculum criteria. Each pupil also has a record of achievement file that is presented to him or her when they leave the school. Work to be included in this file is selected by pupils in conjunction with their teacher and this encourages pupils to produce work of high quality.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

42. This is a major strength of the school and is an aspect of which the school is justifiably proud. In the pre-inspection questionnaire and at the pre inspection meeting, parents expressed their gratitude and support for the work of the staff throughout the school. Parents were anxious to share their views that the staff are easy to approach at any time and always willing to listen to concerns or answer queries regarding the development of the children in their care. Where concerns have arisen, the majority of parents feel that these are always dealt with in a sensitive, caring and appropriate manner. The quality of the partnership and relationships with parents makes a valuable and valued contribution to pupils' learning and to the good progress that they make at the school.
43. There is a Parent Teacher Association in place which works dedicatedly and enthusiastically to support the school by means of numerous social and fund raising activities. The range of information supplied to parents is very good and is presented in a wide range of formats, including newsletters, magazines, curriculum evenings, and formal and informal meetings with parents. Two formal meetings are held each year where parents are given every opportunity to discuss their children's progress and areas for improvement. The end of year reports are presented in an easily assimilated format with targets for improvement clearly identified.

44. Although a minority of parents expressed some concerns about homework, the majority of parents responding to the questionnaire felt that the amount and content of work their children were expected to do at home were appropriate. They felt that the range of tasks and topics covered gave their children a valuable opportunity to extend their learning and understanding. Parents felt that they were kept fully informed in advance of the range of topics being covered and were able to offer support to their children in the investigative nature of this work.
45. The school is justifiably proud and pleased with the level of success achieved by the Parent School Partnership. Parents are able to undertake a range of study courses to assist their understanding of modern educational methods and give further opportunity for personal, career and academic advancement. In order to give the maximum support to parents who undertake these courses, an efficient, well run crèche is provided and children are cared for by dedicated and qualified nursery staff, who undertake this role in a cheerful, caring and effective manner.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

46. The school is very well led and managed by the headteacher, who provides a clear vision for the school and works in close partnership with the deputy headteacher, senior management and all staff, to fulfil the school's aims and objectives. Although the deputy headteacher undertakes a significant teaching role, he does not have a full-time class responsibility. This enables him to take a very active and effective part in the management of the school. Having only been in post for one term at the time of the last inspection, the headteacher has now established a strong leadership role, indicated by the significant improvement in the quality of leadership and management since that time. She has played a pivotal role in moving the school forward and in creating an excellent team spirit where all working at the school are committed to providing the best education they can for all pupils.
47. The headteacher has a very good overview of the running of the school, and has a well established and highly committed senior management team which meets regularly to discuss whole school issues. The headteacher delegates responsibility for specific areas, such as staff development, to staff and these are managed very effectively.
48. There is a very positive ethos, which focuses clearly on providing the best education for all the pupils, both academically and through well-established pastoral care systems. This is an excellent feature of the school. The vision is shared by all staff, who provide positive role models and have high expectations of pupils. Staff are committed to raising standards and have a clear understanding of what needs to be done to ensure that all pupils make the best progress.
49. The headteacher monitors teaching and learning very effectively through both informal and formal observations of classes and their work, and the feedback is provided to staff. The deputy headteacher is also closely involved, as are co-ordinators, particularly in core subjects or subjects with a high priority on the school development plan. Together with formal lesson observation, monitoring of teachers' planning and a scrutiny of pupils' work take place on a regular basis. Targets for improvement are identified and acted upon. These strategies are effective in improving the quality of teaching and learning across the school. Careful analysis of standards is also undertaken from the range of tests undertaken by pupils. The information that is collated is used to set targets for improvement. These effective procedures have played an important role in helping to raise standards.

50. The school development plan is a clear and comprehensive document, which shows clearly both short- and long-term plans. All staff and governors are involved in the formulation of the plan, which includes clear tasks, success criteria, finances allocated and those staff responsible, along with a time scale for completion. This ensures that everyone is aware of what needs to be accomplished and shares the responsibility for the outcomes. The school development plan is seen as a working document that is the vehicle by which the school is to raise standards. The school development plan mirrors many of the findings of this inspection and illustrates the fact that this is a school that clearly knows its strengths and equally the areas that need to be tackled to move the school on still further.
51. The school has made good progress since the last inspection in 1997. Standards have been maintained or improved in most subjects although the school has rightly identified a need for further improvements in English and information and communication technology. Following the last inspection, the school set about tackling the key issues in a systematic and effective manner. The school has successfully addressed the weaknesses in teaching to such an extent that the quality of teaching is now a strength of the school. A very good quality school development plan is now in place that provides a very accurate and detailed analysis of the issues that the school needs to address to improve further. The weaknesses in the Foundation Stage have been tackled well and again this is now another strength of the school. The desire and commitment of all staff and governors to constantly seek to provide the best education for the pupils indicates that this is a school that is very well placed to continue to develop and improve.
52. Appropriate performance management systems are in place, which enable staff to identify strengths and areas for improvement. The procedures that are in place for staff development and training are very good. A member of staff has specific responsibility for this area of school life and carries it out very well. A careful record is kept of staff training and every effort is made to ensure that training matches the needs of the school as well as the individual. An evaluation of the training course is made and recorded. Procedures are in place to ensure that any examples of best practice that are gleaned from training courses are shared with other members of staff. This makes a significant contribution to improving skills and expertise and in turn helps to provide an even better quality of education for the pupils. The school has good procedures for the induction and mentoring of new staff, and makes good provision for the training of new teachers.
53. The Governing Body plays an active and very effective part in the management of the school. Governors have an excellent grasp of the strengths of the school and what it needs to do to improve and are effective in holding the school to account for the quality of education it provides. The Chair and Vice Chair of Governors are particularly adept at this. The Chair of Governors is a frequent visitor to the school and prepares and presents assemblies with classes on a regular basis. This gives him a clear insight into the daily running of the school. Some governors work at the school and their good knowledge of the school makes a positive contribution to the Governing Body, while others contribute their professional and experience or expertise. The Governing Body is clearly aware of the challenges the school faces. Governors attend training and meet regularly, both as a full body and in committees, fulfilling all their statutory requirements. There are named governors for a range of responsibilities, such as special educational needs and literacy, who have a broad understanding of the issues facing the school and can contribute effectively to full Governing Body meetings. The

Governing Body has good access to financial information, on a monthly basis, which enables them to prepare well for governors' meetings.

54. The management of the provision made for pupils with special educational needs is good and contributes significantly to the good progress that these pupils make. There are two co-ordinators, one for Key Stage 1 and the Foundation Stage and one for Key Stage 2. They work closely together to ensure that there is a smooth transition for pupils across the key stages and at eleven when pupils change schools. They make very good use of information and communication technology to support the record keeping and management of individual education plans. The special needs register is very well maintained and the time and effort shown by the co-ordinators demonstrates the commitment that they have to helping pupils improve. Reviews to assess the progress that pupils make are well organised and up-to-date. Good liaison procedures are in place with class teachers, support staff and outside agencies.
55. Administrative staff are welcoming, well-organised and efficient in organising financial and budgetary information, ensuring that grants and funds are correctly allocated and authorised. Appropriate use is made of information and communication technology and training is attended regularly, which allows staff to operate efficiently. They provide valuable support to senior management and the staff and make a significant contribution to the smooth running of the school.
56. The quality of financial planning and its impact on pupils' learning and achievement is very good. The headteacher and governors apply the principles of best value for money in financial spending well. All available funds are put to good use to improve pupils' learning. Funds are well managed by the headteacher who prepares the budget for analysis by the finance committee of the Governing Body. This includes the use of specific grants and funds, so that finances are spent wisely and make a very positive contribution to pupils' progress. Financial planning is appropriately related to the requirements of the school development plan. The school also assesses the impact of major spending decisions on pupils' learning. For example, the school has assessed the improvement in standards after spending additional money on learning support assistants and computer equipment. Day-to-day financial administration is carried out most effectively by administrative staff who make good use of new technology. This helps to free up teachers to work with pupils.
57. The school is staffed with a sufficient number of suitably qualified teachers. Subject co-ordinators are in place for all subjects and have benefited from in-service training which has enabled them to establish themselves as a focus for the further development of their subjects. Teachers also work with a team of support staff, all of whom liaise successfully with the class teachers and assist pupils with special educational needs. Many of the support staff make a valued and valuable contribution to pupils' learning and to the good progress that they make.
58. Curriculum resources are good in mathematics, science, art, history, religious education and geography and satisfactory in the remaining subjects. The resources for children in the Foundation Stage represent a major improvement since the previous inspection. Resources are satisfactory for the teaching of pupils with special educational needs and are used effectively by the staff involved. The supply of books is at least satisfactory and often good in each classroom and represents a balance of fiction and non-fiction texts for teaching purposes. The library areas are under-used and are lacking in sufficient recently acquired and up-to-date materials. The provision of computers has improved and the new computer suite has provided the possibility of establishing an electronic library resource.

59. The school is situated in two separate buildings but are on the same site. This causes some inconvenience in terms of day-to-day management but the school overcomes this well. The pupils in the nursery have the use of a purpose built facility and the outdoor activity area continues to provide a safe environment for the youngest members of the school community. The classrooms available for use in Key Stage 1 are generally less crowded than those in Key Stage 2 but in both cases teachers make good use of the space available. Teachers and pupils work hard to make their working environment safe and attractive and the walls are filled with colourful and informative displays of all aspects of the work of the school. These displays are not only aesthetically pleasing but also act as an effective learning resource. The school benefits from the hard work and dedication shown by the site manager and a team of cleaning staff. Together, they take enormous pride in their work and keep the school very well maintained and clean. This adds significantly to the quality of the learning environment and shows again the commitment that all who work at the school have to providing the best for the pupils attending the school.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

60. In order to improve the quality of education that the school provides, the headteacher, Governing Body and staff should:

1) raise standards in English by:

- consistently providing opportunities and encouraging pupils to use a more expressive and expansive vocabulary in class and group discussions, debates, in assemblies and through the use of drama across the curriculum (*paragraphs 71, 75, 117*);
- ensuring that opportunities are consistently provided in all classes and the necessary skills systematically taught to enable pupils to write creative, expressive and extended pieces of writing (*paragraphs 3, 16, 73*);

2) raise standards in information and communication technology by:

- continued provision of good quality staff training (*paragraphs 20, 52, 121, 122*);
- ensuring that all the necessary skills and knowledge across all elements of the subject are directly taught in a systematic and progressive manner (*paragraphs 6 and 122*);
- making sure that every opportunity is capitalised upon to use computers to support pupils' learning across all subjects of the curriculum, particularly English (*paragraphs 75, 86, 92, 96, 113, 120, 122*).

3) seek to improve attendance rates at the school and in turn improve pupils' rate of learning and standards of attainment by:

- ensuring that the very good procedures that the school has devised to address this issue continue to be rigorously implemented and followed and progress towards an improved attendance rate carefully monitored (*paragraphs 13 and 39*).

In addition the school should consider the following less important weaknesses in the action plan:

- continue to seek ways of improving the school's library facilities (*paragraphs 21, 58, 72, 76*).
- continue to develop assessment procedures for the foundation subjects (*paragraphs 41, 103, 107, 113, 122, 138*).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	80
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	51

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	26	54	20	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR-Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	55	422
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	189

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR-Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	2	89

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	11
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	9

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.7
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.9
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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	29	35	64

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	22	23	25
	Girls	31	29	33
	Total	53	52	58
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	83(84)	81(81)	91(81)
	National	83(82)	84(83)	90(87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	22	25	25
	Girls	31	33	35
	Total	53	58	60
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	83(84)	91(82)	94(95)
	National	84(82)	88(86)	88(87)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	25	33	58

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	17	19	23
	Girls	28	26	32
	Total	45	45	55
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	78(67)	78(60)	95(86)
	National	75(70)	72(69)	85(78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	18	20	21
	Girls	27	26	30
	Total	45	46	51
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	78(66)	79(69)	88(91)
	National	70(68)	72(69)	79(75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	
Black – African heritage	1
Black – other	
Indian	
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	1
White	360
Any other minority ethnic group	1

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	17.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	27.8
Average class size	28

Education support staff: YR– Y6

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	206

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	27.5

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	90

Number of pupils per FTE adult	11
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000
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	£
Total income	903385
Total expenditure	908126
Expenditure per pupil	1721
Balance brought forward from previous year	102217
Balance carried forward to next year	97476

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	529
Number of questionnaires returned	136

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	60	37	3	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	62	37	1	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	61	38	0	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	46	45	6	1	2
The teaching is good.	74	26	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	56	37	6	1	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	75	20	4	0	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	79	19	1	1	0
The school works closely with parents.	57	34	6	1	2
The school is well led and managed.	73	25	1	0	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	68	29	1	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	38	33	15	1	13

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

61. Children enter the nursery with well below average levels of attainment. They have poorly developed skills in all areas of learning. This is confirmed by the initial assessments that are conducted at the start of the children's time in the school. Full baseline assessment is undertaken when children enter the reception classes. Despite making considerable progress because of good and often very good teaching, children reach standards at the end of the Foundation Stage that are below average in mathematics, and elements of communication, language and literacy. The majority of children, however, achieve the nationally recommended Early Learning Goals in their personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world and in their physical and creative development.
62. The curriculum planning is shared across the Foundation Stage and all the national Early Learning Goals are fully covered. The nursery has introduced High Scope procedures, which focus on children planning their own work, undertaking tasks and reviewing their work when completed. This has provided more structure to the day but is still in the initial stages of implementation. Assessment has improved since the previous inspection; procedures give a clear overview of children's progress and are used effectively to inform teachers' planning. Parents are made aware of what their children are learning through the initial home visits and induction meeting with the headteacher. The children with special educational needs are identified as soon as possible in the nursery and individual learning programmes are drawn up where appropriate. There have been improvements since the last inspection as the timing of sessions has been changed to ensure all nursery children attending the morning and afternoon sessions have the same amount of time. The school now fully recognises the education of the youngest children in school in its own right and there is an effective and detailed policy for the Foundation Stage.
63. The provision and teaching for the children in the Foundation Stage is good overall, often very good and never less than satisfactory. Teaching in the nursery is often very good. The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is characterised by effective leadership, good organisation and a wide range of activities that are well matched to the abilities of the children. Staff work closely as a team and are generally very well deployed. However, there are times in the reception class in the literacy session and circle time, for example, when the role of the classroom assistant is not sufficiently productive.

Personal, social and emotional development.

64. Children enter the nursery with very immature skills in personal, social and emotional development. They make very good progress in their learning so that by the time they enter Year 1 they are achieving the Early Learning Goal in this area and some achieve beyond the expected level. This reflects the skilful teaching, especially in the nursery, where staff encourage children to become independent learners. Even the youngest children now enter the nursery confidently and readily settle to activities. They work well in both large and small groups sharing resources and taking turns; they join in the 'Welcome Song' at the start of the day with enjoyment and relate well to one another. Staff actively encourage children to become independent. At snack time, for example, children choose when to sit down with their friends and select their own milk and biscuits with no adult supervision. Children show high levels of interest in all activities

and concentrate well. In both the nursery and reception classes behaviour is consistently good and children have very positive attitudes to learning. All staff relate exceptionally well to the children and this has a significant impact on their sense of security and quality of learning. Circle time and assemblies provide very good opportunities for children to learn about their own and others' cultures and beliefs and staff tell stories with a clear moral theme and relate the message very effectively to the childrens' own lives.

Communication, Language and Literacy

65. Children make good progress in all aspects of this area of learning and benefit from the very good teaching in both the nursery and the reception classes. However, despite the very good provision, children do not achieve all the communication and language aspects of the Early Learning Goals. Many children have a very limited range of vocabulary and find it difficult to express themselves clearly; they seldom use language to organise and clarify their thinking. They listen attentively to stories, songs and rhymes and respond with interest and excitement but seldom ask questions or make relevant comments. Teachers make very good use of the 'Big Book' sessions. For example, in the nursery the effective story telling and excellent choice of books in shared reading activities ensure that children respond with enthusiasm and enjoyment. There have been considerable improvements in the range of books that are now available throughout the Foundation Stage and children are encouraged to take books home. In literacy lessons, children join in enthusiastically when looking for patterns in text and generate rhyming words when making up simple sentences. In the nursery, children make marks on paper and are beginning to recognise and write the letters of their name. However, some children have difficulties in holding a pencil correctly and use incorrect letter formation. Writing is well taught in the reception classes and some children are joining their letters and writing simple and complex words.

Mathematical Development

66. Children make good progress in the mathematical area of learning in both the nursery and reception classes. The staff work very hard to promote mathematical understanding, skills and language through structured play and small group work. However, despite the good and often very good teaching, children do not achieve all the aspects of the Early Learning Goals. Many children have a limited mathematical vocabulary and although they solve problems and make and recognise patterns they do not use mathematical language with confidence, for example, to describe and compare shape, position, size and quantity. In the nursery, children are encouraged to count out objects in their activities, for example, the number of chairs needed at the table. There is sand in each classroom to encourage children to explore mathematical ideas and water play helps them to learn about capacity and use the terms 'full' and 'empty'. Staff encourage children to use positional language in games, as the firemen climb the ladder, and develop addition and subtraction skills, for example, adding one more straw and taking one away in snack time. By the time they are five, children count confidently to 20 and recognise patterns in numbers as they learn about odd and even numbers and place numbers around a clock face. Children know a good range of number rhymes and sing them enthusiastically

Knowledge and understanding of the world

67. Children enter the nursery with very little basic general knowledge. They make good progress so that by the end of the Foundation Stage, the majority of children achieve the Early Learning Goals in terms of their knowledge and understanding of the world.

This is due to the good teaching and range of opportunities children have to explore and investigate the world around them. There have been significant improvements since the last inspection in the use of the computer. There are now a number of computers available in both the nursery and reception classes. Children use the technology with confidence and even in the nursery they know how to use the mouse to control the programs. There is a Roamer, but there are still no other programmable toys. There are good opportunities for children to learn about their environment and look closely at similarities and differences. In the nursery, for example, they go for walks and collect leaves, twigs and stones and talk about the different houses they see. The project on 'Ourselves' helps the young children to learn about past and present as they look at photographs of themselves as babies and talk about the changes as they grow. In both the nursery and reception classes, children use a range of construction toys to build and construct different objects. This is an improvement since the last inspection, when findings were that opportunities for this type of activity were restricted. A very good range of visitors and visits enables children to learn very effectively about their own and different cultures in the nursery. In the reception classes, children learn about Chinese and African cultures and the good quality of teaching ensures that there are vibrant displays to support this area of learning.

Physical Development

68. By the end of the Foundation Stage, the children achieve the Early Learning Goals in terms of their physical development. They make good progress in both the nursery and reception classes. The children in the nursery have a particularly good range of activities that include physical education lessons in the hall, the use of wheeled toys and a small adventure playground. These facilities are also available to the children in the reception classes. There are good opportunities for children to climb and balance in physical education lessons and on the wooden boxes in the nursery. They move with confidence and good co-ordination as they use the adventure playground and travel over and under the equipment. In the reception classes, children throw and catch bean bags with increasing skill and show good awareness of space and each other as they travel across the floor. Staff encourage children to think about the importance of physical exercise and the effect it has on their health as they explain clearly the importance of the warm-up activity and show the children how to feel their heart racing. Teaching is satisfactory in the reception class when the pace slows as too many children sit and wait for instructions. Children handle a range of tools when they use dough to make large and small shapes; they use scissors with confidence and fill jugs, tubes and sponges at the water tables.

Creative Development

69. By the end of the Foundation Stage, the children achieve the Early Learning Goals in terms of their creative development and all children of all abilities make good progress. Teaching is good across all classes with teachers actively encouraging children to be creative and imaginative. The children will readily involve themselves in role-play, for example, taking on the role of customer at the Chinese restaurant or hiding their eyes in fright as they look for the 'Meanies'. Children have good opportunities to explore colour, shape and texture as they paint and draw pictures, make collage and models with playdough. There has been an improvement in children's creative development since the last inspection, which found pupils' drawing skills underdeveloped and limited opportunities for children to listen to and respond to music. There is now a very good range of activities to ensure that children use their imagination in music and dance. There is a music table with a range of instruments that children have made and regular music time ensures that children have the opportunity to explore different sounds.

Many children know a good range of songs and rhymes that they sing with enthusiasm and at the start of literacy lessons children listen attentively to calming music. In physical education lessons, children enjoy acting out the story of the 'Bear Hunt' and move with imagination, matching their movements to the music. Children have made butter and at snack time have compared the taste and smell with 'real' butter, have tasted different cheeses and explored the smell and taste of tropical fruits.

ENGLISH

70. On the basis of the National Curriculum tests in 2000, pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 was below the national average but above average when compared to similar schools. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1, based on the results of national tests, was well below the national average in reading and writing and at an average level when compared to similar schools. Inspection findings show that by the end of Key Stage 1, standards are below the national average in English. Speaking, reading and writing are below the expected level whilst standards in listening are in line with expectations. A similar picture is evident at the end of Key Stage 2. However, given the very low attainment in English when they enter the school, pupils, including those with special educational needs, are judged to make good progress and achieve well in many aspects of English and literacy work as they move through each of the classes. The exception is in speaking where progress is not as rapid as that seen in other aspects of their literacy development. While the school is very successful in ensuring that the number of pupils who attain the expected levels at both key stages matches the national picture, the number who attain the higher levels is often below the national average. The fewer pupils who attain these higher levels depress standards generally. Since the school's first inspection, however, significant improvements have been made at both key stages. The most notable of these has been in the very effective implementation of the National Literacy Strategy and improvements in the quality of teaching. Both these factors have led to improvements in pupils' learning in English.
71. At the end of both key stages, pupils' listening skills are average. Good quality teaching ensures that pupils are given good opportunities to develop their ability to listen effectively. The reading of 'big books' in literacy sessions at Key Stage 1 contributes well to this, as do the opportunities at Key Stage 2 for pupils to listen to their classmates reading aloud their written work at the end of lessons. At both key stages, pupils' responses show that they have a clear understanding of the need to listen purposefully to one another. Pupils do not make the same gains in the development of their speaking skills. By the age of seven, few pupils speak clearly and few demonstrate the skill of adding detail to their spoken work. By the age of 11, and by the time they leave the school, few pupils show sufficient confidence in speaking aloud to a wider audience. Often, they do not give enough detail in their oral work, which largely consists of short responses to questions they may be asked, and they do not use an expressive or expansive vocabulary, despite encouragement from teachers. Whilst pupils are provided with some opportunities to develop their speaking skills, such as re-creating a short scene from Shakespeare's 'Midsummer Night's Dream' as seen in one Year 6 lesson, in general, pupils are not consistently provided with enough opportunities to take part in educational drama or regular debates or formal discussions.
72. At the end of both key stages, pupils' standards in reading are below average. At the end of Key Stage 1, many pupils clearly enjoy reading and having books and other literature read to them. They are able to follow the text when it is read out to them by the teacher as part of the opening sessions in the Literacy Hour. However, despite

having a developing awareness of letter sounds, many pupils need support to help them understand and read text that they are unfamiliar with. Few have developed the skills of reading with expression. At Key Stage 2, pupils continue to develop their sight vocabulary and their enjoyment of many forms of literature, including the stories of Shakespeare as seen in Year 6. However, despite the good emphasis placed by teachers on extending pupils' reading skills, pupils' understanding of the works of famous authors is weak. Pupils' reading is not sufficiently fluent and only the higher-attaining pupils are able to change the tempo of what they read, by using their knowledge and understanding of the importance of reading with suitable intonation and expression. Pupils do use reference books to find information and most of them have mastered how to use a glossary, index and contents page in order to locate the information they are searching for in non-fiction materials. However, the size of the library for Key Stage 2 makes it very difficult for groups of pupils to work independently on developing their research skills. Compensating for this in part is the good use that many teachers are now making of the Internet on computers that lie outside classrooms in enabling pupils to explore information on web pages.

73. At the end of both key stages, pupils' attainment in writing is below that expected nationally. However, at both key stages, pupils make very good gains in the development of their handwriting skills. The school has high expectations in this regard and effectively ensures not only that pupils are taught early to develop a good early mastery of using joined handwriting, but that their skills are used for all aspects of literacy in other subjects. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils use capital letters, full stops and other forms of punctuation and spelling is fairly accurate. Few pupils are able to write in depth or use written language that holds the attention of the reader. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils successfully develop their understanding of how writing has various uses from simple note taking, writing letters of complaint, or the reporting of events. Pupils have a good understanding of the importance of presenting their work neatly and many strive hard to ensure that their work is pleasing to read. Older pupils appreciate the importance of drafting and amending early ideas and how a final piece of work will differ in content and quality from an earlier draft. However, few pupils' written work is sustained or sufficiently developed into longer pieces of imaginative and creative writing. The pupils' somewhat limited vocabulary hinders their progress in this regard.
74. The overall quality of teaching is consistently good and results in pupils making good gains in their learning of English. Teaching has improved considerably since the time of the school's previous inspection. The school has effectively incorporated the teaching principles advocated in the National Literacy Strategy that is consistently and effectively taught across the school. The school places strong emphasis on and has high expectations of pupils learning the key skills of punctuation, handwriting and spelling. This results in pupils making good progress in these areas. Homework is used well in both key stages giving pupils a good opportunity to develop their literacy skills at home. Classroom organisation is also very effective. In many classrooms, for example, labels, reminders, and spelling rules are all prominently and attractively displayed providing further support for pupils in the course of their daily writing activities. Further strengths in teaching lie in the creative and effective way that teachers plan to develop pupils' literacy skills through other subjects. In history, for example, at Key Stage 2, pupils are encouraged to write a diary account from a participant's perspective after exploring the impact of the Jarrow Crusade. One pupil wrote: 'The crusade was what we needed, but in the end it didn't help us overcome our difficulties.' In geography, pupils are encouraged to write about different rivers and in many classes, pupils are given strong encouragement to develop their literacy skills through evaluating their design and technology work or writing the results of their science investigations. Other

strong features of teaching include the good marking of pupils' work and regular and effective use of assessment information to plan the next steps in pupils' learning.

75. While teaching is good, it could be more effective with regular use of educational drama and further use of information and communication technology to develop pupils' writing skills in lessons. Whilst the school is making greater use of computers to support literacy learning, such as using the Internet to explore information about the Aztecs in history, many examples were seen during the inspection of missed opportunities for pupils to access and use computers to support and extend their learning. There is also a need for further refinement in some teachers' planning. Whilst generally good account is taken of pupils' needs in planning their learning, even in classes where pupils are grouped according to ability, sufficient attention is not always paid to effectively ensuring that those pupils with higher-attainments within the groups undertake work that fully stretches their capabilities.
76. The management of the subject is very good and much improved since the previous inspection. This is largely undertaken by two co-ordinators each of whom effectively oversees provision in each of the key stages. Regular monitoring of teaching and evaluating standards takes place and careful evaluation of the results of this is used to highlight where improvements to the quality of pupils' learning could be made. The subject makes a strong contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Regular visits to the school by visiting theatre groups, for example, provide the pupils with regular opportunities to see live theatre. In addition, the use of literature enables pupils to explore how language is used to express emotion and mood as well as to explore issues of a moral nature. Resources are satisfactory with improved provision being made in recent years to the general book stock within the school. However, whilst the school has two libraries, the size of these are quite small and do not provide sufficient space to enable pupils to be taught to use the library effectively. Moreover, some of the books within the libraries are dated and take away from the quality of provision often seen in classrooms.

MATHEMATICS

77. The school has improved standards since the previous inspection, which reported standards to be broadly in line with the national average. Particular success has been in the increase in the number of pupils who attain higher levels at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. Inspection findings show that attainment overall at the end of Key Stage 1 is below average, although the number of pupils attaining the expected level for seven-year-olds is at an appropriate level. The smaller number of pupils that exceed the level expected of seven-year-olds suppresses standards. However, given the low starting point of many pupils, this represents good progress for pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs. The good strides in progress and learning continue at Key Stage 2 and by the time that pupils leave school they are attaining at the expected level.
78. Pupils start Year 1 with mathematical skills, knowledge and understanding, which are below average. They achieve well and by the age of seven the results of the 2000 national tests show that the number of pupils attaining the expected Level 2 and above is average when compared to all schools nationally. Over the last four years, the school has successfully increased the percentage of pupils who attain Level 3. This is due to the careful match of work to pupils, who are grouped according to ability. Twice a week, higher attaining pupils in Year 2 are taught together and this has enabled the school to meet their individual needs better. Results, therefore, show an improvement

in the school's average points score. When compared to similar schools, as measured by the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals, standards are above average. Standards seen during the inspection reflect this picture.

79. At Key Stage 1, teachers assess pupils' mathematical understanding carefully and, if necessary, revisit previous learning before teaching new or more difficult skills and knowledge. For example, pupils in Year 1 talk about how they add two numbers to ten before moving on to add two numbers which require them to work out the steps to ten and then beyond. Lessons in Year 1 are appropriately practical and focus closely on pupils' ability to show their skills, knowledge and understanding orally before asking them to write their answers down. By Year 2, pupils are confident when talking about their mathematics activities and respond well to teachers' questions, which probe their understanding closely. Teaching strategies and styles are changed to respond to pupils' answers and approaches and this supports the learning process.
80. The effective implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy means that pupils have increasingly been provided with opportunities to develop their mental agility skills. Pupils have a secure knowledge of place value and can count and match words and numerals up to a hundred. The teaching is providing pupils with opportunities to examine different ways in which to solve number problems and the higher attaining pupils recognise that there are different ways of arriving at the same answer. However, not all pupils are secure in this area of mathematics. An area of weakness is that many pupils are not able to transfer their number skills to written problems and are unsure when problems are presented in different formats. Pupils do not have a good grasp of mathematical language or terminology. Pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of two- and three-dimensional shapes and measure using standard and non-standard measures. This measuring is not always as accurate as it could be.
81. Pupils continue to make good progress throughout Key Stage 2 and by the age of eleven standards are average when compared to all schools nationally. They achieve well and by the age of eleven a greater number of pupils attain above the level expected of 11-year-olds nationally. These standards are supported by the results of the 2000 National Curriculum tests. When compared to similar schools as, measured by the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals, standards are well above average.
82. Pupils throughout the key stage are given challenging problems to solve which require them to use their skills and knowledge in a range of activities. Pupils in Year 4 partition numbers to add or accurately multiply two 2-digit numbers and use this knowledge to find out related subtraction and division facts. They have a good understanding of multiplication facts to 100 and higher attaining pupils can recall these facts quickly with little help. By Year 6, pupils are working confidently with numbers greater than 1000 and multiply accurately in their heads numbers to two decimal places. They use what they know to explain their strategies and this reflects their very good understanding of place value. They have a secure understanding of the relationship between fractions and percentages and calculate these quickly when asked. Pupils' knowledge of shape space and measures is satisfactory. Pupils' ability to record data using different formats is appropriate, with the higher attainers showing a good level of interpretation. Pupils' ability to use an appropriate mathematical vocabulary to talk about and explain their work is a weaker element of the subject.
83. The pupils display very good attitudes to learning. The pupils really enjoy the mental tasks that are now a feature of all mathematics lessons. They join in the activities with great enthusiasm and clearly enjoy the tasks that are set. Within lessons behaviour is

often very good. The pupils work productively and when work is challenging and demanding pupils rise to the occasion and concentrate for prolonged periods of time. These factors add significantly to the quality of their learning.

84. The quality of teaching is consistently good at both key stages. Teachers plan thoroughly to make sure that lessons are based on previous learning. Teachers use focused and probing questions in all lessons to give pupils very good opportunities to talk about the strategies they use when solving problems or carrying out mathematical investigations. This shows an improvement in Key Stage 1 and Years 3 and 4 since the last inspection, which reported investigation skills to be weak for this group of pupils. Pupils show a keen interest in all aspects of their work because of the brisk pace of lessons and the interesting activities. Pupils are taught in ability sets, which are determined following very secure assessments on what pupils know and understand. The level and challenge of work are matched well for most pupils, although, occasionally, higher attaining pupils are expected to complete the same work as other pupils in the group before being given extension work. This is not the case in Years 2 and 6. The decision to teach the higher attaining pupils together twice a week is a significant factor in raising standards and has increased the numbers of pupils attaining standards above the expected level at the age of seven and eleven. Higher attaining pupils in Year 2 add two 2-digit numbers confidently in their heads and use the information to solve problems with money, working out how much two toys cost and finding how much change is needed from £5. Higher attaining pupils in Year 6 use logical thinking to work out the sequence to show the least number of moves required to allow three frogs and toads to swap places and apply their pattern of results to solve the problem for any number of frogs and toads. This well thought through investigation requires them to think carefully about what strategies to use as well as to identify pattern and relationship in number and look for rules to explain their results.
85. Lessons have a good structure that involves a whole class activity, group work and a summing up session at the end of the lesson. The opening mental agility activities that are a feature of all lessons are taught well and with a high degree of pace, fun and challenge. Pupils respond well when they clearly understand what it is they are to learn in a particular lesson and work productively when deadlines or time scales are set. The summary sessions are being used in an effective manner to find out if the stated lesson objectives have been achieved. In the best teaching, the outcomes of the summary session are then used to amend and extend the next range of learning activities that have been planned. This adds much to the quality of pupils' learning.
86. The co-ordination of mathematics is most effective. Suitable targets for improvement have been identified clearly and the school has made good progress in achieving these. The monitoring of teaching, learning and standards is rigorous and the information gained has been used positively to improve the quality of learning for all pupils. Assessment procedures are very good and the information gained is used effectively to develop and improve the curriculum. There is suitable use of computers to support the learning of mathematical facts, including useful websites, which allow pupils to take part in a range of mathematical challenges. These opportunities are not always planned consistently into the curriculum to ensure that all teachers are planning to include information and communication technology to support learning in the subject. There is a wide range of suitable resources, which are used effectively by teachers to consolidate and develop mathematical understanding in numeracy. Numeracy is developed well in other subjects especially science, geography and art and design.

SCIENCE

87. Inspection findings show that standards in science in Year 2 are in line with national expectations and well above the national average in Year 6. Standards have been maintained in Key Stage 1 since the last inspection, but have improved significantly in Key Stage 2. The 2000 National Curriculum test results indicate that pupils' attainment at Key Stage 1, based on teacher assessments, were close to national expectations. The Key Stage 2 results, however, show that pupils' attainment was above the national average and the proportion of pupils reaching Level 5 was well above national average. In comparison with national benchmarks for schools in similar contexts, attainment was very high. This represents a continued improvement since the last inspection.
88. Pupils entering Key Stage 1 have a low level of understanding and knowledge but make good progress. Progress in Key Stage 2 is very good based on a well-structured curriculum and good teaching. There is no appreciable difference in the performance of girls and boys. Pupils with special needs are supported well and are making good, and sometimes very good, progress.
89. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of the difference between living and non-living things and the basic differences between plants and animals. They recognise and name a range of common animals, including some mini-beasts and categorise animals according to the habitats in which they are found, for example, those that live in water, such as fish, and those that fly, such as birds. Good teaching encourages pupils to observe in detail and the more able pupils group animals based on observable features. For example, they know that insects have six legs and spiders have eight legs. Most pupils in Year 2 understand the meaning of life cycle and can name the stages in a frog's development from egg to maturity. They also know that human beings change as they grow and that we require different foods. The more able pupils are beginning to understand what healthy eating means.
90. By the age of seven pupils are secure in their knowledge of the properties of some common materials and how these properties determine the use that can be made of them. For example, plastic is waterproof and used for protection against rain. They also know that some materials change when heated and the more able appreciate that some of these changes are reversible, such as when heating and cooling chocolate, and that other changes are irreversible, such as when paper is burnt.
91. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have a good knowledge of household equipment that uses electricity. They know that in some instances electricity creates movement, as in a vacuum cleaner, sound as in radios and heat as in a hair dryer. The teaching ensures sufficient emphasis on the dangers of mains electricity and pupils know the possible consequence of misuse. Pupils know the components of an electrical circuit and what arrangements need to be made in order that a bulb will light.
92. Pupils in Key Stage 1 have suitable opportunities to observe objects and living things and can communicate their findings in tabular and written form. Their ability to speak and to use an appropriate vocabulary is limited and this inhibits good class discussion, although a few more able pupils describe their work accurately. Pupils in this key stage have some opportunities to engage in practical work, such as running toy cars down a slope and to make predictions as to which one would be the first to stop. Overall, however, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to undertake practical work involving them in making suggestions and finding things out for themselves. Pupils are beginning to use books for information but the use of information and communications

technology as a source of information and to store and present their work is underdeveloped.

93. Most pupils in Year 6 have a good level of understanding of some of the major body systems. They know that the heart pumps blood around the body to supply muscles with oxygen and to remove carbon dioxide. Through good teaching and practical activities they learn that exercise results in a faster pulse rate which slows down during periods of rest. All pupils know the names of the major organs of a flowering plant and can name the stages in the life cycle of a plant and distinguish between them. For example, in discussion, pupils could distinguish between pollination, fertilisation and seed dispersal. Most pupils have a very good understanding of the interdependence of living things through the study of food webs and that whilst animals breathe out carbon dioxide this is utilised by plants in their food making process.
94. By the age of eleven all pupils accurately name a range of common materials and understand how their uses depend on their properties. They know that wood and plastic are hard and durable and used, for example, in furniture, whilst glass is transparent and waterproof and used in windows. They also know that there are three forms of matter - solids, liquids and gases and some materials change from one state to another by heating, for example, water. Pupils use a good scientific vocabulary to describe these changes, including evaporation and condensation in their proper context. More able pupils know how the specific properties of materials may be used to separate them. For example a mixture of sand and salt can be separated because the salt is soluble in water allowing the mixture to be filtered and the salt can be recovered by the evaporation of the water.
95. By the end of Year 6 all pupils can accurately describe how day and night occur and know that the earth circles the sun once a year. Pupils create their own electrical circuits and use them to ascertain the conducting or insulating properties of materials. They understand that gravitational forces acting on objects pull them towards the earth and that friction slows down the movement of objects.
96. Pupils in Year 6 have well-developed skills of scientific enquiry. Most have an excellent understanding of the principle of fair testing and apply it in a practical context. In discussion, pupils in Year 6 were able to quickly and methodically suggest ways of testing the absorbency of paper, identifying the key factors in the investigation. Their predictions were based on close observation, such as the nature of the paper. Most pupils in Year 6 read both line and bar graphs and their conclusions are consistent with the evidence. Pupils have a well-developed scientific vocabulary and understand the importance of repeated measurements when undertaking investigations. Overall, pupils' investigative skills are very good and in several instances they are excellent. Good teaching encourages pupils to become independent learners and they co-operate well in group tasks, as when determining heart rate during and after exercise. This suitably enhances the progress by the high attaining pupils, as is evident in their attainment. Further improvements to pupils' capacity of independent learning would be achieved through the greater use of information and communication technology.
97. The pupils enjoy taking part in science lessons, thoroughly enjoy practical and investigative tasks and show high levels of concentration. They are always ready to listen to advice from their teachers and to learn from one another. Pupils develop enquiring minds and are very keen to acquire new knowledge and skills. These factors, together with the very good standard of behaviour that is a feature of many lessons, contribute significantly to the quality of pupils' learning.

98. The quality of teaching at both key stages is good and accounts for pupils' good progress. The school has a coherent scheme of work and teachers' planning ensures a consistent step-by-step approach to pupils' learning. The teaching is based on clear objectives for the lessons that are shared with the pupils and a concluding plenary session to review progress. Teachers use questioning well to consolidate previous learning, to informally assess pupils' knowledge and understanding and to develop pupils' thinking as, for example, in Year 1 where the teacher was developing the idea of pushes and pulls as part of the work on forces. Teachers encourage pupils to take care of the equipment and to record their results carefully, as when handling thermometers. The majority of pupils in this instance recorded their results accurately. Where the teaching was good, resources were well used and this served to capture and hold pupils' attention. This was particularly good where these resources were linked to pupils own lives, as when discussing good insulators in the home.
99. Leadership of the subject is effective and adds to the quality of teaching and learning. All teachers assess pupils' progress informally during lessons and the tasks set take into account the different abilities. Pupils are formally assessed at the end of each half term and through standardised tests at the end of the year and this enables teachers to set appropriate targets. Pupils in Year 6 are well prepared for their statutory tests and the results of these tests have been carefully monitored to ascertain the strengths and weakness of the teaching programme. Where weaknesses were identified, appropriate changes have been made, for example, in the pupils' ability to understand the terminology and in their ability to interpret data. The consequent changes in the teaching programme have been outstandingly successful in raising attainment to the present high standard.

ART AND DESIGN

100. Pupils' attainment in art and design is above the level expected at the end of both key stages and all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress throughout the school. There are good examples of work on display in corridors, halls and classrooms and pupils have a strong sense of pride in the ownership of the work shown. There is a strong sense that pupils and teachers value art and design as part of the curriculum and this has contributed to the good improvement in this subject since the time of the last inspection.
101. The good quality of teaching and learning contribute significantly to the good standards that are achieved. Pupils clearly enjoy their lessons, are keen to show originality and behave very well in lessons. The effective teaching at Key Stage 1 ensures that the direct teaching of specific skills is given a high priority and, as a consequence, pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 are showing a good level of competence in drawing and painting. Sketchbooks, underused in the past, are now becoming more embedded in the curriculum and pupils are able to use these to experiment with mark making and shading as well as more general techniques. Paint is the most widely used medium at this stage and pupils have a good sense of colour and teaching ensures that many opportunities are provided to mix colours to bring about a change in effect. In addition to paint, pupils are also able to investigate the effects of texture in printing and, during the course of the inspection, pupils in Year 2 were making repeating patterns in design and technology that drew on the knowledge gained in their artwork. The work was of a good standard. Teachers also ensure that art relates to other subjects in the curriculum, such as mathematics and science. Pupils record their impressions from first hand observation which gives them useful insights into the structure of plants and flowers and the science of living things. Links are also made with work in religious

studies through the making of Easter cards. Teachers encourage the freedom of expression essential to acquiring an awareness of the techniques and skills of the young artist but they also introduce pupils to the work of some of the famous contributors to the European artistic tradition, such as Van Gogh. Good examples of work are produced in three dimensions through the use of clay and modelling with paper and textiles.

102. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have made further good progress in the development of their skills and techniques. This is as a direct result of the good quality of teaching, which also encourages pupils to handle materials with a high degree of confidence. Pupils in Year 3 have produced good quality pictures in the style of Lowry and have used colour-wash techniques very successfully. Teaching ensures that experiences in other subject areas are put to effective use; pupils relate their history fieldwork in Year 4 to the work of the painter Holbein and pupils in Year 5 produce artwork in the style of ancient Greece based on their visits to the Walker Art Gallery. Although the majority of the finished work is based on the artistic traditions of Europe, both ancient and modern, teaching helps pupils to develop a good knowledge of the decorative arts from other cultures, such as Islamic pattern designs. It is clear that good teaching and pupils' enthusiasm combine to produce work of high quality, such as the vibrant Mondrian-style designs produced by Year 6. There is a sense of understanding that art changes both in style and fashion over time but that it is also central to the identity of the culture in which we live.
103. By the end of Year 6, pupils have acquired the ability to make thoughtful and comprehensive evaluations of their own work and to celebrate that of others. With their teachers, they have created an attractive and informative learning environment around the school and they have increased their knowledge of the art of their own and other cultures. Although there is no whole-school policy for assessment, the co-ordinator has a good overview of the subject, with the exception being the ability to use assessment data for the setting of future learning targets.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

104. Standards in design and technology are above national expectations at the end of both key stages. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in both key stages and this is a reflection of the good quality of the teaching provided. Pupils have very positive attitudes to the subject, work with high levels of interest and enthusiasm and behave very well in lessons. All these factors make an important contribution to the good quality of learning that is a feature of many lessons and also to the good improvements that have been made in the subject since the time of the last inspection.
105. The good quality of teaching at Key Stage 1 makes sure that pupils are provided with a good range of activities that are aimed at progressively increasing their skill levels as well as their appreciation of the design process. By the end of Year 2, they have designed and made good quality artefacts for the home, such as table decorations and Easter cards, and they have engaged with the problems of designing and making puppets. As is often the case, pupils at this stage are more committed to making than designing and it is a reflection of the good quality of teaching in the subject that they also make good progress in their design skills. Good cross-curricular links are established during the key stage and this is very noticeable in the manner in which the key skills of cutting, shaping and joining materials that pupils have learned are successfully used in their work in art and science. There is a good balance between

practical tasks related to increasing understanding of the making process and the evaluation of the designs for suitability for purpose. Even the younger pupils are able to evaluate whether their finished products look the way they wanted them to.

106. By the end of Key Stage 2 the continued good quality of teaching enables pupils to have further increased their knowledge of the design process and to make more sophisticated evaluations of the work done. As in the previous key stage, good links are made with other areas of the curriculum. Pupils in Year 3 make good quality books using paper engineering, which also allows them to think in terms of the literacy component of their work. They also relate to their work in science when they make a moving chassis. As they move through the key stage, teaching allows pupils to revisit some of the activities done before but at a higher level of skill requirement. The teaching then makes good use of this prior learning. For example, the moving chassis designed in Year 3 is incorporated into designing and making a moving toy in Year 5 using cams as part of the motive power. Teachers ensure that pupils establish a close link between the quality of the finished outcomes and the initial design concept, which the pupils do well. In their recording, pupils have revisited their designs a number of times in order to identify and correct problems that arise in the making stage. This consistently good quality of teaching and learning contributes well to the good strides that all pupils make in developing knowledge, skills and understanding.
107. Resources are good and are well used and accessible to the pupils. The co-ordinator has a good overview of the subject and knows precisely the strengths of the subject and areas for development. This includes the identified need to improve assessment procedures so that information gained from assessment tasks can be used in an effective manner to guide and inform future priorities in the subject.

GEOGRAPHY

108. Standards in geography are at an expected level at the end of both key stages. Given the fact that many pupils start school with poor knowledge of the world that they live in, this represents good progress for pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs. This progress is due to the good quality of teaching, a curriculum that provides a good balance of geographical knowledge and skills and the pupils' very positive attitudes to the subject. The standards have been maintained since the time of the last inspection.
109. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have developed a secure understanding of the locality in which they live. They walk around the district, make maps and pinpoint the main features and landmarks around Gwladys Street. They give good pointers as to their likes and dislikes of the local environment and what they would do to improve it. They know the different functions of different buildings and show an appropriate awareness of people in the community and what they contribute. They recognise that different localities have different features and the comparison made with Hale village reinforces this concept. Through their study of different holiday resorts, the pupils start to get an early understanding of the advantages and disadvantages of tourism. Good use was made of information and communication technology when pie charts and bar graphs were used to demonstrate how popular different holiday resorts are. Pupils develop appropriate mapping skills by drawing simple plans of objects and of routes to school. Most pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of weather patterns and conditions and know that extremes of weather can cause damage to people and property. The quality of pupils' written work is sometimes restricted by their more limited writing skills and limited expressive vocabulary.

110. Pupils continue to develop geographical knowledge and skills at a good rate at Key Stage 2. By the end of the key stage pupils have a secure knowledge of climate. They know that different types of homes and buildings are needed for different climates. They understand that if people are to survive in quite hostile climates they have to adapt their lifestyle and make the best use of the prevailing environment. Pupils show that they know the difference between desert and semi-desert environments and that in more deprived parts of the world there is a big difference in life expectancy when compared to more prosperous countries. The studies of hot and polar climates present a good contrast, which enable pupils to understand how different life can be in different climates. Pupils understand in a satisfactory manner how land can be used for different purposes and know the difference between rural and urban. Pupils recognise contour lines on maps and the higher attaining pupils use six figure grid references to locate different places on maps. Pupils show that they know the names of major rivers in the world and, through their studies of the Swat Valley in Pakistan, they gain an understanding of what life is like and the difficulties that people have to endure in an economically developing locality. The school makes very good use of visits and fieldwork to enhance pupils' learning. Visits around the locality, to Kendal, to Colomendy and to Manchester Airport provide the pupils with a first hand insight into differing localities, different landscapes, changes to the environment and the uses to which different types of land can be put. Good examples were seen of computers being used to support pupils' work when pupils were asked to produce temperature and rainfall graphs of the Swat Valley. The weakness is that again pupils' written and recorded work does not consistently reflect their verbal knowledge.
111. The pupils have very good attitudes to the subject and are keen to find out more about the world in which they live. Pupils enjoy their lessons and are ready to contribute to question and answer sessions even if at times they have some difficulty in carefully articulating their answers. This is overcome by teaching that deals with pupils in a very sensitive manner and careful questioning that brings pupils of all abilities into the discussion. This results in pupils sharing ideas and showing respect for the views and opinions of others. Behaviour in lessons is often of a very good standard. All these factors have a very positive impact on the quality of pupils' learning and the progress that pupils make.
112. The quality of teaching is good across the school. Planning over time and in the short term ensures that pupils receive a broad and balanced diet of geographical knowledge and skills. Lesson objectives are shared with the pupils and this enables them to be fully aware of what it is they are to learn. Reference is made to these objectives throughout the lesson and at the end when the teachers check if the objectives have been met. Teaching is at its best when future lessons are modified as a result of objectives not being met or, indeed, being exceeded. This impacts most positively on pupils' learning. In a very good lesson on climate at Year 6 and a good lesson on the Swat Valley at Year 5 both teachers use re-cap at the start of the lesson to assess what pupils had remembered before making pertinent teaching points. In both lessons, teachers use good technical language, such as longitude, latitude, climatic differences, that add to the quality of the lesson. Good links are sometimes made with literacy when, for example, pupils are asked to take notes from a video they are watching. The provision of a writing framework to do this enables the pupils to organise their notes in a more coherent and logical manner. A main strength of the teaching is that teachers use every opportunity to enhance pupils' geographical knowledge and skills. Teachers often have very good subject knowledge themselves and provide the pupils with a string of interesting pieces of information or facts and figures that enthuse and motivate

the pupils. The marking of pupils' work is often of a good standard because it clearly outlines why a piece of work is good or what a pupil needs to do to improve.

113. The subject is well led and managed. The two co-ordinators are knowledgeable, enthusiastic and have a very good grasp of the strengths and areas for development within the subject. They have rightly targeted the need to develop pupils' ability to record their work in a more effective manner, to continue to capitalise on the opportunities for computers to consistently support and enhance pupils' learning in the subject and to develop more formal procedures to assess pupils' attainment and track their progress. The subject has not been a priority focus of school development recently but when it is opportunities are to be provided for the co-ordinators to monitor the quality of teaching and learning across the school. The co-ordinators have monitored teachers' planning, looked at different samples of pupils' work and provided much informal help and guidance to colleagues. The subject has made an important contribution to pupils' moral and social development through looking at environmental and global issues from a moral perspective and the good range of visits add much to pupils' personal and social development. The subject is well resourced and the quantity and quality of these resources add to pupils' learning.

HISTORY

114. By the end of both key stages, attainment in history is in line with national expectations. At the time of the last inspection, standards were found to be at a higher level than that normally seen for eleven-year-olds. The slightly weaker picture is due to the reduced emphasis given to pupils researching and interpreting sources of information about the past. Despite this, given the generally low levels of general knowledge many pupils demonstrate when they first enter the school, they are judged to achieve well and pupils of all abilities make good progress. This is a direct result of the good teaching that is a feature of many lessons and the good range of additional trips and visitors to the school that are very successful in stimulating pupils' interest and curiosity about the past.
115. By the age of seven, pupils, including those with special educational needs, successfully develop their understanding of certain historical events and characters from the past. They know, for example, that the Great Fire of London started accidentally yet destroyed much of London requiring the city to be rebuilt. They appreciate that homes from the past differ from those of today and that in the Victorian era, for example, they were often small and cramped. Pupils have a satisfactory understanding of the concept of chronology and how things change over time. The weaker writing skills that many pupils demonstrate hold back their ability to record formally aspects of their history work and these shortcomings prevent progress and attainment from being stronger.
116. By the age of 11, pupils continue to make good gains in their learning of the past. Through a carefully planned programme of work, pupils in Year 3, for example, learn about how the Romans lived and what they believed in. Year 4 pupils have learned about the values and culture of the Aztecs and by the end of the key stage, pupils understand well how life in Britain has changed since the 1930s. This is developed well by good opportunities provided by teachers for pupils to deepen their appreciation of how the city of Liverpool was in the 1930s and how it has changed in recent times. Good scope is given for pupils to explore the impact of major events, such as the Jarrow Crusade and why this came about and the impact that it had on the participants. Pupils explain the importance of different historical leaders and the impact and part people, such as Churchill and Hitler, played during the Second World War. Pupils are

also aware of how people, such as the Beatles, have had an impact on the cultural development of Britain. Standards could be strengthened if pupils had a greater opportunity to develop their skills in pursuing a line of historical enquiry and to develop their research skills through, for example, the use of the school library and other sources of information.

117. The overall quality of teaching is good and has a strong impact on the pupils' enthusiasm for the subject, which is very apparent. Pupils are effectively taught to be curious about the past and evaluate how others behaved and lived their lives in different ways. In one very good lesson seen in Year 4, for example, the teacher sensitively guided the pupils through careful questioning and answering to discover the importance and belief the Aztecs placed in making a human sacrifice. By the end of the lesson, pupils had successfully developed their appreciation of the value system of another culture. All teachers have a good subject knowledge and understanding and plan learning well ensuring, for example, that pupils have good access to different materials in lessons. Good links are also made with other subjects. In design and technology, Year 4 pupils have made Tudor homes and strategies like these successfully develop pupils' understanding not just of the skills in design and technology, but in how people from the Tudor lived their lives. While teaching is good, there is greater scope to use further strategies, such as educational drama, to develop pupils' learning. A further feature of the teaching includes the well-planned series of visits by pupils to places of historical interest. In many year groups, pupils often visit museums, or houses, such as Rufford Hall, to deepen their knowledge and understanding of the past. This impacts positively on pupils' learning because it helps to bring history to life.
118. The subject is well led and managed. Both co-ordinators are enthusiastic about the subject and support their colleagues well in planning pupils' learning. In addition, the co-ordinator for Key Stage 2 has opportunities to gauge the quality of teaching and learning in other classes and this has provided her with a good understanding of where improvements could be made. At present, however, the school does not have a formal system of recording pupils' attainment and progress in the subject. Resources are satisfactory and the subject makes a good contribution to the pupils' moral development as they are given scope through the subject to explore issues of a moral nature, such as the reasons why the Second World War was fought.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

119. The school has dealt successfully with many of the weaknesses identified in the last inspection. The recent installation of a suite of computers has already enhanced the quality of learning in the subject for all pupils. Pupils have a good length of time to work on computers during a regular weekly lesson and at other times in the classroom. Computers are compatible and pupils are now able to continue the work started in the computer suite when they return to their classroom. These were weaknesses identified in the last inspection, which have now been addressed. However, despite the best efforts of the school, standards are below the expected level at the end of both key stages. During the inspection, the quality of teaching, learning and the progress that pupils of all abilities made was good. Pupils are now being taught a range of skills across all elements of the subject that will enable them to become competent computer users. The progress, however, that pupils have made over time has not been at this satisfactory level. Pupils have not until recently had the breadth of experience necessary to gain the basic skills and knowledge necessary to attain average standards and little work was seen at higher levels. The school is presently focusing

appropriately on developing pupils' basic skills in order to help them learn the range of knowledge and understanding needed to meet average and higher standards. Evidence indicates that standards in the subject are rising at a good rate as pupils now acquire the necessary skills and knowledge at a faster rate than was previously the case.

120. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils' attainment is below average. Keyboard skills are satisfactory but some pupils need assistance to access the different features of the program that they are using. The higher attaining pupils change the size and appearance of their text. A few pupils save their work but discussions with pupils show that those who have access to a computer at home are more proficient at this than those that do not. Pupils do not have a well-developed knowledge and understanding of the uses of computers in the wider world and their ability to use an appropriate technical vocabulary is limited. By the end of Key Stage 2, there are some stronger features of attainment, but standards are still lower than they should be. Pupils' keyboard skills are satisfactory and many pupils know how to access, save and retrieve information. The manner in which teachers use the interactive whiteboard enables pupils to gain a satisfactory understanding of the different functions of the keys on the keyboard and helps pupils to find their way around programs with greater speed. Pupils are developing their knowledge and understanding of how to access the Internet for information and the uses of electronic-mail. Pupils have a limited technical vocabulary and understanding of how to use sensor equipment as part of their studies. Although some good examples were seen of pupils using computers to support and enhance their learning in other areas of the curriculum, this good practice is not as consistent as it could be and as a result impacts negatively on pupils' learning. This is particularly the case in English where opportunities are missed to enhance pupils' literacy skills.
121. The quality of teaching seen taking place in the computer suite during the inspection was good. Recent training has improved teachers' subject knowledge and plans show that future training will cover the breadth of computer knowledge and understanding that pupils require. When teachers' subject knowledge and confidence is secure, pupils are given very good opportunities to explore and find out for themselves what computers can do. For example, in one Year 4 lesson, two pupils successfully created a star pattern after correctly writing a procedure for drawing a triangle using 'Logo'. Work on display shows that pupils in Year 6 are provided with the opportunity to explore the potential of computers and as a result use a program to design, save and print their names using a range of styles, colours and presentations. The pupils really enjoy using computers and do so with a sense of enthusiasm. Behaviour is often of a high standard. Pupils show a keen interest when working on the computers and work together very well on shared pieces of work. They concentrate very well and produce a good amount of work during the time given. These factors bring an added dimension and contribution to the improving standards that are now being achieved.
122. The co-ordination of the subject is good. Considerable improvements have been made to address all the weaknesses identified in the previous report and this reflects the good progress made since the last inspection. There is a suitable action plan to improve and develop the subject further and a timetable of when and how this will happen is currently under review. The co-ordinator has had the opportunity to monitor lessons in the computer suite and feedback has been given to teachers on how they can improve learning further. This information has also been used to identify a relevant training programme for teachers across the school. The co-ordinator has accurately identified the need to ensure that every opportunity is seized upon to use computers across the curriculum and to ensure that all the required skills are taught in a systematic and progressive manner. This is wholly appropriate. The very recent

assessment procedures for the subject are not yet fully embedded in practice to be having their biggest possible impact on pupils' attainment and learning. The number and suitability of computers is satisfactory and the school makes good use of a digital camera to record pupils' achievements.

MUSIC

123. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in both key stages and are in line to meet the standards expected at the end of both key stages. This maintains the standards found in the last inspection. Pupils in both key stages benefit from weekly sessions taken by the music co-ordinator, who teaches singing, both hymns and a variety of songs, to both age groups. This is good use of staff expertise and ensures that all pupils have equal opportunities to learn. Pupils benefit from her enthusiastic approach, and clearly enjoy singing. The younger ones learn action songs, which they perform enthusiastically, and planning shows that older pupils in Key Stage 2 begin to sing in rounds and parts later in the year. Pupils learn composition and have chances to play instruments in weekly class lessons. These are planned by class teachers using the school music scheme. They are based on sound commercial schemes, which successfully provide non-specialist teachers with a supportive framework on which to build their lessons.
124. Pupils in Key Stage 1 play instruments in an appropriate manner to accompany poems they listen to, trying to distinguish between slow and fast. Most pupils know that some percussion instruments are made of wood and others of metal. The majority of pupils can keep a steady beat and play simple rhythms. However, pupils find it difficult to follow the teacher's commands as 'conductor' to stop and start playing. In Key Stage 2, pupils in Year 4 enjoy a positive experience, using a taped resource, when the two classes have a joint lesson. Staff share expertise and this provides pupils with a good level of interest and motivation, ensuring that all pupils learn successfully. They sing and play instruments, combined with some movement, to a gospel song. This is of a satisfactory standard.
125. Pupils are interested in their music lessons. They generally join in enthusiastically and concentrate well. Lessons are short, because of the demands of the curriculum, and this means there is little chance to develop the theme of the lesson to any great degree in either key stage. Teaching in the inspection was satisfactory and sometimes good. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Some staff do not have well-developed skills in music but use their teaching skills effectively, in conjunction with the schemes, to provide interesting lessons, that engage pupils well. Relationships are good and pupils behave well. Praise is used effectively to motivate pupils. Pupils learn about a wider world of music through the range of visits and visitors who bring music into school, such as an African drummer recently. This effectively extends the music provision in the school for all pupils.
126. A good range of extra-curricular activities is available, which enhances the progress of those pupils who participate. Pupils enjoy guitar sessions, which are taken by the co-ordinator, and woodwind and brass tuition provided by peripatetic teachers each week. These activities, and the music curriculum in class lessons, make a positive contribution to pupils' cultural and social development.
127. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and supportive to colleagues. She monitors resources and allocates the budget appropriately. Although a few opportunities are time-tabled to observe and monitor the music curriculum, a full-time teaching

commitment and a focus on monitoring core subjects limits the opportunities to monitor and evaluate the music curriculum throughout the school.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

128. Pupils of all abilities make satisfactory progress throughout the school and are in line to meet the standards expected at the end of the both key stages. This is an improvement on the standards found in the last inspection, which were judged to be below average at the end of Key Stage 1.
129. Pupils participate in a full range of activities over the school year in both key stages, including dance, gymnastics, games and athletics. Pupils in both key stages attend swimming lessons at local pools, which is a good feature. In Key Stage 2 pupils gain good experience of outdoor and adventurous activities, through residential weekends, in both Year 4 and Year 6. This is a good feature, with many benefits, not only to the physical education curriculum but also to the personal and social development of pupils.
130. Satisfactory, good and very good teaching was observed in the inspection. Over time teaching is satisfactory overall, and pupils of all abilities make appropriate progress throughout the school. Teachers plan effectively and organise lessons well. This means that pupils are clear about what they should do and little time is wasted. Pupils generally enjoy physical education lessons. They participate enthusiastically and behaviour is good. Staff are confident and demonstrate the techniques required. They use pupils to demonstrate good features, encouraging others to work hard to improve and achieve good standards. Resources are good and staff generally use them well to give pupils good chances to learn. In Year 1, for example, pupils bounce, throw and catch using large balls, both individually, in pairs and in small groups. In Year 2, pupils achieve good standards in gymnastics, using the benches, floor and mats. They demonstrate good balance and they can evaluate their own performance and know how to improve. Teachers use support staff well to help particular pupils or to give support to a group in lessons. This is effective in helping pupils to make progress.
131. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 enjoy dance lessons, both in traditional dances and in an interpretation of an Aztec myth to support class work in history. They improve co-ordination and balance, and learn about improvisation. On occasion, in athletics, for example, there is too little physical activity in the lesson and, although pupils are actively occupied, physical skills are not sufficiently challenged and progress is a little slow.
132. The physical education curriculum is enhanced by arrangements with a local college for pupils to participate in sporting activities, and the regular use of a local sports hall for games activities. This compensates in part for the lack of a grassed area for games within the school grounds, and ensures that pupils can participate in the full physical education curriculum.
133. A good range of extra-curricular activities is available, which enhances the progress of those pupils who participate. This includes regular clubs run by staff, such as netball and football and coaching from the local professional football clubs for pupils in Key Stage 2 at various times during the year. Pupils play in a variety of competitions against other local schools, adding significantly to their social development.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

134. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils attain standards that are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. By the end of Key Stage 2 they are attaining standards higher than those expected. Overall, this represents an improvement from the position noted by the previous inspection. Pupils at both key stages are making good progress in this aspect of their education, including those with special educational needs. The pupils show a real awareness of the needs of others and a desire to find out about different cultures and traditions. This, together with the very good attitudes to work and the high standards of behaviour, makes a significant contribution to the learning environment that is prevalent within the school and to the good progress that pupils make.
135. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have a secure grasp of the basic tenets of the Christian faith and they are familiar with the name and location of the local St. Luke's Parish Church. In their recording and in conversation pupils describe the importance of Christmas and Easter in the Christian calendar and they know that the Bible is a special and sacred book. They also know that there are other faiths and that not all people are Christian in their beliefs. They have a satisfactory knowledge of the fact that there are other sacred texts, such as the Torah, and that other faiths have different celebrations and festivals. In their reverence for artefacts pupils show a high degree of spirituality and the teaching has also been very successful in developing a strong code of morality among all pupils in the school.
136. In Key Stage 2 pupils make good progress in their understandings of different religions and the ways of life associated with them. By Year 6 they effectively address many aspects of human nature, including the age-old quest for answers to profound questions, such as the origins of life. At a philosophical level, many pupils find it hard to express their thoughts verbally as they often lack an adequate specialist vocabulary. This was noticeable as some Year 6 pupils engaged with issues surrounding a comparison of creation stories in the European and Chinese traditions. However, when confronted with more concrete problems, such as the inhumanity of many of the conflicts in the world, they are more able to express a strong and very moral view. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have a good understanding of the relationships between Christianity and other major faiths, such as Islam and Sikhism, and they are becoming sensitive to the cultural traditions of other faith communities. They know that the growth and development of children is accorded great importance in all cultures and they have a good awareness of the rites and ceremonies associated with growing up, such as baptism in the Christian tradition.
137. Teaching is good in both key stages and the staff are secure in their knowledge of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils and this is noticeable in the mature level of their mutual discussions. The quality of the discussions is not always reflected in the recording done in their workbooks by the pupils and occasionally too much time is spent on drawing pictures to accompany written work. In one Year 5 class, the freedom of expression in the class discussion was lost to some extent by the more limited form of their written recording.
138. The resources available for the teaching of religious education are good and the co-ordinator leads the subject well and has a very clear vision for future developments in the teaching of the subject. At present the school lacks a comprehensive scheme for assessing work in the non-core foundation subjects and individual teachers monitor progress in religious education. The school does its best to ensure that pupils are able to develop their knowledge and appreciation of other faiths and cultures and

representatives from these are also involved in visits to the school in addition to the visits made by the school to centres of faith in the wider community. These add much to the quality of pupils' learning.