

INSPECTION REPORT

**Saint Cleopas Church of England Voluntary
Controlled Primary School**

Liverpool

LEA area: Liverpool

Unique reference number: 104613

Headteacher: Miss J. Fleetwood

Reporting inspector: Stafford Evans
21217

Dates of inspection: 30th April - 3rd May 2001

Inspection number: 196986

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Beresford Road Liverpool
Postcode:	L8 4RP
Telephone number:	0151 727 1725
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr J Middleton
Date of previous inspection:	3 rd February 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr S. Evans (OIN 21217)	Registered inspector	English Information and communication technology Design and technology Physical education Equal opportunities	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
Mr G. Norval (OIN 9624)	Lay inspector		Attendance How well does the school care for its pupils? How does the school work in partnership with parents? Staffing, accommodation and learning resources
Mrs J. Walker (OIN 25461)	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Mathematics History Religious education	How good are curricular and other opportunities? Assessment
Mrs S. Russam (OIN 10228)	Team inspector	Science Art Geography Music Special educational needs	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	10
The school's results and achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	12
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	14
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	16
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	18
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	19
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	21
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	22
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM AND SUBJECTS	26

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Saint Cleopas is a Church of England Voluntary Controlled primary school with a total of 197 pupils on roll aged 4 to 11 years. There are also 23 part-time and 10 full-time children in the nursery class. The school is about the same size as other primary schools nationally. Attainment on entry to the nursery class at the age of three is below that expected for children of this age. The percentage of pupils in the school identified as having special educational needs - 21 per cent - is in line with the national average. No pupil has a Statement of Special Educational Need. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals is well above the national average. Nine per cent of pupils are from ethnic minority backgrounds. No pupil speaks English as an additional language. The school is in an Education Action Zone and belongs to the Excellence in Liverpool initiative. It received Beacon School status in September 2000.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective school that has very good features. It gives good value for money. Standards, by the time pupils leave the school at 11 years of age, are satisfactory in relation to national expectations, except in English. Pupils achieve well in relation to their prior attainment, except a significant number of boys aged 7 to 11 who underachieve. Pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds achieve similarly to other pupils. The quality of teaching ranges from excellent to satisfactory and is good overall. The leadership and management of the school are good. The school makes good effective use of, and benefits significantly from, its involvement in the Education Action Zone and the Excellence in Liverpool initiatives and from its Beacon School status.

What the school does well

- Pupils attain highly in information and communication technology. The good quality of teaching, good resources, very good leadership of the subject and pupils' very good attitudes to learning, are the most significant contributory factors to the high attainment.
- Throughout the school, there is a high proportion of good, very good and excellent teaching - 70 per cent. This ensures pupils achieve well by the time they leave the school.
- Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development are good. Their relationships with one another are very good. This positively affects pupils' quality of learning.
- Teachers provide a broad and interesting range of work for the pupils. This promotes high achievement of pupils.
- There is a strong emphasis on provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This has a positive impact on pupils' personal development and the relationships they form with one another.
- The headteacher provides very good leadership. There is a very good team spirit in the school and a staff who are committed to raising standards.

What could be improved

- Although standards in English attained by pupils aged 7 to 11 are improving, they are too low.
- The role of teachers as co-ordinators is not effective enough.
- Despite improvements, pupils' attendance rate is below the national average.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in February 1997. Since then it has made satisfactory improvements. Standards pupils attain are broadly the same, the quality of teaching is better and the attendance rate of pupils is significantly better. Standards in information and communication technology are higher. Procedures for assessing pupils' work have improved. Information relating to pupils' attainment and progress are generally analysed more effectively. The exception is the monitoring and evaluation of attainment data in respect of ethnic minority pupils. The information relating to gender issues is also not used effectively. The monitoring and evaluation of the school's work is better but there remains room for improvement in role of subject co-ordinators in this respect. In addition, the specific roles of individual governors are not clearly defined and there is no planned programme of governors' visits to the school.

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	C	C	E	B
Mathematics	C	C	C	A
Science	B	C	B	A

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

The current class of 11-year-olds attains the same standards in English and mathematics as those in the table above, but lower in science. Within this class there is a higher than usual proportion of pupils' on the register of special educational needs - 33 per cent - and this adversely affects standards of attainment. Boys also do not achieve as highly as girls and significantly more so than is found nationally. Throughout the school there are definite indications of standards improving in English. For example, Year 5 pupils attain in line with national expectations and continue to improve. By the age of 11, pupils attain above national expectations in information and communication technology and standards in other subjects are the same as those found in most primary schools. Pupils make good progress overall during their time in the school. By the age of 5, children make good progress and attain nationally expected standards. Pupils aged 7 years attain well above average in English and above average in mathematics and science. In the national tests for 7 year olds in 2000, pupils' level of attainment in reading placed the school in the top 5 per cent of schools similar to Saint Cleopas. By the age of 7, pupils make very good progress. Pupils, aged 3 to 7 years, with special educational needs make very good progress and achieve well in relation to prior attainment, and pupils aged 7 to 11 make satisfactory progress.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils like school and they have good attitudes to their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils' behaviour in and around the school is usually good. There is one exclusion.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils have very good relationships with one another and with adults in the school. Their personal development is good.
Attendance	The attendance rate is below the national average and the number of pupils late for school is high.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is good. Teaching is satisfactory or better in all lessons. It is excellent in 4 per cent, very good in 30 per cent, good in 36 per cent and satisfactory in 30 per cent. The teaching of literacy and numeracy for pupils aged 5 to 7 years is very good and satisfactory for pupils aged 7 to 11 years. A strength of the school is the teaching of information and communication technology. Another strength of the school is the teaching of pupils in the reception class. Particular strengths of the teaching of pupils aged 5 to 7 are the teaching of basic skills, the effectiveness of the teachers' lesson planning and the

management of pupils' behaviour. Although there is a significant amount of good and very good teaching of pupils aged 7 to 11 years, there are some weaknesses. These are in the teachers' management of pupils' behaviour and the marking of pupils' work. The quality of teaching of pupils identified with special educational needs is good for children aged 3 to 5, very good for pupils aged 5 to 7 and satisfactory for pupils aged 7 to 11 years. Support staff make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning. However, they are not always deployed effectively during the introductions to lessons.

The quality of pupils' learning ranges from excellent to satisfactory. It is good overall. The quality of pupils' learning is better for pupils aged 5 to 7 than it is for pupils aged 7 to 11 years. Strengths of the learning for pupils aged 5 to 7 years are the acquisition of basic skills, their hard work, interest and concentration. A significant number of pupils in Year 6 do not work hard or fast enough.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The well-planned curriculum for the under-fives covers the national Early Learning Goals ¹ . The school provides a broad range of work that is interesting and relevant to pupils aged from 5 to 11 years. Curriculum planning is mainly satisfactory. However, there is inconsistency in how teachers plan pupils' work and the planning is not of satisfactory quality throughout the school.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The school's programme of support for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. It is effectively organised to identify pupils who need additional help. This ensures that they make similar progress to that of their classmates.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	This provision is very good overall and is set within a strong Christian ethos. Provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good and good for their spiritual and cultural development. Pupils clearly understand what is right and wrong and show a high degree of respect for all people.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares well for its pupils. Members of staff treat the pupils with understanding and respect. Procedures for child protection are in place. Teachers and support staff know the pupils well and have good quality information to tell them what pupils have done well and where they need help. Therefore, support is directed effectively to the pupils who need it most.

Parents have a very high regard for the school. There are good links between school and parents. The parents' impact on the work of the school is good. Less well developed is the contribution parents make to supporting their children's learning at home.

¹ These goals are based on the areas of learning during the Foundation Stage. They also help prepare children for future learning when they enter compulsory education at the age of five years. The goals mainly refer to literacy and numeracy skills, and personal, social and emotional development. Most children should reach the early learning goals by the time they are five.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher has a very clear vision of what sort of school it should be and puts pupils and their achievement first. The headteacher, ably supported by the staff, has a definite commitment to high standards. The leadership of the co-ordinators for the Foundation Stage, English and information and communication technology is of high calibre. Subject co-ordinators provide sound leadership overall. They need to monitor and evaluate pupils' standards more rigorously. They also need to play a more prominent role in the strategic planning for the subjects for which they are responsible.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors are satisfactorily organised. They have a good grasp of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They need to set out clearly their specific individual roles. They also need to put in place a planned programme of visits to the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school generally monitors and evaluates its performance effectively. It knows its strengths and areas that require development and takes effective action to secure improvement. There are no systems in place for monitoring and evaluating the attainment and progress of ethnic minority pupils.
The strategic use of resources	Resources are managed very well and the principles of best value applied effectively. The school is adequately staffed and the quality of accommodation is satisfactory. There are sufficient learning resources in all subjects.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Fifty questionnaires were returned. This was 21 per cent of those sent out. Twelve parents attended the pre-inspection meeting for parents.

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school. • The school enables their children to make good progress. • The teaching is good. • Their children behave well at school. • The school is very easy to approach with concerns. • Parents are happy with homework provision. • They feel the school keeps them well informed about their children's progress. • Parents feel staff have high expectations for their children. • The school works closely with parents. • The school is well led and managed. • The provision for their children's personal development is good. • There is a good range of extra-curricular activities. 	

Inspectors support the parents' positive views.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. In the 2000 national tests for pupils aged 7, standards were above the national average in reading, average in writing and well below average in mathematics. In the teacher assessment for science, results were below the national average. In comparison with similar schools, standards of attainment were well above average in writing, above average in mathematics and in the top 5 per cent of schools in reading. Standards are higher now than they were at the time of the last inspection in 1997. The biggest improvements are in reading and mathematics standards.
2. Inspection evidence indicates standards attained by pupils aged 7 are broadly the same in English as they were in the 2000 national tests, but higher in mathematics and science. Standards in mathematics and science are now above the national average. The main reason for the improvement since the last inspection is the better quality of teaching and pupils' learning. Both are now very good compared with good at the time of the last inspection. Pupils also make better progress in the reception class now compared with at the time of the last inspection. Therefore, pupils start in Year 1 at a higher level of attainment than they did previously.
3. In the 2000 national tests, standards of attainment for 11-year-olds in English were well below average, average in mathematics and above average in science. In comparison with similar schools, standards were above average in English and well above average in mathematics and science. Over the last four years, standards have remained broadly the same and match the national trend over the same period.
4. Inspection findings indicate that by the age of 11, pupils' standards in English are well below the national average, average in mathematics and below average in science. Standards of the current Year 6 pupils are similar to those achieved in the national tests just after the previous inspection. Girls attain higher than boys and significantly more so than is found nationally. Boys' underachievement is the main factor for the low standards in English and science. Also, only a few pupils, 6 out of 21, regularly attend the after-school 'booster classes' that provide extra teaching for Year 6 pupils. There is also a poor response by pupils to homework. Therefore, pupils very rarely extend their learning by doing extra work at home. Another factor for the low attainment in the current Year 6 is the presence of a higher than usual proportion of pupils on the register of special educational needs. The attendance rate of pupils in Year 6 is poor and this adversely affects their progress and attainment.
5. There are definite signs within the rest of the school of improvement in English standards. For example, 75 per cent of Year 5 pupils attain in line or above nationally expected levels for pupils of this age. There are a number of factors that contribute to the current trend of rising standards:
 - good quality teaching and learning;
 - effective involvement in Education Action Zone initiatives;
 - the focus by everyone in the school on raising standards of writing;
 - the increasing use of writing skills in other subjects;
 - good leadership by the subject co-ordinator.
6. Pupils' attainment in information and communication technology is above that found in most primary schools for pupils aged 7 and 11 years. Pupils of all abilities make very good progress. Standards are rising quickly throughout the school and are very

significantly better than at the time of the last inspection. This is due to a number of reasons. A considerable investment in time and money has included staff training, and the school plans even more for the near future. Involvement in the Education Action Zone initiative has benefited the school by providing good quality information and communication technology resources. Lesson planning is good and ensures pupils' work becomes harder as they move through the school and that the skills they learn develop in an appropriate order. The co-ordinator leads the subject very successfully and has clear plans for the subject's continued development, together with the ability, support and commitment to implement them successfully.

7. Assessment carried out when they enter the nursery shows that children enter school with low standards in all areas of the Foundation Stage. By the time they leave the reception classes the majority of children will have achieved the Early Learning Goals and more able children have already reached them. The children, including those with special educational needs, make good progress during their time in the nursery and reception classes.
8. By the time pupils are aged 7 and 11, standards in religious education are in line with those recommended in the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils aged 7 and 11 attain in line with national expectations in art and design, design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education. By the time pupils leave the school at 11 years of age, they achieve well in relation to their prior attainment in all subjects. Ethnic minority pupils attain similarly to other pupils in all subjects.
9. Pupils identified as having special educational needs make good progress in relation to their prior attainment from the ages of 5 to 7 years. Pupils aged 7 to 11 make satisfactory progress. The school's programme of support for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. It is effectively organised to identify pupils who need additional help in class. At the time of the inspection no pupil had a Statement of Special Educational Need. Pupils who have individual education plans make some progress in meeting their targets, but many targets are vague and are not changed regularly enough. Pupils identified as gifted or talented make satisfactory progress.
10. The school assembles a wide range of information on pupils' attainment and has used this information to set targets for each existing year groups of pupils. The targets set reflect the variation in cohorts but are realistic, challenging and high enough.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. Pupils of all ages and abilities have positive attitudes to school and to learning, and most pupils are well behaved and considerate of the needs of others. Pupils enjoy school and start each day with high levels of anticipation and enthusiasm. In lessons they show good levels of interest and are keen to become involved in the activities. Most pupils work well individually and in small groups, but there is too much variation in the rate at which they complete their written work, depending on the demands and expectations of individual teachers. All pupils, including children in the Foundation Stage, are especially responsive when the tasks they are given are challenging and stimulating. A minority of pupils in Year 6, show little enthusiasm for school. In some lessons this sense of apathy is more widespread and individual pupils openly challenge the teacher's authority.
12. The high standards of behaviour identified in the previous inspection report have been maintained. Behaviour in and around the school is generally good and no bullying, racism, sexism or other oppressive behaviour was seen during the inspection. The vast majority of pupils are polite, friendly and follow instructions carefully. Playtimes and lunchtimes are pleasant social occasions, where pupils socialise well within their age

groups. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 are given the opportunity to show initiative and personal responsibility through their work as members of the Pupils' Council. They are keen to develop this commitment to their school and eagerly contribute ideas about how to improve it. Pupils move around the school in an orderly manner and most show respect for their own property and that of others. A small number of pupils sometimes display challenging behaviour.

13. Relationships are usually very good amongst pupils and between pupils and staff. Pupils are mostly kind and considerate towards one another and show respect for teachers and visitors alike. In class, most pupils are attentive and concentrate well, but some do not always listen sufficiently carefully whilst their classmates are talking, and this sometimes disrupts the flow of the lesson. Most pupils share ideas and resources well. During discussions, pupils are happy and confident to put forward an argument and explain their viewpoint and the majority of pupils are respectful of the views and beliefs of others.
14. Attendance is unsatisfactory overall and in Year 6 it is poor. It is less than the national average despite improving since the last inspection. This adversely affects the learning and progress of those pupils who are regularly absent. In Year 6, where attendance this year is less than 90 per cent, the effect is significant.
15. Punctuality is poor throughout the school. In every year group there are a small number of pupils who seldom come to school on time. Evidence, gathered by officers of the Education Action Zone, shows that some pupils regularly lose up to one hour of teaching time each week.
16. The majority of absence and lateness is the responsibility of a small number of families whose support for their children's education is lacking. The school believes that some parent-condoned absence has previously been incorrectly coded as authorised. Inspection evidence supports this view. Since the appointment of the new headteacher, initial steps are in place to analyse absence more rigorously. Further measures will be implemented shortly. However, there is no evidence of parents abusing the privilege of holidays during term time.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

17. The quality of teaching is good and similar to that at the time of the last inspection. Teaching is satisfactory or better in all lessons. It is excellent in 4 per cent, very good in 30 per cent, good in 36 per cent and satisfactory in 30 per cent. The teaching of literacy and numeracy for pupils aged 5 to 7, is very good and satisfactory for pupils aged 7 to 11 years. A strength of the school is the teaching of information and communication technology. Another strength is the teaching of pupils in the reception class.
18. The quality of teaching for the under fives is good and this has a significant effect on children's learning. The teaching is based upon good planning that identifies clear learning targets in all areas. Groups of children are organised well and have good access to resources, which fosters the purposeful working atmosphere and good behaviour of the children. Children show increasing levels of concentration, initiative and independence for their age because the staff encourage this. There are good assessment procedures for tracking children's progress, which the staff use successfully to plan the next step in children's learning. Support staff are deployed effectively in lessons and make a positive contribution to children's learning.
19. The quality of teaching is very good for pupils aged 5 to 7 years. It ranges from very good to satisfactory - 64 per cent is very good. Teaching is very good in English, mathematics and information and communication technology. It is good in science,

religious education and physical education. It is satisfactory in art and geography. The quality of teaching is satisfactory for pupils aged 7 to 11 years. Forty-five per cent of lessons are good or better. The teaching of Year 5 pupils is a strength of the school. Teaching is very good in information and communication technology and good in religious education and physical education. It is satisfactory in all other subjects.

20. In the most effective teaching, teachers' planning shows clearly what is to be taught and learnt. This ensures that pupils know what is expected of them in lessons and their learning is very focused. Teachers use a range of appropriate teaching methods. These include whole-class teaching and group and individual work involving practical, investigative and problem-solving activities. These teaching approaches motivate pupils and give them the chance to work co-operatively and collaboratively, thereby significantly contributing to their personal development. Teachers use time and resources efficiently. Their use of computers to support pupils' learning is a particular strength. The use of interactive whiteboards provides frequent opportunities for the use of information and communication technology to support learning in mathematics and English. Pupils respond by being attentive and keen learners. Teachers have secure subject knowledge so they answer pupils' questions accurately and teach with confidence. This, in turn, extends pupils knowledge and understanding of the work they complete. Pupils' behaviour is managed very effectively. As a result, little time is wasted in lessons and the pupils have more time to work hard. A strength of the teaching is the very good relationships between the staff and pupils. This ensures all pupils, whatever their background, are fully involved in lessons and feel valued. This greatly enhances the quality of pupils' learning. Teachers deploy support staff effectively to support pupils' learning. Support staff contribute positively to pupils' progress.
21. There is room for improvement in some aspects of some teaching of pupils aged 7 to 11 years. Pupils' behaviour is not always managed effectively and this causes disruption to pupils' learning. There is inconsistency in the quality of marking. Some of the marking is of outstanding quality, whilst some work is left unmarked. Support staff are not always effectively deployed at the start of lessons. Even so, in a Year 5 lesson, the teacher made very effective use of the support staff when pupils identified with special educational needs received the introduction in a small-group set up. Homework is not used effectively enough to extend pupils' learning. Throughout the school, the timetabling of the assembly in the middle of some literacy and numeracy lessons adversely affects pupils' learning.
22. Support in whole-class lessons for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. It is effective in enabling pupils to participate fully and with confidence in all learning tasks. Teachers do not make enough use of individual education plans to inform their planning or match the work they provide to the pupils' individual needs.
23. The quality of literacy and numeracy teaching is very good for pupils aged 5 to 7 and satisfactory for pupils aged 7 to 11 years. The following are examples of how the good quality of teaching positively affected pupils' learning.
 - In a Year 1 literacy lesson based on the text, 'Dear Greenpeace', the teaching and learning were very good. The teacher demonstrated very secure knowledge of the National Literacy Strategy. This meant pupils spent appropriate amounts of time listening, answering questions and working independently. The teacher's intonation and expression when reading the book held pupils' interest and attention fully so that they remembered the key elements in the story. There was very good teaching of basic phonic skills. This ensured pupils learnt basic skills of reading very effectively. This was demonstrated during a very good guided reading session.

- In a Year 2 literacy lesson on the use of the contents and index pages and the glossary, the teaching and learning were very good. There was very good management of the pupils' behaviour, based on effective, established rules and routines. The pupils responded by behaving very well, listening attentively and responding promptly to the teacher's instructions. Focused questioning by the teacher provided a high level of intellectual challenge that further extended pupils' learning. The teaching of basic phonic skills was very good. Pupils' standards in reading are very high which is a clear indication of the quality of pupils' learning.
- The teaching and learning were very good in a Year 5 numeracy lesson on relating fractions to their decimal equivalence. Very skilled questioning involved all pupils. This meant that the brighter pupils were challenged appropriately and the pupils with special educational needs answered questions that extended their knowledge but did not exclude them because they were too hard. The activity was very challenging - indicative of the teacher's high expectations- and pupils responded by working with sustained concentration. Pupils were encouraged to work collaboratively, which they did very well, to seek the answer. This supported their personal development really well. There was a very good atmosphere for learning that very positively impacted on standards. The key to the creation of this atmosphere was the very good relationships between teacher and pupils.

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

24. The school provides a broad range of work that is interesting and relevant to pupils aged from 5 to 11 years. It meets the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum and religious education. The time given to each subject is appropriate except in literacy and numeracy lessons when they are frequently longer than the required hour. The school needs to consider whether teaching and learning is effective when these lessons are split into two sessions in order to accommodate daily assemblies. Curriculum planning is variable and the school now needs to ensure a more consistent approach throughout the school. The school plans very good coverage of the Early Learning Goals for children under five and provides good learning opportunities for them. Health, sex and drug education for pupils is part of the personal, social and health programme and is also addressed through other subjects of the curriculum. The curriculum reflects the aims of the school and is effective in promoting pupils' intellectual, physical and personal development. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, have equal access to the curriculum and the life of the school. The school has successfully implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. The school's policy on homework is applied satisfactorily. However, many pupils do not complete their homework and parents do not appear to insist that it is done and returned to school. The support of some parents, especially those who have children aged 5 to 7, has helped to improve pupils' learning, attitudes and standards in reading and numeracy.
25. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. Although teachers have copies of pupils' individual education plans they are not always used effectively to plan a range of more suitable work to meet the needs of some individuals. No pupils are withdrawn or excluded from class lessons. This results in them being able to make similar progress to their classmates.
26. The curriculum and learning opportunities for the under-fives are good and provides a good broad and balanced range of learning opportunities that encompasses the Early Learning Goals. Strong features include: very successful strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy; good planning that involves the support staff and good provision for personal, social and emotional development. Time is appropriately allocated to the

different areas of learning with the provision for knowledge and understanding of the world being good. Provision for purposeful play, roleplay and outdoor play is good. However, play activities in the nursery lack targets for the children to achieve and should be more structured to ensure better progress.

27. Throughout the school, teachers organise the curriculum in a subject-based approach although there is usually an overall topic for pupils aged 5 to 7 years. Links between subjects are satisfactory. Examples of this are given in the subject section of the report. Links with information and communication technology and other subjects are very good.
28. Pupils and teachers make good use of the school grounds and the new information and communication technology suite. The school enriches curriculum provision by visits to local historical attractions, such as the Merseyside Maritime Museum and local community facilities such as the Liverpool Central Library and department stores. The children are very fortunate that every Wednesday morning a class visits a local place on the 'Wednesday Bus' and these visits very effectively support the work that pupils do in class. A wide variety of visitors come into school and include; firefighters, a dance company, animal aid and a Greek myths and legends performance and workshop. The provision for extra-curricular activities is very good and a strength of the school. There are clubs on four days of the week and include such activities as netball, football, athletics, recorders and 'Booster' classes for English, science and Springboard mathematics. The school also offers visits out of school hours. They include those for gifted and talented children who go on outings during the weekend to such events as 'Cinderella' performed by the Russian National Ballet and Chester Jets Basketball Match.
29. There are good links with the community including the church, Educational Action Zone, local businesses and students from college. There are also good links with other local primary schools and the partner secondary school. These are at various levels, but a particularly good feature is the links with the secondary school. Older pupils visit the school and its teachers come to St Cleopas to talk to and teach the pupils.
30. Pupils' spiritual development is good. Stories are chosen to illustrate themes in lessons, assembly and collective worship. Pupils talk about how they are cared for and how they also care for people who are an important part of their lives. Regular visitors to the school contribute meaningfully to developing pupils' wider understanding of caring within society. As part of this, they regularly collect money for good causes such as Marie Curie Cancer Care, Guide Dogs for the Blind Association and Comic Relief. During periods of formal prayer, pupils demonstrate reverence and respect. They sit quietly and reflect on what they have learned, sometimes whilst listening to a range of modern, contemporary or classical music. Opportunities for quiet thought are also effectively organised by teachers within their class assembly time.
31. The school is very effective in cultivating the pupils' personal development through the opportunities it provides for raising their awareness of social and moral issues. There are effective policies for eliminating bullying and unsatisfactory behaviour, which are implemented by all adults working in the school. Adults who work within the school provide good role models for pupils and are also consistent in their approach to reinforcing the difference between right and wrong. Discussions in class are particularly effective in prompting pupils to reflect upon how their actions may affect others and that they have choices about how to behave. Representatives on the Pupils' Council talk with maturity about the need to be honest and fair and to tell the truth and they know that justice means being even-handed and non-biased. During the inspection, first-hand experience confirms the value of these initiatives in developing older pupils' social competence and skills in initiating and sustaining interesting dialogue with the help of adults. Through their participation in school sports events and competitive games, pupils

learn the value of developing a team identity and the need for interdependence upon their teammates in order to be successful participants in school based and regional events. Pupils in Years 2 and 6 also benefit from residential field trips to the Colomendy Outdoor Education Centre where they learn the importance of co-operation when living together in a community.

32. Pupils' cultural development is good. The school enhances pupils' awareness of their own culture through several areas of the curriculum, together with regular visits and field trips. During their history lessons they learn about the impact of inventions and discoveries made by their ancestors and how Britain as a nation has influenced the lives of people from other countries. Through art and music, pupils find out about the work of reputed artists and musicians. Visits to the theatre, ballet, galleries and classical music concerts help pupils appreciate effects created by a particular piece of music or art. Pupils were very appreciative of their recent visit to see the Moscow State Ballet. Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to develop an understanding of living in a multicultural society and effective use is made of visiting musicians who share their traditional music. The pupils have good opportunities to learn about unusual instruments such as the didgeridoo. However, due to some parental opposition, the school cannot fully develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of the variety of beliefs within Christianity.
33. Since the time of the last inspection the school has maintained the very good overall standard of provision it makes for pupils' personal development.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

34. Every member of staff has the pupils' health and well-being as a high priority. There are good procedures to support this. The nursery teacher is the designated person for child protection matters and measures are planned to ensure that all members of staff are aware of any changes. Most staff and many pupils are fully trained in first aid and the school informs parents of any concerns. Parents' contact details are updated twice a year. There is no dedicated treatment room, but pupils waiting for parents to collect them receive good supervision. Parents attending the parents' meeting are unanimous that the school provides a safe and secure environment for their children. One parent summed up their feelings by quoting, 'this is a family school'. Inspection evidence supports the parents' view. The feeling of safety supports pupils and aids their confidence in learning.
35. The behaviour policy is good and the many procedures are clearly displayed and consistently applied. This consistency enhances the effect of the policy on pupils' behaviour. Activities such as the 'I can cope' club provide significant help. Additional funding provides extra support for pupils whose behaviour remains challenging. Pupils do not feel that the school has a problem with bullying and are confident that they can ask any member of staff for help and receive it should there be a problem.
36. Transfer to the nearby secondary school that receives most pupils is good. Transfer arrangements start in Year 5 and continue through Year 6. During the inspection, a Year 5 games lesson took place in the secondary school, led by a physical education specialist. Pupils responded well to the tasks in a competitive manner. By the time they transfer, pupils are at ease and know the procedures. Many have older brothers or sisters at the secondary school.
37. There are very good procedures to aid pupils' personal development. There are monitors in each year group who have duties graded to match their ability. Duties include looking after the library, conveying registers and ringing bells to mark the end of breaks and lunchtime. Pupils from Year 5 help in the infant playground. The school council has been

re-started. Currently, members are all from the 7 to 11 age groups. The headteacher has plans to widen membership. Members of the council accept their duties with maturity and responsibility. A Year 4 pupil holds the chair and the secretary is in Year 6. During the inspection, the council led an assembly during which they reported to fellow pupils on recent actions and decisions. There is evidence of respect between council members and other pupils.

38. Excellence in the Cities funds are used to employ a learning mentor. Currently working with twelve pupils to improve their self-esteem and confidence, half have improved to the extent of receiving awards as 'pupil of the week'. For example, one pupil has improved attendance from 53 per cent to 86 per cent.
39. The new headteacher has implemented satisfactory procedures to monitor, analyse and improve attendance and lateness. These complement the very good support from external agencies. Officers from the Education Action Zone provide an outstanding service to the school, recording, analysing and following up both absence and lateness. However, there is not yet sufficient improvement in attendance and lateness. These matters were key issues in the last report and the governing body has not adequately monitored improvement since then.
40. Registers are marked for analysis by computer. There is a new policy that indicates when registers should close and includes guidance on how to define unauthorised and authorised absence. The school provides very clear guidelines for parents. There is a formal signing-in procedure for pupils who arrive late, to support further action with persistent offenders. Responsibility for checking registers lies with a member of the administrative team who works closely with the headteacher. They monitor attendance daily. This is a satisfactory improvement relative to the key issue of the last report.
41. Procedures for the monitoring of pupils' academic and personal performance are sound overall. Class teachers gather a wide range of assessment data. Together with knowledge of pupils' individual personalities it is used to organise groups within classes.
42. Children in the nursery are constantly assessed during the lessons by the teacher and support staff and results are used to inform future planning and ensure that children make good progress. Baseline assessment carried out at the beginning of the reception class is good and used to group the children into ability groups. It is constantly reviewed by the Foundation Stage co-ordinator. Baseline assessment is also completed at the end of the reception year so the 'value-added' can be measured. Children's personal development is also assessed throughout the Foundation Stage. The teachers and support staff have a very good knowledge and understanding of each child's strengths and weaknesses including their ability to work co-operatively and sustain interest in the set tasks. This is good practice.
43. Assessment procedures for pupils aged 5 to 7 years are good and day-to-day assessment is used successfully to plan lessons that cater for the pupils' varying needs. For pupils aged 7 to 11 years it is satisfactory. There have been significant improvements in assessment procedures since the last inspection when it was a key issue for action. Throughout the school, in English and mathematics, assessment is used to identify pupils who may need extra support. Sometimes, higher-attaining pupils are insufficiently challenged and their progress slows. Generally, insufficient attention is given to marking and comments are not written in the pupils' books to inform them how to improve. Assessment records are variable across the school and do not always contain precise information about what pupils do well and what they need to do next. However, assessment procedures are very good in information and communication technology and are used very successfully to aid lesson planning.

44. There is a sound policy for assessment. The school now keeps an electronic database where information of all the test results is stored. This information is used to identify particular weaknesses in subject areas around the school. For example, writing was identified as an area for development throughout the school. However, ethnic minority groups' progress and attainment are not monitored and the school is unaware of the standards they achieve in any subject.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

45. Inspection evidence supports parents' very good view of the school's ethos of care, provision and approachability. The quality and format of annual reports and other information is good. Reports to parents on their children's achievements indicate the work that children have done and how they can make further progress. The school publishes letters regularly and evidence supports the view of parents that they receive information about forthcoming events. There are two formal meetings each year. Parents welcome the two 'record of achievement' weeks that take place each year. Where parents are unable to attend, pupils choose their own 'friend' from the school staff to share in their achievements.
46. The governors' annual report to parents now meets statutory requirements. It has been rewritten since the appointment of the new headteacher. There are weaknesses in the prospectus, which are recognised by the school. This will be corrected before the 2001/2002 issue.
47. The school works hard to establish a good partnership with parents. A large number of parents help in classrooms. For example, during one lesson a father helped with simple mathematics and a mother helped two pupils at a time on the computer. The school values this help.
48. Parents are satisfied that the open door policy of the school is effective. Inspection evidence indicates that class teachers are happy to assist parents with any concerns. At the parents' meeting a parent unable to attend a numeracy training day said that she received willing help from her child's class teacher. There were occasions noted during inspection when parents talked constructively to teachers.
49. Where parents support their children at home, learning is improved. The school has produced a home-school agreement, which is signed by most parents. It sets out a charter for constructive co-operation as well as elements of the discipline and homework procedures. A policy about parental involvement is issued to all parents. This is supported by an internal document giving clear guidelines to all staff.
50. In Year 6, the impact of the school's links with parents is barely satisfactory in aiding pupils' progress. Letters are too frequently ignored, hearing children read is frequently ignored and there is little support for homework. Lateness and absence are a major concern.
51. Parents are satisfied that, should they have concerns, the school will listen to them and act accordingly. This supports the views of the parents at the parents' meeting.
52. Parents of children with special educational needs receive information about any concerns or meetings and the school invites them to attend review meetings. The school fully informs these parents of all procedures. Class teachers discuss provision for pupils with parents and parents are aware of the school's plans for their children.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

53. The headteacher has been in post for one term. She provides very good leadership, including a clear educational direction for the school. She is very hardworking and provides strong, influential and supportive leadership. All staff ably support the headteacher. A very good team spirit exists and there is a shared commitment to build on the satisfactory improvements made since the last inspection. This creates a positive ethos, which reflects the school's commitment to an effective atmosphere for learning, very good relationships and equality of opportunity for all. The school's aims accurately reflect the work of the school. Subject co-ordinators and representatives of the local education authority effectively monitor the teaching and learning in literacy and numeracy. The teachers with responsibility for managing the Foundation Stage, English and information and communication technology provide high calibre leadership. Overall, the leadership of subject co-ordinators is sound. Their monitoring and evaluating of standards within the subjects for which they are responsible are not rigorous enough. Also, they do not play an effective enough part in the school's strategic financial planning. The headteacher identifies these areas in the new school improvement plan. Another weakness in the school's monitoring procedures is the absence of any information relating to attainment and progress of ethnic minority pupils. The quality of the leadership and management of the school is similar to that reported on in the last inspection.
54. The role of the governing body has improved since the last inspection, and governors fulfil all statutory requirements. There is now an organised system of committees to oversee various aspects of school life. Thus, they monitor and evaluate standards and educational provision within the school more effectively. Some governors are active in the life of the school and keep themselves well informed about what is going on in school. There is still room for improvement. Although individual governors have specific roles, these roles are not clearly defined. Also, there is not a programme of planned visits to school with a predetermined and agreed agenda. This would enable governors to have an even clearer picture of how the school performs.
55. School development planning is good. It clearly identifies appropriate priorities and makes the raising of standards the basis of all developments. The school takes effective action to meet its targets. There is satisfactory long-term strategic financial planning. The carry forward of funds from one year to the next is used effectively to maintain current staffing levels and replace old resources and equipment. The school effectively applies the principles of best value. The money allocated to the school per pupil is well above average in comparison with other schools in the country.
56. The day-to-day administration and management of the school are good. The recommendations in the latest auditor's report have been implemented. There were very significant weaknesses identified. The school ensures it allocates its grant for staff training to support targets in the school development plan and in this way relates them directly to pupils' learning.
57. The school spends funds provided through the Education Action Zone, Excellence in the Cities and Beacon School initiatives wisely. Information and communication technology and English provision benefit significantly from monies and resources provided through the Education Action Zone. Another very significant area to benefit from this funding is the attendance improvement procedures. The high quality work of the learning mentor is testimony to the effectiveness of the Excellence in the Cities initiative.
58. The good number, qualifications and experience of teachers and support staff match the demands of the curriculum. Teaching and support staff are keen to develop their professional skills. Newly qualified staff are supported well and the school is an effective

provider of placements for initial teacher training. Support staff have an understanding of their role and provide good support for children under five and pupils with special educational needs. Administration staff are highly competent.

59. The accommodation allows satisfactory teaching of the National Curriculum and early learning goals for children under five. The open plan structure and cramped conditions impede the teaching of music and art. The senior management team are concerned that no classroom is big enough to hold the numbers of pupils currently entering Key Stage 2 by the time they reach Year 6. Inspection evidence concurs with this.
60. Externally, the school suffers from vandalism. Steel shutters cover doors and razor wire is located to minimise the risk of access to the roof. Funds are approved to replace all windows and fascia panels. Broken glass has to be removed from playgrounds and fields regularly.
61. There is no evidence of the unspecified external safety hazards mentioned as a key issue in the previous report. However, the playground surfaces are beginning to break up and coping stones from the front gardens are missing. The nursery grassed area is currently unusable. Negotiations are taking place with the building contractors responsible for the damage.
62. The school is unsuitable for persons with physical disabilities who require the use of a wheelchair. There is no toilet for disabled persons.
63. Resources for teaching are good overall and support learning. Resources for information and communication technology (computers) are noteworthy and support the very high standards of attainment seen during the inspection. The school has a large interactive computer screen located in the modern computer suite. Resources for mathematics, music and religious education are also good.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

64. The headteacher and staff, in conjunction with the governing body, should:
- raise standards in English by the age of 11 by continuing with the successful strategies already in place and:
 - take action to address boys' underachievement;
 - increase the effectiveness of the deployment of support staff throughout lessons;
 - ensure the quality of the marking of pupils' work is of a consistently high standard;
 - increase the effectiveness of 'booster classes' and homework provision;(paragraphs 4, 21 and 75-92)

 - as identified in the new school improvement plan, further develop the role of teachers as co-ordinators for the areas for which they are responsible, so they:
 - have a more effective role in monitoring, evaluating and supporting teaching;
 - have a more meaningful role in the strategic planning for the subjects and/or aspects for which they are responsible;(paragraphs 53, 105, 111, 117, 124, 134 and 142)

 - continue with, and build upon, the recently introduced very good support for improving pupils' attendance and punctuality. (paragraphs 16, 39 and 40)
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65. In addition to the key issues above, the following less important areas for development should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:
- the governing body should set out clearly the specific roles of its members, and ensure they have appropriate training for their roles. Also, in consultation with the headteacher, it should put in place a planned programme of governors' regular visits to the school; (paragraph 54)

 - the school should monitor and evaluate attainment data in respect of ethnic minority pupils; (paragraph 53)

 - as identified in the new school improvement plan:
 - examine ways of ensuring lessons are of an appropriate length;
 - review curriculum planning to ensure a consistent approach throughout the school;
 - reorganise the school day so literacy and numeracy lessons are not interrupted by an assembly.(paragraphs 21, 24, 88 and 97)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	47
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	32

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
4	30	36	30	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)	22	197
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	3	120

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	3	41

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	4
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	8

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.8
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
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	13	12	25

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	12	11	12
	Girls	11	11	10
	Total	23	22	22
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92 (79)	88 (88)	88 (67)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	10	9
	Girls	10	11	10
	Total	20	21	19
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	80 (54)	84 (67)	76 (71)
	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	14	12	26

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	7	10	13
	Girls	9	7	11
	Total	16	17	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	62 (73)	73 (70)	92 (76)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	7	10	12
	Girls	8	7	9
	Total	15	17	21
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	58 (76)	71 (76)	81 (76)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	8
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	2
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	4
White	151
Any other minority ethnic group	1

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19.7
Average class size	28.1

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	146.25

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	32.5

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

Financial information

Financial year	1999-2000
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	£
Total income	447,821
Total expenditure	464,434
Expenditure per pupil	2,079
Balance brought forward from previous year	53,302
Balance carried forward to next year	36,689

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate 21%

Number of questionnaires sent out	236
Number of questionnaires returned	50

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	68	32	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	82	16	0	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	58	36	2	2	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	59	37	2	0	2
The teaching is good.	92	8	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	76	16	6	0	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	82	16	0	0	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	84	16	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	64	32	4	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	70	28	0	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	64	34	0	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	66	26	8	0	0

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

66. The quality of teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage are strengths of the school. Standards reported on in the last inspection have been maintained. Children enter the nursery on a part-time basis at the age of 3 and some older children attend full-time. Wherever possible, children transfer to the reception classes in the year in which they are five. Twenty-three children attend part-time and 10 children attend full-time in the nursery. Thirty-one children attend full-time in the reception classes. On entry to the nursery, children's attainment is below expectations for their age. Nursery staff maintain good links with parents and offer pre-admission visits and provide parents with good written documentation. These practices help children to settle securely into school. Attainment on entry to the reception classes is below expectations for children of a similar age. This is confirmed by the careful assessment of the children on entry during the September term. A good foundation across all areas of learning is provided, particularly in language, literacy and mathematical development. Children, including those identified with special educational needs, make good progress. By the time the children come to the end of their reception year, the majority achieve the Early Learning Goals in most areas of learning. They achieve above expected levels in their personal and social development.
67. The personal, social and emotional development of the children is good and standards are above that expected for their age, especially in the reception classes. The children are very co-operative and relationships are good and they want to succeed in their work. They readily share equipment and take turns and help each other. For example, in the reception classes, children get materials out or put them away and they help those who are a little slower or where there is more mess. In the nursery, children tidy up after they have had their milk, sandwiches or cake and perform these duties quietly and efficiently. Children learn good habits from one another as well as from their teachers and listen to their peers. This is very noticeable in mathematics in the reception classes where lively teaching engages their interest. Children have plenty of their own ideas and have the confidence to put them forward in discussion or when completing a piece of work. Most children show good initiative by not wasting time, moving to work groups quickly and organising their own equipment. They know the difference between right and wrong and know that their teachers trust them. The quality of teaching in this area is good and permeates all aspects of the provision. It is one of the main reasons why the children make good progress. It reflects the very good understanding that the teachers and support staff have of this age range and of these children in particular.
68. Children make good progress in developing their speaking and listening skills and in acquiring the skills they need to read and write. Children with special educational needs are effectively supported and they make good progress. The introduction of the National Literacy Strategy is proving to be very successful, especially in the reception classes. The teachers plan their work carefully and match it to the children's needs very closely. This means that the children extend their understanding, skill and knowledge lesson by lesson. Again, good teaching methods and appropriate challenges mean children sustain concentration throughout the lesson and do not waste any time. In the nursery and reception classes teachers give children many opportunities to speak, to offer their opinions and ask questions. Most of the children's responses to learning are good and they enjoy reciting action rhymes. They know that pictures and words have meaning and the older children associate sounds with words. Children recognise their own names and most older children can write their names. All staff, especially in the reception classes, have good questioning skills which they use effectively to promote children's thinking and

provoke responses. All teaching and support staff have good relationships with each other and provide a happy and encouraging ethos. There is very effective teaching of phonics and older children know the initial sounds of words. Most children in the reception classes make phonetically plausible attempts at writing words. Higher attaining children read and write simple sentences. Most children hold a pencil correctly and write recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed. In whole-class lessons, children listen very carefully and attentively; they enjoy stories and like to give their ideas on what will happen next. The higher attaining children talk about their ideas with great confidence. They settle to their work very quickly and get on diligently. Children understand what to do because the teachers share with them what they are expected to learn by the end of the lesson. For example, in the reception class the teacher explained why they were making dough and why she wanted them to change the colour and shape of the dough. Children made very good progress during this lesson because they knew what they were supposed to be learning and how to achieve it. This is very good teaching that has a very good impact on children's learning. Other very good features of the lesson were the brisk pace and the activities for the children which were interesting and accurately matched their varying abilities and needs.

69. Children make good progress in mathematical development in the nursery and the reception classes and attain standards that are above those expected for their age. Very good teaching and effective use of the National Numeracy Strategy, accounts for the good progress children make. Staff plan activities, which simulate interest and provide a thoroughly secure foundation for further development. There are daily activities to promote children's awareness of number. In the nursery, during registration, children count the number of children present. Older children add up single digits to 5 mentally and enjoy singing number rhymes. When using numbers to 20, children count on and say, with accuracy and speed, the number that is one more and one less. Many are good at simple problem solving, such as 'How many apples would I have left if I took two away?' Social development is reinforced by sharing equipment and taking turns in many of the mathematical activities. For example, when estimating how many cups of water are needed to fill a specific container, they take turns sensibly and without fuss. They have a good knowledge of shapes and name squares, triangles and cubes with confidence. Many children describe, in simple terms, the properties of the shapes. Teachers provide varied and interesting activities for the children. Thus, the children work hard and sustain concentration for longer than one might expect. The enthusiasm, encouragement and high expectations of the staff mean that no time is wasted and the children make a sustained effort to learn and as a result make better progress.
70. Children make good progress in the development of their knowledge and understanding of the world. This is because the teachers thoroughly plan lessons that are stimulating, interesting and appropriate to the varying needs and abilities of the children. Children have a good understanding of basic scientific principles. The higher-attaining children talk about where they live and their families. They become curious and interested in the world around them. Children begin to be aware of the different seasons. Through the use of computers, they begin to gain a knowledge and understanding of the use of technology, especially when closely supervised and supported by an adult. They use the mouse to access programs. Many of the programs are linked with the current topic that the children work on in their lessons. This is good practice and extends their knowledge and understanding. Children begin to gain understanding of forces by experimenting with sand and water using wheels and paddles and as they push the pedals on their large-wheeled toys. Many children have a sense of time and know when it is their snack time or playtime. Many know the sequence of the days of the week. They are sensitive to other children's culture and beliefs. The quality of teaching is good because staff plan exciting activities and the management of the children's behaviour is good.

71. The progress children make in their physical development is good. In the nursery, children develop self-confidence as they experience a wide range of activities to exploit their physical skills. For example, they have regular time to use large apparatus out of doors. However, activities within the classroom are not structured and it is unclear what the children are to achieve. Children would achieve better if targets were set for them. Although there is a good hard standing surface for the children to use for their large apparatus, the fenced grass area is very unsuitable for the use of the outside climbing frame. The school is very aware of this and has made several complaints to the builders for it to be rectified. This issue now needs to be resolved. The school hall is also used for physical education. During a nursery lesson, most children throw a ball with increasing accuracy and catch a soft ball well. The activities that the teacher has chosen sustains the children's interest and they work keenly to improve their performance. The teacher uses praise and rewards effectively, which contribute to the children's very good behaviour. The quality of teaching is good because the staff insist on warming up and cooling-down activities. The pace of lessons is brisk and the teacher gives opportunities to the children to practise all the activities. The children develop their fine motor control skills in drawing, writing, painting and cutting by using the computer mouse and construction apparatus. Children use scissors, glue, paint and pencils with increasing skill.
72. Children make good progress in their creative development. They develop very good work routines. For example, they put aprons on without being reminded before they paint. Children in the reception class show their increasing dexterity when they model dough by rolling, pulling and squeezing. They enjoy painting and gluing and drawing. Teachers provide opportunities for drama and imaginative play in the home corner. For example, the nursery children play in the vet's surgery. The children imaginatively explore colour, sound and texture. The majority of children know their primary colours. They enjoy singing and sing very tunefully together. They understand that different instruments make different sounds. Teaching is good and has a good impact on the learning. Lesson planning is good because it shows clearly what is to be taught and learnt. Adults listen and value the children's opinions.
73. Accommodation and resources for the foundation stage are good. The nursery and reception classes are kept very tidy and provide a stimulating environment for the children. Staff regularly change displays and learning activities to sustain the children's interest and enthusiasm for learning.
74. The quality of teaching is good and sometimes better with 100 per cent being at least satisfactory and 85 per cent good or better. Planning is detailed, but no targets are set for children during unsupervised play activities in the nursery. There are appropriate assessment systems in place and teachers effectively use the results of the children's assessments to match work accurately to the children's varying needs. All support staff give much help and assistance to the teachers and children. All staff are very conscientious and hard working. The children are eager and happy to come to school.

ENGLISH

75. Pupils' standards at the end of Year 2 have improved very significantly since the last inspection. Standards are higher in reading than those found in most schools. Writing standards are well above average when compared with schools similar to Saint Cleopas. The school is very successful in teaching pupils to read. Reading standards by the age of 7 place the school in the top 5 per cent of those similar to Saint Cleopas. Ethnic minority pupils achieve similarly to other pupils. The main reasons for the improvement since the last inspection are the better quality of teaching and pupils' learning. It is now very good compared with good at the time of the last inspection. Pupils also make good progress in the reception class. Therefore, pupils start in Year 1 at a higher level of attainment than they used to do.
76. Standards by the end of Year 6 are much lower than in most primary schools, but are higher than those in schools like Saint Cleopas. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve satisfactorily in relation to their prior attainment. Standards in English are similar to those at the time of the last inspection. Girls attain higher than boys and significantly more so than is found nationally. Boys' underachievement is the main factor for the low standards. Also, only a few pupils, 6 out of 21, regularly attend the after-school 'booster classes' that provide extra teaching for Year 6 pupils. There is also a poor response by pupils to homework. Therefore, pupils very rarely extend their learning through extra work at home. Another factor for the low attainment in the current Year 6, is the presence of a higher than usual proportion of pupils on the register of special educational needs. The attendance rate of pupils in Year 6 is poor and this adversely affects their progress and attainment.
77. There are definite signs within the rest of the school of improvement in English standards. For example, 75 per cent of Year 5 pupils attain in line or above nationally expected levels for pupils of this age. There are a number of factors that contribute to the current trend of rising standards:
- good quality teaching and learning;
 - effective involvement in Education Action Zone initiatives;
 - the focus by everyone in the school on raising standards of writing;
 - the increasing use of writing skills in other subjects;
 - good leadership by the subject co-ordinator.
78. The raising of standards in writing is one of the Education Action Zone initiatives. The school has benefited from the presence of a specialist literacy teacher. Extra money from the Education Action Zone funding means the school employs two extra classroom assistants. This support benefits pupils during literacy lessons. This positively affects pupils' learning. Excellence in the Cities funding means the school employs a pupil mentor. This member of staff supports some pupils who underachieve. This positively affects standards attained by these pupils. For example, one Year 3 pupil has made very significant improvement in his reading since the learning mentor has supported him.
79. Throughout the school, speaking and listening skills are in line with what is expected of primary school pupils. Their listening standards are good. They reflect pupils' good behaviour and attitudes to their work. Pupils know why it is important for only one person to speak at once, so they listen carefully when teachers read, explain and tell them what to do. They are good at listening to each other. As a result, the quality of learning in most lessons is good. For example, in a Year 3 computer lesson, pupils quickly learn to access the correct program and enter information on a database. This is because they listen carefully to each part of the teacher's explanation.

80. By the age of 7, most pupils are confident enough to say what they notice, think, remember and want to know. Throughout the school, teachers use the correct technical words and they encourage pupils to use them in English and other subjects. This leads to pupils' good learning. For example, 7-year-olds use the terms 'pictorial index' and 'glossary'. Older pupils accurately retell what they learn. For example, in a Year 5 religious education lesson, pupils articulately discuss why certain things happen at the same time every day. Through skilled questioning, the teacher successfully developed pupils' knowledge of 'Salah'. Pupils were expected to respond thoughtfully to the questions and this sharpened their concentration and so improved the quality of their learning.
81. The school achieves very good standards in reading by the time pupils are 7 years of age. They read storybooks aloud and with understanding. They like talking about what they have noticed in the stories. Pupils have a good knowledge of letter sounds and use this knowledge to help read new words. Most pupils know how to use simple indexes and contents pages to find facts in information books.
82. Pupils aged 11 years, attain standards that are below those expected for pupils of this age. They use an adequate range of strategies in their reading to establish meaning and are developing confidence to express opinions and discuss their books. Pupils tend to read mechanically rather than with expression and confidence. They have yet to develop an adequate level of fluency and expression. All but the higher attainers have little interest in reading. The standards attained by the current Year 6 are not found throughout the age range of 7 to 11 years. There are much higher standards in Years 3 and 5. For example, in Year 3, pupils read very fluently and with understanding. They retell the story in great detail. They are familiar with locating information for research. Many have a genuine love of books and literature.
83. By the end of Year 2 pupils attain standards in writing that are broadly the same as those found in most schools. There is evidence that standards continue to rise. This is borne out by good quality work in Year 1. By the age of seven most pupils write readable sentences with capital letters and full stops. Higher attaining pupils use complex sentences. For example a pupil wrote: ' "I am going home", said the duck, so on walked the duck and the monster'. Teachers provide a wide range of writing experiences, including information and imaginative work. Handwriting is well formed and most words are spelled correctly.
84. Year 6 pupils attain standards in writing that are well below those expected for pupils of this age. The higher attainers, all girls, attain above nationally expected standards. Some of their writing is of a high standard. For example, one girl wrote: 'I pressed my face against the dog's fur and wept quietly so no-one could hear me but my dog grew uneasy and wanted to whimper'. Pupils use a wide range of forms of writing such as stories, plays, letters, poems, reports and notes. Spelling, punctuation and handwriting standards for many are unsatisfactory. Pupils spell and punctuate correctly in exercises, but forget in longer pieces of writing. Many pupils have no real interest in writing. This lack of motivation adversely affects standards. The quality of writing in Year 5 is superior to that in Year 6. There are many more examples of good quality writing. Standards attained by these pupils are in line with those expected for pupils of this age. The progress they make is good. One pupil writes as part of a story about 'Odysseus and the Sirens': 'The sirens sat on their rocks singing as they flapped their delicate wings'. Another pupil wrote a character description: 'Sir Lancelot was... bold and kind and shone and sparkled in the sun'.
- 85.

Teachers make satisfactory use of other subjects to develop pupils' literacy skills. The following are examples of how pupils develop their literacy skills in other subjects.

- Year 3 pupils produced 'Plant Fact Files' as part of their science topic. Pupils in Year 6 science labelled plants and then provided written definitions of the labels. In an English lesson, pupils in Year 6 wrote scientific accounts of their plant experiments. These accounts were of good quality. In Year 2, pupils learn their 'words of the week' based on their science work about fruit and vegetables. They also record their investigative work by listing six things they know about electricity.
 - In design and technology, Year 3 pupils wrote clearly and correctly their evaluation of sandwiches. For example, one pupil wrote: 'The texture was hard and crunchy'. In Year 4, pupils wrote their plans for making Roman helmets.
 - In history, Year 6 pupils clearly labelled their photographs of their visit to a Victorian museum. Year 4 wrote good quality descriptions of a Roman kitchen. In geography, Year 2 pupils wrote accurately and in detail all they had learnt about Nigeria. One pupil wrote: 'In Nigeria they make oil for your chips and food from palm oil nuts'.
86. The quality of teaching English is very good for pupils aged 5 to 7 years. It is satisfactory for pupils aged 7 to 11 years. Throughout the school there are very significant strengths in the teaching. There are areas for improvement in the teaching of pupils aged 7 to 11 years.
87. Teachers' close relationships with their classes encourage thoughtful speech and listening. Teachers' good knowledge of books, language and the best teaching methods enable them to use skilled questioning in class. This improves pupils' understanding. Pupils try to copy their teachers' expressive speech, reading and writing, and so improve their own. For example, in a Year 1 literacy lesson, pupils read an extract from 'Dear Greenpeace' with great expression following a very good reading by the teacher. Pupils pick up teachers' enjoyment of books too; an important stage in their own reading development. The quick pace of these lessons keeps all pupils interested. Support staff make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning when pupils work in groups. Better use could be made of this support during the introductions to lessons.
88. A strong feature of all the very successful lessons throughout the school is that teachers manage the different parts of the literacy hour successfully. They give explanations in the introduction and use the end of the lesson successfully to review pupils' understanding of the work. As a result, pupils cover a good deal of work during the lesson. The progress pupils make in some lessons is adversely affected when they are interrupted by the timing of the school assembly in the middle of the lesson. Some lessons are also too long and the pupils' concentration wanes. Teachers make good use of assessment to group pupils and to identify what they need to do next in their work to extend pupils' learning further.
89. Teachers use attractive resources and interesting methods to gain pupils' interest. As a result most pupils enjoy their work, concentrate well and are keen to learn. They get on very well together when working in pairs or groups. Teachers have very good relationships with the pupils. This underpins their successful management of pupils' behaviour. Pupils' behaviour is very good and this makes a positive contribution to their learning.
90. Support for pupils who have special educational needs is effective. Many pupils with special educational needs lack confidence and slowly acquire new skills and knowledge

in reading and writing. Teachers plan the work for these pupils carefully. Pupils also receive effective support from specialist classroom staff. As a result, they make good progress in their learning in relation to their prior attainment.

91. There is room for improvement in some aspects of some teaching of pupils aged 7 to 11 years. There is inconsistency in the quality of marking. Some of the marking is of outstanding quality, whilst some work is left unmarked. The management of pupils' behaviour is ineffective in some lessons. Support staff are not always effectively deployed at the start of lessons though good practice was seen. In a Year 5 lesson, the teacher made very effective use of the support staff when pupils identified with special educational needs received the introduction in a small-group set up. Homework is not used effectively enough to extend pupils' learning. Throughout the school, the timetabling of the assembly in the middle of some literacy lessons adversely affects pupils' learning.
92. Teachers' good use of the National Literacy Strategy is raising standards. The school takes effective steps to improve the quality of writing. Information and communication technology skills are used to develop literacy skills and vice-versa. This is illustrated well in the information and communication technology section of the report.

MATHEMATICS

93. The 2000 National Curriculum tests for 7-year-olds show that the performance of pupils was well below the national average; however, when compared with similar schools, results were above the national average. At age 11, pupils' performance was in line with the national average and well above those for similar schools. These standards are broadly similar to the school's national test results in 1997 at the time of the last inspection. In the 2000 National Curriculum tests there are no marked differences between the performance of girls and boys. Trends over time for pupils aged 5 to 7 are steadily improving although there was a dip in 1999. For pupils aged 7 to 11 years there is a significantly improved picture. Currently, pupils aged 7 years attain standards above expectations for their age and high-attaining pupils well above expectations. This represents a significant improvement. This is because the quality of teaching is now very good and the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy positively affects standards. Children who leave the reception class and enter Year 1 now attain more highly than they used to do. By 11, the majority of pupils attain standards that are in line with national expectations and some higher-attaining pupils attain above national expectations. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Ethnic minority pupils achieve similarly to other pupils.
94. By the age of 7, pupils use mathematical language appropriately and with confidence. For instance, they know 'more than', 'less than', 'total', 'larger' and 'smaller'. They know that to add or subtract 9 it is easier to use 10 and add or subtract 1 appropriately. The majority of pupils extend this strategy to add and subtract 19 from a given number. They present numbers in figures and words and know and understand the terms for addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. They add double digits to single digits and make given amounts of money up to a pound. The majority of pupils know their multiplication tables from 2 to 5 and the 10 times table. They understand odd and even numbers and explain why a number is either odd or even; for example, that even numbers always end in 2, 4, 6, 8 or zero. Most pupils recognise and identify the properties of a good range of two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes. Pupils produce simple block graphs. Their response to mental calculations is improving in quantity and speed as a result of mental mathematical sessions at the beginning of lessons. Pupils make good use of resources to aid their learning. For example, they effectively use a 100-square to help with addition, subtraction, multiplication and division sums.

95. By the age of 11, pupils extend their knowledge of number, measurement and shape and begin to develop good data handling skills. Many pupils use a range of methods to add, subtract, multiply and divide accurately and have a sound understanding of the relationships between these operations. Lower-attaining pupils use smaller numbers. Higher-attaining pupils have good mental arithmetic skills and use a variety of methods to solve problems. They explain clearly and correctly their preferred method. They work accurately with factors, prime numbers and positive and negative numbers. They understand the equivalence of fractions. For example, they know that 25 per cent is the same as 0.25 and a quarter. Pupils solve problems by extracting information from data tables and different types of graphs and they explain their findings correctly. Many pupils read and plot coordinates in all four quadrants and add, subtract, multiply and divide decimals to two decimal places accurately. The majority of pupils accurately construct triangles with obtuse and acute angles and find the area and perimeter of both regular and irregular shapes.
96. Pupils aged 5 to 7 years have very good attitudes to their learning and behave very well in lessons. Pupils aged 7 to 11 years have mainly good attitudes to their learning and behave well. Some pupils in Year 6 have unsatisfactory attitudes to learning and sometimes behave inappropriately. Relationships between teachers, support staff and the pupils are very good throughout the school. Teachers value the pupils' responses and ideas and create a good climate for learning in which the pupils feel confident. Together with the good quality of teaching, these very good relationships promote positive attitudes to the subject. Pupils, especially those aged 5 to 7 years, are able, without fuss, to carry on working independently when the teachers move to another group. This is good practice by the teachers and enhances pupils' social development. Some pupils aged 7 to 11 years are less independent and frequently need to be reminded to get on with their work.
97. The quality of teaching is very good for pupils aged 5 to 7 years and satisfactory for pupils aged 7 to 11 years. However, it is very good in the Year 5 class. The very good teaching is characterised by very high expectations of work. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour very well. What is to be learnt is shared with the pupils and the end part of the lesson effectively establishes what pupils achieve in the lesson. If teachers were to identify and share aspects of the very good teaching seen in these classes this would improve standards overall. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the National Numeracy Strategy is good. Lesson planning is good and covers all aspects of the mathematics curriculum. However, some higher attaining pupils aged 7 to 11 years are insufficiently challenged and this has a detrimental effect on their rate of progress and attainment. Pupils' learning is also adversely affected when the timing of the school assembly in the middle of the lesson interrupts the lesson. Also some lessons are too long and pupils lose concentration. Homework is set, but all too frequently the pupils do not complete it and this adversely affects the progress they make. This is especially true for Year 6 pupils. Marking is always completed but is of variable quality, with the best marking giving comments on how the pupils can improve their work.
98. Assessment procedures are good in mathematics and are used to good effect to set targets and plan future work. In all lessons, teachers provide pupils with good opportunities for speaking and listening and encourage the pupils to use mathematical vocabulary accurately. The word banks in the classrooms support this. There are sound links with other subjects of the curriculum including literacy, history, geography and information and communication technology.

SCIENCE

99. Since the time of the last inspection in 1997, standards of work achieved by pupils at the ages of 7 and 11 have improved. National test results for 2000 showed pupils in Year 6 achieved higher standards than pupils from similar schools. However, evidence from the inspection indicates pupils currently in Year 6 are not producing work of a high enough standard. Significant factors contributing to this underachievement are the poor level of attendance of several pupils and their unwillingness to take advantage of attending 'booster' classes and completing homework. Inspection evidence confirms predictions made by teachers that national test results in 2001 will not reflect those of previous years. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to their classmates. This is because they are never taken out of lessons for additional help with other subjects. This good practice is to be commended. Ethnic minority pupils achieve similarly to other pupils.
100. Standards in the current Year 2 are good. Within the key stage in lessons the quality of teaching is good, therefore, pupils make better progress and achieve higher standards of work than expected for that age. An example of this during the inspection was in a lesson about sound. Pupils identified how musical instruments make sound and know that this can be created in several ways. They are familiar with vocabulary such as 'vibrate' and use the vocabulary accurately. Teachers provide interesting and challenging work, including that for the higher-attaining pupils. Teachers give these pupils good opportunities to learn through first-hand investigations and by writing their own accounts of what they have discovered.
101. An analysis of the work produced by the pupils in Years 1 and 2 shows that they make good progress. In Year 1, for example, pupils record some of their work in exercise books whilst some is completed on worksheets. Pupils who record their science work separately have a clearer knowledge and understanding of the subject. Pupils aged 7 years talk knowledgeably about what they have recorded, including the stages of the life cycle of humans and why we need food and a balanced diet. They are familiar with natural and man-made sources of light and the uses of natural and man-made materials including wood, plastic, wool and paper. They have a mature understanding about the benefits and dangers of electricity and fire and readily discuss the need for safety when using either. All pupils enjoy investigative work. It is especially beneficial for pupils with special educational needs, who receive effective support from classroom assistants and their classmates. The practical approach to learning ensures that they make good progress in developing their knowledge and understanding of the subject.
102. Standards in the current Year 6 are below average. However, most pupils make satisfactory progress in their lessons, but a significant minority do not work hard enough. Pupils who are capable of achieving higher than average standards are keen and conscientious to learn. They regularly attend the out of school science club and 'booster' classes in order to gain more knowledge and understanding about the subject. They have high personal aspirations and want to do well in the national tests. Lessons are very long and less well motivated pupils cannot sustain sufficient interest in their work. All pupils make good progress in practical activities, such as in a lesson observed in which they had to test air resistance and gravitational attraction. However, their use of scientific terminology and subject specific vocabulary are not well developed. Few show pride in recording their work to an acceptable standard.
103. An analysis of pupils' work shows that in Year 3 their level of knowledge and understanding about materials, forces and magnetism is unsatisfactory. Much of the work they have done about living things is at a level expected for pupils aged 6 to 7 years. Pupils in Year 4 are given too much work to copy and too few opportunities to

write accounts of their work themselves. Pupils have covered a good range of work since the beginning of the school year, but too little of it is done in adequate detail. The over-reliance on using worksheets prevents pupils from writing their own accounts of their work and developing their use of vocabulary. When investigating how organisms adapt to their habitats they chat excitedly about their discoveries and are keen to compare the homes of ants, snails, worms and spiders. Pupils in Year 5 make the best progress in their lessons. The tasks teachers give them help to develop skills of recording their work by using diagrams, labelling and the interpretation of data. In discussion with pupils they explain clearly the basic features of fair testing and are experienced and familiar with devising and carrying out their own experiments and investigations.

104. Science lessons are taught well to pupils aged 5 to 7 years. The most consistent strength is the way in which teachers manage pupils. As a result, pupils like their teachers and show them respect. Teachers organise their lessons well by using a range of different teaching styles to vary the lesson. They expect pupils to work hard and try their best to make the work interesting and challenging. However, for pupils aged 7 to 11 years, whilst teaching is satisfactory, there are weaknesses. The subject is not taught in adequate detail so pupils' knowledge of some basic science skills is weak. Teachers do not have high enough expectations about what pupils are able to achieve and do not expect them to make adequate records of their work. The work pupils do produce is not well marked and rarely do teachers include comments, which would help pupils to improve their work. Pupils do not have sufficient time to produce adequate work of their own because teachers dominate some lessons. Nevertheless, pupils enjoy their lessons and even in those lessons that are not particularly well taught or interesting they generally behave well.
105. The use teachers make of information gained from assessing pupils' work is underdeveloped. Records are kept, which help teachers plan what to do next, but teachers do not keep adequate information about the development of pupils' investigative skills. Pupils who are capable of achieving better than average standards of work are not always being given tasks that are hard enough. More time needs to be devoted to monitoring the effectiveness with which the teachers' plans are implemented in the classroom and how they affect the quality of teaching.

ART AND DESIGN

106. Pupils' work in art, including those with special educational needs, is broadly of a standard expected for their age. Pupils make steady progress in their art lessons, which results in progress over time being satisfactory by the ages of 7 and 11 years. Ethnic minority pupils achieve similarly to other pupils. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to that of their classmates.
107. Through cross-curricular links with other subjects, teachers provide pupils with opportunities to observe objects and record their observations using pencil crayons, felt pens, chalk and charcoal. However, in some classes, the range of work is too narrow and frequently does not promote adequate development of skills associated with the subject, especially in Years 3 to 6. Pupils' ability to appraise and evaluate their work is satisfactory.
108. Pupils aged 5 to 7 years explore imaginatively the medium of paint and pastels. They mix colours examining texture and application correctly using a variety of tools including brushes of varying sizes and shapes, their hands and simple shapes for printing. They effectively use paint and collage to illustrate well-known stories and poems such as 'The Rainbow Fish', 'Elmer the Elephant' and 'Springtime'. Pupils in Year 1 use art successfully as part of many other subjects. As part of their science work about materials

they use a range of fabrics and junk material to construct people and collages. To illustrate their work in geography they paint and cut out different types of houses to represent 'Cleopas Street.' There are good links between what pupils produce in their art lessons and visits to places of interest. For example, pupils in Year 2 visited a local textile stores as part of the work the school is undertaking with the Educational Action Zone business links. Following this visit, pupils used samples of yarn and fabrics to make texture boards and fabric weave a newly designed coat for Elmer the Elephant as well as a colourful wall hanging. Pupils learn about the style of well known artists such as Kandinsky and Miro, as well as designing and making Nigerian starch resist, fabric prints. Throughout Years 1 and 2, pupils show respect for their work.

109. Pupils talk positively about their art lessons and they behave well. However, many older pupils are reticent to discuss their work and lack confidence and understanding about suggesting ways in which they could improve it. They are not familiar with discussing different techniques, but frequently refer to art as painting. Evidence was found to suggest all pupils gained experience from working in both two and three-dimensional materials including clay and textiles. In the lessons observed, pupils enjoyed the practical activities, concentrated on what they were being taught and took care of their own and other's work. They talked enthusiastically with each other whilst working and showed a pride in having their work praised and admired by their teacher and other adults helping in class. Pupils in Year 6 demonstrated an astonishing level of application and interest in their textile work. They were exceptionally well motivated, which resulted in their behaviour being excellent. At the end of a two-hour lesson they were all reluctant to tidy away and get ready to go home.
110. The standard of teaching is satisfactory. In one lesson observed, the quality of teaching was good because the teacher was confident in her knowledge and understanding of the subject and was able to share her love of it with her pupils, which helped to stimulate their ideas. The pace of learning was lively and pupils were keen to do their best. However, over time, some teachers place too little emphasis upon teaching skills, knowledge and understanding of artistic techniques and too much upon using art as an activity related to other subjects. However, importance is attached to celebrating pupils' achievements by displaying their day to day efforts sensitively and creatively. Even so, some examples of high quality work produced are not adequately annotated or clearly attributable to individuals within classes.
111. Currently there is no formal monitoring of classroom practice or portfolios of pupils' work to inform teachers about standards and to assist them in planning for the development of skills, knowledge and understanding. The co-ordinator is aware of the need to develop portfolios and match the pieces of work to National Curriculum levels. The use of assessment does not yet adequately inform teachers' planning to ensure the work becomes progressively harder as pupils move through the school, or breadth and balance of experience. Opportunities are good for art to contribute to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils. Resources for the subject are adequate. The co-ordinator is aware of the value and importance of using sketchbooks, which, at present, is underdeveloped throughout the school. Other areas for development are perceived as expanding pupils' knowledge and appreciation of well-known artists and enabling pupils to have more confidence to appraise their own work.
112. Since the time of the last inspection, standards of pupils' work have been sustained through the good use made of the skills of visiting artists. Pupils have the opportunity to benefit from participating in a range of stimulating visits to places of interest.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

113. No design and technology lessons were observed during the inspection, but products pupils have made and teachers' planning indicate that standards attained by pupils are consistent with those normally found in most schools for pupils of this age. Standards are similar to those at the time of the last inspection. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress.
114. Throughout the school, teachers link design and technology effectively to other subjects such as English and history. Year 4 pupils made Roman helmets to a good standard linked to their work in history. Teachers give pupils opportunities to plan and evaluate their designs. This provides very effective links with literacy. Their written plans and evaluations and their carefully labelled diagrams show that pupils use their literacy skills well. This is very evident in the Year 6 work on slippers. They produce detailed plans and make fabric slippers to a good standard. Year 4 designs of 'a bicycle of the future' are another good example of how pupils extend their literacy skills in design and technology.
115. Year 5 complete food technology work through the Educational Action Zone link with the business community. They make biscuits and the quality of them will be judged during a visit to a local bakery firm. The measuring of ingredients is an effective link with numeracy. Further numeracy links are found during the measuring process in the making of all the products throughout the school.
116. Year 2 pupils plan and make products to a good standard. They made Mexican 'God's Eyes'. They used wool, wood and feathers to good effect. Their planning is of a good standard, and very positively enhances their literacy skills. Pupils in Year 2 produced a wallhanging by weaving various coloured fabrics. They wove a design for 'Elmer the Elephant' to complement their literacy work on the same subject.
117. The co-ordinator leads and manages the subject satisfactorily. However, he is not sufficiently involved in strategic financial planning or in the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning in the subject. Teachers check and record pupils' progress in lessons carefully. The school has plans to provide additional systems for assessing pupils' work regularly and comparing it against the level they are expected to achieve in the National Curriculum.

GEOGRAPHY

118. The last time the school was inspected, the standards in geography were in line with national expectations for pupils by the ages of 7 and 11 years. Since then standards have remained the same. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to their classmates. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Pupils have good attitudes to the subject. The previous weaknesses in the scheme of work and assessment procedures for the subject no longer exist.
119. By the end of Year 2, pupils have knowledge of their locality. Teachers satisfactorily draw pupils' attention to similarities and differences between places in which people live. Pupils explain the routes they need to take to travel between various familiar places such as school and the swimming baths. This leads them to give clear explanations about different forms of transport used to travel between home and more distant places. Pupils who have a clear understanding of distance relate this to holiday destinations. In a Year 1 lesson, pupils learn how to use aerial photographs and side views of the locality to develop an understanding of how these form the basis of map making. They also plot routes on a map. Pupils use appropriate geographical vocabulary to explain how they

can match photographs of objects taken from different perspectives.

120. In Years 3 to 6, pupils continue to satisfactorily develop their geographical skills, knowledge and understanding. A strength of the geography curriculum is the use teachers make of visits and residential field trips to give pupils first-hand experience of learning about their environment. Following a visit to the Albert Dock, pupils in Year 3 recalled seeing a wide range of natural materials used to develop the previously derelict waterfront. Year 4 used their visit to gain information to compare features of city and village locations. Pupils have made progress in being able to explain some fundamental features of environmental interdependence and the effects of climatic conditions on world locations, such as desert and Arctic regions. In discussion with pupils in Year 5, they spoke with a good level of knowledge about the people and agriculture of India, Australia and France. Pupils explained the importance of natural features such as rivers and the devastation brought about by earthquakes. The good progress made in Year 5 is consolidated in Year 6. Pupils have made good use of information and communication technology, including the Internet, to research information about mountains and rivers. Pupils are adept at locating a wide range of information from various sources and databases stored on a computer. However, in lessons the pace of learning is less dynamic and several pupils have a tendency to become inattentive and restless. Very good use is made of residential field trips for pupils in Years 2 and 6 to Colomendy Outdoor Education Centre. This stimulates learning and deepens the pupils' knowledge and understanding of environmental issues.

HISTORY

121. Due to timetable restraints it was not possible to observe history being taught. However, from evidence gathered from analysing pupils' work, studying teachers' plans and discussions with pupils and teachers, it is possible to judge that the pupils attain standards in line with national expectations by the ages of 7 and 11 years. This is a decline in standards from the previous inspection when attainment was judged to be above in both key stages. Pupils with special educational needs achieve the same standards as other pupils.
122. By the age of 7, pupils have a sound knowledge of the passing of time. They talk about Florence Nightingale and know she was a famous nurse. Some pupils explain why she was famous but few know where she worked and why. They enjoy studying the difference between her uniform and those of the nurses of today. Most pupils recall the Gunpowder Plot and why an effigy of Guy Fawkes is burnt on a bonfire on November 5th every year.
123. By the age of 11, pupils achieve sound standards and have knowledge and understanding about the passage of time and different periods of the past. They have detailed knowledge about the lives of people in England during the Victorian era. They know about the lives of the rich and poor and discuss the similarities and differences between them. They also discuss the differences and similarities between school life, food and clothes of the Victorians and present day. They visit historical houses including the Pier Master's House. Pupils enjoy dressing up as Victorians in school. They study toys of the period and make their own slate boards. Good use is made of the computers. Displays around the school are good. For example, the Roman helmets in the Year 4 class are of particularly high quality.
124. From the discussions with the pupils it is obvious that they enjoy history. Their enthusiasm shows in their eagerness to answer questions and participate in discussions. Pupils' recorded work is, at times, untidily presented. There are effective links with other subjects including information and communication technology, music, mathematics and

literacy. The co-ordinator, at the moment, is not given any non-contact time to evaluate and monitor planning or the quality of teaching.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

125. Pupils' attainment in information and communication technology is above that found in most primary schools for pupils aged 7 and 11 years. Ethnic minority pupils achieve similarly to other pupils. Pupils of all abilities make very good progress. Standards are rising quickly throughout the school and are very significantly better than at the time of the last inspection. This is due to a number of reasons. A considerable investment in time and money has included staff training and the school plans even more for the near future. Involvement in the Education Action Zone initiative has benefited the school by providing good quality information and communication technology resources. Lesson planning is good and ensures that pupils' work becomes harder as they move through the school and that the skills they learn develop in an appropriate order. The co-ordinator leads the subject very successfully and has clear plans for the subject's continued development, together with the ability, support and commitment to implement them successfully.
126. Year 1 pupils properly program a floor robot to move forwards, backwards and sideways. Year 2 pupils use their computer skills to make a design for their bedroom door. They confidently alter the font and colour. They print off their designs. Pupils effectively use an art package to copy images and paste them into their work. They competently show their 'mouse' control by clicking and dragging items on the screen to complete numeracy problems. Information and communication skills are used extensively to support pupils' learning in literacy. For example, Year 1 pupils word-process poems entitled 'Deep in the Rainforest'. Year 2 use the computer to practise their spellings and work connected with the alphabet. They also correctly complete an exercise on punctuation. They draft and re-draft their stories on the computer. Pupils work with great confidence on the computer whatever work they are doing. They correctly access programs, save and print their work.
127. Pupils aged 7 to 11 years further gain in confidence and competence working with computers. They access the Internet and use it effectively. They e-mail work properly. Year 3 pupils correctly copy and paste work about the 'Lion King' from the Internet. They e-mail pictures to one another. Year 4 pupils use an art package to skilfully and artistically develop pictures using repeated patterns. The same pupils produce a newspaper front page. The 'Beresford Daily News' is of very high quality. This sort of work greatly enhances pupils' literacy skills. Year 4 pupils also very effectively use and add to, a branching database. They do this by accessing the Internet and finding the relevant site. They work quickly, confidently and accurately. Pupils use spreadsheets to collate information and produce graphs to represent this information. Year 5 pupils produced a graph to represent the height of pupils in the class. This is done by using the database they have compiled on information about pupils in the class. Year 6 pupils put together a multimedia presentation by using a specialised program. Their presentation is linked to their geography topic, which was about mountains.
128. Pupils are very enthusiastic and interested when they use computers. They really enjoy the subject and quickly settle to the work in hand. During their work in pairs they co-operate well, sharing out activities fairly. Pupils persevere when they encounter difficulties. They handle equipment with care and respect.
129. The quality of teaching and learning is very good and is better than at the time of the last inspection. Teachers make very good use of the information and communication technology suite. A very significant factor in the success of the teaching is the excellent support teachers receive from a visiting specialist. He greatly enhances the quality of

teaching and learning. Teachers have secure subject knowledge that results in them giving clear explanations and instructions. They use the correct terms for the subject. Teachers circulate around the class to support and monitor the pupils' work. They are then in a position to identify errors quickly or offer help when pupils are hesitant. They make good use of ongoing assessment to ensure that pupils build satisfactorily on what they know. There is good, firm, yet friendly management of pupils' behaviour; resulting in good behaviour and no interruption in the pupils' learning. Pupils are interested, concentrate well and follow instructions promptly because of the good quality teaching. They show good motivation by the work they do and they are keen to experiment. This extends computing skills and builds up their confidence in the subject.

MUSIC

130. Pupils, including ethnic minority pupils, throughout the school attain the standards expected for their age and the majority enjoy their music making activities. Since the time of the last inspection, standards have been maintained. The tuition that is provided by the subject co-ordinator, enables pupils in Year 2 to achieve well. This is enhanced for some pupils by tuition from visiting, specialist teachers in strings, brass and woodwind. Pupils benefit from listening to the performances of professional musicians who visit the school, such as the didgeridoo workshop. These events are often used to promote pupils' literacy, as well as their music skills. In discussion with pupils in Year 5, they were able to explain how the music they listen to affects the way they feel and how music adds to the atmosphere of calm prior to assembly. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress.
131. Throughout the school, pupils' singing shows good control of pitch and rhythm. There is sound progression in skills from Year 1 to Year 6, although with Year 6 it is less evident. Teachers do not all regularly provide opportunities for pupils to compose and evaluate music. Pupils occasionally listen to traditional music from other cultures. They develop the ability to talk constructively about the quality of their work and make sensible comments about how it might be improved. In one lesson observed in Year 2, the standard of work produced by pupils was good and higher than that generally achieved at this age. The very good quality teaching by a music specialist is a significant contributory factor in the quality of teaching and learning for this group of pupils. Pupils are able to maintain a steady beat whilst singing 'Have You Seen a Penguin?' They can work together co-operatively in groups using a variety of percussion instruments to play their composition. They use symbols to represent sounds, appraise their work and make improvements to their performance. During singing practice, pupils in Years 5 and 6 are less effusive and spontaneous in the contribution they make. However, some are in the choir and make greater efforts when performing in that context. In Year 6, the silly behaviour of some pupils during their music lesson spoils the quality of teaching and learning for the rest of their classmates, therefore, the quality of the work they achieve is lower than expected for their age.
132. The quality of teaching and learning throughout the school is satisfactory. Both are very good in Year 2. Music is taught by the co-ordinator who is a specialist and by class teachers. In some classes, where teachers lack confidence in the subject, too much time is spent organising the lesson rather than teaching the subject. A heavy reliance is placed upon following the guidance of a commercial scheme and this limits the opportunities for spontaneous learning. Some teachers are familiar with the more recent nationally produced guidance for the subject, but the school's own scheme of work and policy for the subject are old and in need of review.
133. Several pupils are talented musicians and receive good encouragement from the school to develop their talents to the full. They benefit from additional specialist music teaching

that is of a high standard and they make good progress in these lessons.

134. The school recognises the need to develop some teachers' confidence in teaching the subject. There are plans for the co-ordinator to monitor teaching and learning more closely throughout the school and provide her with time to advise and support colleagues by sharing her expertise. Music lessons are taught in the hall because of the nature of the open-plan building. It is difficult for teachers to generate a suitable ambience for music appreciation within the school, therefore, opportunities are often organised for pupils to listen to music elsewhere when attending out of school events such as at the Philharmonic Hall.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

135. By the ages of 7 and 11, pupils attain standards that are in line with national expectations in gymnastics and swimming. The school has maintained the standards reported in the last inspection. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. There is no difference in standards between boys and girls. During the inspection, lessons were observed in gymnastics. The quality of teaching and learning is good. The teachers' planning for the subject ensures that there is good attention to all areas of the curriculum throughout the year.
136. Pupils aged 7 years work enthusiastically and move with increasing control; for example, through actions involving running, jumping, landing and balancing. In response to good teaching they plan and perform movements safely using the floor and large apparatus. They practise and improve their own performance, repeating a previously performed series of movements with increasing imagination and control. Pupils are helped by the teacher who offers good coaching points. The teacher effectively provides time for pupils to appraise their own and others' movements and try to make necessary improvements. Thus they know the importance of planning and evaluating their movements. Pupils conclude by successfully stringing together some movements into a sequence, but need to develop a greater awareness of the space around them.
137. Pupils build on their work well by the time they are 11 and show a good awareness of effective use of space. Teachers have secure subject knowledge. This means pupils achieve well in gymnastics because they are taught skills and techniques systematically. This was well illustrated in a Year 4 lesson when pupils made spinning and rotating movements within their sequence. The teacher's own demonstrations motivated pupils to want to copy and helped produce movements of good quality. It is a shame that all teachers do not change into suitable clothing and footwear for physical education lessons. Pupils enjoy their physical education lessons. They focus well and listen carefully to directions. This means no time is wasted through repeated instructions and the lesson flows at a brisk pace. The brisk pace to the lesson held pupils' interest and ensured activity was vigorous. Pupils were suitably breathless at times.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

138. By the ages of 7 and 11, pupils' knowledge and understanding of religious education is in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus therefore standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. Pupils' progress is good overall. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress. Pupils study the faiths of Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Buddhism. Their knowledge and understanding is strongest in Christianity, particularly for pupils aged 5 to 7 years.
139. By the age of 7, pupils know that the Christian holy book is *The Bible* and contains stories about Jesus. Year 1 pupils discuss the need for rules in the community and that God

made rules called the Ten Commandments. Pupils in Year 2 study significant artefacts from the Christian faith, such as the font, altar and cross, and know that the Christians' special place of worship is called a church. They understand that in the Hindu faith the special place for worship is called a temple. By the age of 11, pupils have studied sacred texts. They are familiar with *The Bible* and are learning about *The Qur'an*. They understand that these texts are important and very special to the faiths from which they come. Pupils in Year 3 learn about the story of Jonah and make a collage of fishes on which they write their own prayers; for example, 'Don't run away from God for he forgives everyone'. Year 5 pupils know that *The Ka'bah* is very special for Muslims and their special prayer is called the Salah. They understand that each faith has rules such as the Ten Commandments in the Christian faith and the Five Pillars of Wisdom for the Muslims.

140. Pupils' respond positively to their work and are keen to learn. They eagerly settle to work, listen, and are not shy about contributing to class discussions. Pupils' behaviour is good and they sustain interest in set tasks. They work collaboratively in groups and pairs in a sensible and mature way, especially in Year 5.
141. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers' planning is good and informs pupils of what they are expected to learn by the end of lessons. Resources are used effectively and teachers have appropriate expectations of what pupils are to achieve. The management of pupils' behaviour is good. In the most effective lessons, as in a lesson in Year 5, the teacher maintains a calm, reflective approach, which encourages the pupils to think about the issues involved in the lesson. Learning is very good because the teacher is extending the pupils' knowledge and understanding of Islam. Throughout the school, the presentation of pupils' work varies from poor to satisfactory. Teachers could improve pupils' literacy skills by expecting a higher standard of their independent writing. There are cross-curricular links with other subjects, such as, history, mathematics and literacy.
142. The previous co-ordinator produced a detailed policy and scheme of work based on the locally agreed syllabus and the diocesan syllabus. This policy was drawn up in 1995 and now needs to be reviewed. The present co-ordinator monitors planning and, in consultation with teachers, establishes what pupils are to learn for each half term. However, the role of the co-ordinator needs to be further developed to monitor and evaluate the teaching of the subject. Assessment needs to be consistent across the school and formal assessment should be recorded to ensure that pupils' work matches their differing capabilities more closely. Good use is made of local resources, such as places of worship, and the vicar from the local church takes assemblies every week.