

INSPECTION REPORT

**AUGHTON CHRIST CHURCH CE PRIMARY
SCHOOL**

Ormskirk

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique reference number: 119370

Headteacher: Mrs B Stevens

Reporting inspector: Mr C D Taylor
23004

Dates of inspection: 2 - 5 July 2001

Inspection number: 197628

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Long Lane Aughton Ormskirk Lancashire
Postcode:	L39 5AS
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Revd. R Moughtin
Date of previous inspection:	September 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
23004	Christopher Taylor	Registered inspector	The foundation stage Science Geography Music French	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? (a) The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed
19365	Gordon Stockley	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
19709	Jean Fisher	Team inspector	English Art and design Design and technology Religious education Equal opportunities	How good are curricular and other opportunities?
25340	Robert Franks	Team inspector	Mathematics Information technology History Physical education Special educational needs English as an additional language	How high are standards? (b) Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Aughton Christ Church CE School caters for boys and girls aged four to 11 years. There is also a privately funded nursery on the premises. The school is similar in size to most Junior and Infant schools, with 205 full-time pupils. Numbers have increased since 1996. The school serves an area of mainly owner-occupied housing in Aughton village and pupils also travel from other areas of Ormskirk. Many parents are active members of the Christ Church parish community. Most pupils join the reception class with levels of attainment above those expected for their age. Six per cent of pupils - below the national average - are known to be eligible for free school meals. Thirty-six pupils - below the national average - are on the special educational needs register. Eight of these pupils - well above the national average - have Statements of Special Educational Needs. Most pupils with special needs have specific learning difficulties (for example, dyslexia), moderate learning difficulties or emotional and behavioural difficulties, and there are also three autistic pupils. Almost all pupils are white. There is only one pupil who speaks English as an additional language, and no pupil is at an early stage of learning English.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Aughton Christ Church CE School is a good school with clear aims, strong values and a caring environment. Standards are improving generally in line with national upward trends and are above national expectations in English and mathematics for 11-year-olds. Teaching is very good in the reception class and at Key Stage 2, and good at Key Stage 1. As a result, pupils make good progress during their time at the school. Pupils' attitudes to learning are very positive and their behaviour, relationships and attendance are particularly good. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The school benefits from good leadership and management. Although expenditure per pupil is above the national average, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils in the reception class make good progress because of very good teaching.
- Teaching and learning are very good at Key Stage 2 and good at Key Stage 1.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Pupils' very good attitudes, behaviour and relationships help them to learn effectively.
- There is good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare are good and the school has very effective links with parents.
- Good leadership ensures that the aims and values of the school are clearly reflected in its work.

What could be improved

- There is insufficient use of information and communication technology (ICT) to assist teaching and learning in other subjects of the curriculum.
- There is not enough time spent teaching geography in Year 6 and standards are below those expected nationally at the end of Key Stage 2.
- The role of subject co-ordinators in monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning has not been developed sufficiently.
- The assessment of pupils' attainment and progress is good in English and mathematics, but unsatisfactory in other subjects. There is not enough use of target setting to improve individual pupils' standards and insufficient tracking of pupils' progress in these subjects.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made satisfactory progress, overall, in addressing the key issues in the previous inspection report published in September 1997. It has made good progress in raising standards in design and technology and in ICT. It has made satisfactory progress in enabling subject co-ordinators to develop subject action plans and to provide more guidance for their colleagues on classroom organisation and teaching strategies. It has not yet reduced the headteacher's class teaching commitment sufficiently. As a result, she has had too little time to release teachers so that they can monitor and develop the quality of teaching in the subjects that they co-ordinate. In addition to these key issues, the school has improved standards broadly in line with the national upward trend. It has strengthened the quality of teaching and learning and has improved its provision for pupils with special educational needs. It has maintained its high standard of leadership and management. Links with parents were satisfactory and have become very good. The high quality of pupils' attitudes, behaviour and relationships has been maintained. The school has identified appropriate areas for development and has a very good commitment and capacity to make further improvements.

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

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

In English, the school's results in 2000 were above the national average for all schools in the country and in line with the average for schools with a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals. In mathematics, standards were similar to the national average in all schools and below the average for similar schools. In science, standards were below the national average in all schools and well below the average for similar schools. Over the past four years, standards have risen broadly in line with the national upward trend. Inspection findings indicate that standards in the current Year 6 are above the national average in English and mathematics and in line with the national average in science. This is better than last year, as last year's group had more pupils with learning difficulties who joined the school in Year 6. Standards are similar to those expected nationally in all other subjects at Key Stage 2, except in art and design, history and physical education, where standards are above those expected; and in geography, where standards are below national expectations. Pupils make good progress in learning French at Key Stage 2. Standards in the current Year 2 are in line with the national average in English and mathematics and above average in science. They are close to what is expected nationally in all other subjects, except in art and design, history and physical education, where they are above national expectations. Realistic targets have been set to improve standards in English and mathematics in the National Curriculum tests for 11-year-olds in 2001.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are very keen to learn and are well motivated. They are interested and involved in all school activities.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils nearly always behave well in class and around school. They are polite and helpful. There have been no exclusions.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Relationships among pupils and with staff are very good. Pupils willingly take initiative and carry out responsibilities when given opportunities to do so. Pupils in Year 6 take an active part in the recently established school council.
Attendance	Well above the national average. Authorised absence is below average. There is no unauthorised absence. Punctuality is generally good, although a small minority is often a few minutes late.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching was satisfactory or better in all lessons. It was good in 42 per cent of lessons, very good in 38 per cent and excellent in nine per cent. Overall, teaching is very good in the reception class and at Key Stage 2 and is good at Key Stage 1. The teaching of English and mathematics, including the basic skills of literacy and numeracy, is good at Key Stage 1 and very good at Key Stage 2. Strengths of teaching include very high expectations, effective planning of lessons, very good class management and effective use of homework to consolidate and extend pupils' learning. The school meets the needs of higher- and lower-attaining pupils, including those with special educational needs, well. As a result, pupils generally work at a brisk pace and make good progress in acquiring skills, knowledge and understanding. There is not enough use of ICT to aid teaching and learning in other subjects of the curriculum.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good, overall. The curriculum is generally broad and balanced at both key stages. All statutory requirements of the National Curriculum are met. Pupils benefit from learning French in all classes at Key Stage 2, but there is insufficient teaching of geography in Year 6. There is a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities to widen pupils' interests.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils receive appropriate help and make good progress towards the targets in their Individual Education Plans.

Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good, overall. Provision for pupils' personal development is satisfactory. Provision for pupils' moral development is very good, with clear teaching of right and wrong. Provision for pupils' spiritual and social development is good. Provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory overall, including visits to theatres, concerts and museums, but there are few opportunities for pupils to learn about the rich variety of other cultures.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good, overall. Procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare are good. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are effective. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are not rigorous enough in all subjects, except in English and mathematics, where they are good. In other subjects, assessments are not used to set specific targets for individual pupils and to track their progress.

The school's links with parents are very good. Parents express very strong support for the school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good, overall. The headteacher provides very good leadership of the school and is supported effectively by the deputy headteacher. They ensure that the school is moving forward with a clear sense of educational direction. The role of subject co-ordinators in monitoring and promoting high standards of teaching and learning has not yet been developed sufficiently.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. Governors carry out most of their statutory duties well, with the exception of a few omissions in the school prospectus and annual report to parents. They play an effective role in helping to shape the direction of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory, overall. The headteacher and deputy headteacher monitor and evaluate the school's performance well. They have a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. Most governors visit the school regularly, but there is insufficient monitoring and feedback to other governors on provision in different subject areas.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Educational priorities are supported well through the school's financial planning. All major decisions take into account the principles of best value to ensure that spending is effective.

There is a good match of teachers and support staff to the needs of the curriculum. Overall, the accommodation is adequate, but there are insufficient areas for group teaching and the staff room is barely adequate to accommodate all the staff. Learning resources are generally satisfactory, but there are insufficient resources in geography, which has a negative effect on standards.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children enjoy school. • Behaviour is good. • Children get the right amount of work to do at home. • The teaching is good. • The school expects children to work hard and to achieve their best. • The school is well led and managed. • The school helps children become mature and responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nearly a third of parents feel they are not kept well informed about their children's progress. Many parents would like an additional parents' meeting with their child's teacher during the spring term. • A fifth of parents feel that the school does not work closely enough with them.

The inspection findings support the parents' very positive views. While the quality of information provided for parents is generally satisfactory and relationships with parents are very positive, inspectors agree that an additional parents' meeting in the spring term would be beneficial. The school also recognises this, and is planning to introduce an additional meeting next year.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Children join the reception class at the start of the autumn term in the school year in which they become five. Many children attend the privately funded nursery on the school premises prior to this, while some children attend other nurseries. When they enter the reception class, most have levels of attainment above those expected for children of their age. As a result of very good teaching in the reception class, they make good progress. Most children achieve the early learning goals by the end of the spring term and move on to work in the early stages of the National Curriculum. By the end of the reception year, the attainment of most pupils is above what is expected nationally in personal and social development, in communication and early reading and writing skills, in mathematical, physical and creative development and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. Children with special educational needs make good progress in the reception class towards the targets in their Individual Education Plans.
2. At the end of Key Stage 1, the overall attainment of pupils is close to national expectations in English and mathematics, and above expectations in science. It is close to that expected nationally in all other subjects, except in art and design, history and physical education, where standards are above national expectations. Most pupils make good progress during Key Stage 1, but standards, overall, are lower than last year as there are more pupils with learning difficulties in the current Year 2.
3. In English, inspection findings indicate that standards in Year 2 are close to the national average. In reading and in writing, standards are close to what is expected nationally, while pupils' speaking and listening skills are above those expected for their age. Standards in reading and in writing were well above the national average in the National Curriculum tests for seven-year-olds in 2000. In reading, they were well above the average in similar schools, while in writing, they were above the average in similar schools. Standards are lower, overall, in the current Year 2 as there is a much higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs. The majority of pupils make very good progress in their speaking and listening skills. As a result, pupils grow in confidence and are able to express themselves clearly. In reading, pupils make sound progress. They read simple texts accurately, confidently and with some expression. In writing, the majority of pupils make good progress, and both handwriting and spelling have continued to improve since the last inspection. The presentation of work is satisfactory. Teaching is good, and the extra support provided for pupils with special educational needs is gradually pushing up their standards.
4. In mathematics, inspection findings indicate that attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is in line with the national average. Standards in mathematics were well above the national average in the tests in 2000, and well above the standard in similar schools. Standards are lower, overall, in the current Year 2 as there is a much higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs. Results have improved faster than the national upward trend since the previous inspection and pupils are making good progress. There is a good focus on developing basic numeracy skills, and mental mathematics skills have improved since the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy.
5. In science, inspection findings indicate that attainment, at the end of Key Stage 1, is above national expectations. This is not as good as teachers' assessments in 2000, when standards were well above the levels expected nationally, as there are more pupils with learning difficulties in the current Year 2. Most pupils, however, are making good progress, and standards have improved over the last four years. Pupils develop their scientific enquiry skills by observing the growth of plants under different conditions, and carry out simple experiments to investigate forces produced by a ramp inclined at different angles.
6. Pupils' attainment in ICT is in line with the standard expected nationally at Key Stage 1, and pupils make satisfactory progress in developing computer skills. There is insufficient use of

ICT, however, to assist learning in other subjects of the curriculum. Pupils' attainment in religious education is in line with the standards expected in the locally agreed syllabus.

7. Inspection findings indicate that the attainment of pupils in the current Year 6 is above national expectations in English and mathematics, and close to the standard expected nationally in science. The overall attainment of pupils is close to national expectations in all other subjects, except in art and design, history and physical education, where standards are above those expected nationally, and in geography where standards are below those typical for this age group. This is because there is too little teaching of geographical skills in Year 6, and in Year 5 there is over-reliance on worksheets at the expense of developing pupils' research skills. Pupils make good progress in learning French at Key Stage 2.
8. In English, inspection findings indicate that standards in the current Year 6 are above those expected nationally. Standards in English were above the national average in the National Curriculum tests for eleven-year-olds in 2000, and were in line with the standard in schools with a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals. Pupils make very good progress in listening and speaking. They discuss their work sensibly using a wide vocabulary and speak clearly and confidently. Effective questioning makes pupils think carefully about their answers and extends their vocabulary. Pupils make good progress in reading. Most read fluently and expressively, tackle unfamiliar words well and understand what they are reading. All pupils know how the library is organised and use their skills to find books quickly. Progress in writing is also good. The oldest pupils' writing is carefully planned, with good use of interesting vocabulary to enliven the text. Spelling and punctuation are usually accurate and handwriting is satisfactory.
9. In mathematics, inspection findings indicate that attainment in the current Year 6 is above that expected nationally. Standards in mathematics were close to the national average in the National Curriculum tests for eleven-year-olds in 2000, and were below the standard in similar schools. Standards are higher in the current Year 6 as there were several children with learning difficulties who joined the school last year, at the beginning of Year 6, and their standards in mathematics were not as high as most other pupils in the class. Most pupils are making good progress, and have benefited from the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy. Pupils are becoming more confident with written methods of calculation, and there has been a good effort to develop and use mental methods of calculation.
10. In science, attainment is close to the national average in Year 6. This is better than the National Curriculum tests for 11-year-olds in 2000, when standards were below the national average. Pupils are making better progress because of the adoption of a new scheme of work based on national guidance and a greater emphasis on pupils' own investigations. They study the effect of mixing yeast with different amounts of sugar, for example, and carry out practical investigations to construct electrical circuits. They understand the principles of fair testing and record and explain their results clearly.
11. Pupils' attainment in ICT is in line with the standard expected nationally at the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils make sound progress in developing computing skills, but there is insufficient use of ICT in most other subjects of the curriculum. Attainment in religious education is in line with the standards expected in the locally agreed syllabus at the end of Key Stage 2.
12. There are no significant variations in attainment by gender and the only pupil who speaks English as an additional language is actively included in all lessons and is making good progress in developing speaking and writing skills.
13. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets in their Individual Education Plans. Their needs are identified at an early age, and this contributes to the good progress they make. Pupils receive good support from the class teachers and from classroom assistants, and work is provided at the right level. Pupils with special needs make good progress as a result. Pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties make good progress in learning to control their behaviour.

14. Pupils' literacy skills are generally above those expected nationally at both key stages, and pupils make good progress. The literacy hour has been introduced effectively in all classes, and standards of writing are improving faster than national trends. The new knowledge and skills gained in the literacy hour are used effectively in other subjects of the curriculum to improve pupils' writing, for example, in science and religious education.
15. Standards in numeracy are generally above those expected nationally at both key stages. The National Numeracy Strategy has been introduced effectively in all classes and pupils are making good progress. They are carrying out mental calculations with increasing agility and showing confidence in manipulating numbers and using multiplication tables. There is appropriate use of numeracy skills in other subjects, such as design and technology and in science.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

16. Pupils' attitudes to work are very good, and the school has maintained the high standards reported at the last inspection. Pupils are happy and settle quickly to the school day. They are very interested in the activities that teachers provide for them, and all those questioned agreed that they enjoy school. In lessons, pupils listen attentively to the teachers and are quick to offer opinions during whole-class activities. All pupils are keen to point out and discuss the work they have done. Pupils' opinions are sought through the school council and their views are respected, valued and acted upon. Teachers help pupils become more confident by developing their self-esteem. In a reception class lesson, for example, the youngest pupils took turns to wear magic glasses, which helped them to say something encouraging about another child. When offered extra-curricular activities, such as rounders, football and recorder club, pupils take part enthusiastically.
17. Most pupils behave very well both inside and outside school. They are very courteous and polite to visitors. In a tennis lesson in Year 3, for example, all the pupils behaved very well and listened attentively to instructions from the visiting coach. Any occasional incidents of unacceptable behaviour are dealt with very effectively by staff. This has a very beneficial effect on pupils' learning. Pupils move around the school in an orderly fashion, displaying good manners as they wait patiently for others at the start of assembly or when taking their turn to answer questions in lessons. Pupils are very polite to adults and hold doors open without being asked. Pupils treat property and classroom resources with respect and help to keep their classrooms neat and tidy. In lessons, pupils move from one activity to the next sensibly and quickly, they listen quietly and wait for their turn to speak. There have been no exclusions from the school in the last year.
18. Relationships among pupils and between pupils and staff are very good and continue to be a strength of the school. All staff know the pupils well and this makes for a happy atmosphere that enhances the quality of learning. Pupils co-operate amicably when working together and are generally helpful and supportive towards each other. All staff act as good role models, both in their effective working relationships with each other and in the way they respond to the individual needs of pupils. In class discussions, older pupils listen well to the views and opinions of others, ensuring that they appreciate and respect differing values and thoughts.
19. Pupils willingly take initiative and carry out responsibilities when given opportunities to do so. The school operates a school council where pupils in Year 6 speak on behalf of pupils in other classes. As a direct result, improvements are now scheduled for the junior toilets and outdoor seating arrangements have been enhanced. Younger pupils could be given greater opportunities to develop their social skills if all classes elected their own council representatives. Pupils regularly take on responsible jobs, such as taking registers to the school office, and older pupils assist teachers at playtimes and at lunchtimes. Pupils develop their wider social responsibilities by taking part in a variety of fund-raising events and performing in concerts for senior citizens. There is no regular lesson time for pupils' personal and social development, however, when pupils could develop their understanding of the impact of their actions on others.

20. Attendance is very good. It is well above the national average and there is no unauthorised absence. While most pupils arrive punctually in the morning, a small number are often a few minutes late. Registers are completed correctly in accordance with legal requirements.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

21. The standard of teaching is good, overall, with much very good teaching. As a result, pupils develop new skills quickly and learn effectively. Teaching was at least satisfactory in all lessons. In 42 per cent of lessons the teaching was good. In 38 per cent it was very good and in nine per cent it was excellent.
22. Teaching is very good in the reception class. The teacher and classroom assistants have a very good understanding of how young children learn, and succeed in making learning fun. Children enjoyed talking about the toy rabbits and where they had been on holiday, and had fun playing *What time is it Mr Wolf?* when learning how to tell the time. The teacher places great emphasis on developing children's social skills, and encourages them to make choices and to take decisions. Planning is very detailed and includes a wide range of interesting activities for children at different stages of learning. This reflects the teacher's very high expectations of all children. Children are very well managed and activities change frequently so that they do not have time to get bored. This helps to maintain very good levels of concentration. Staff pay careful attention to developing children's language, reading and writing skills, and to introducing children to numbers in a wide range of everyday situations, including visits to local shops, a gardening centre and a clinic.
23. Teaching is good, overall, at Key Stage 1 and very good at Key Stage 2. It is good at both key stages in English, mathematics and science and in all other subjects except ICT, where it is satisfactory. There is too little teaching of geography, however, in Year 6. Teaching that is good or better (89 per cent of lessons) is a major factor in ensuring that pupils make good progress.
24. Teachers' subject knowledge is consistently good or better and this ensures that pupils acquire sound techniques and accurate information. The teaching of basic literacy and numeracy skills is good, overall, at Key Stage 1 and very good at Key Stage 2. Teachers follow the structure of the National Literacy Strategy confidently, and stress the development of pupils' language and vocabulary. Opportunities for developing and consolidating writing skills are followed up in subjects such as science, religious education and history. The teaching of numeracy includes a wide variety of activities for pupils to practise and consolidate their learning, and this helps to retain pupils' interest. Teachers use mental mathematics sessions well to develop pupils' analytical thinking and mathematical vocabulary. Numeracy skills are reinforced appropriately in other subjects; for example, in science, where pupils in Year 6 plot a line graph to show the amount of sugar that dissolves in water.
25. Teachers' planning is particularly effective at both key stages. In English and mathematics, teachers prepare lessons thoroughly and benefit from following the guidelines in the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. In other subjects, planning usually follows national guidelines and shows a clear progression of skills and knowledge. This helps pupils to acquire skills in a logical order. An art and design lesson in Year 6, for example, was particularly well planned, drawing on pupils' previous knowledge to compare the work of L.S. Lowry with that of Impressionist painters such as Monet. In most subjects, other than history and English, however, there is insufficient planning to ensure that computers are used effectively to assist pupils' learning. Teachers' expectations of pupils' work are very high, and this ensures good productivity and a brisk pace of work.
26. A wide variety of teaching methods is used effectively at both key stages. Teachers often start their lessons by referring to the previous lesson in order to reinforce pupils' learning. This was done very effectively, for example, in a Year 1 literacy lesson, when the teacher motivated pupils at the beginning of the lesson by reminding them of the story they had read earlier. Most teachers make the learning objectives clear at the start of lessons and review what pupils have

learned at the end. This helps pupils to consolidate their learning. Teachers use questioning skills effectively, and constantly encourage pupils to improve their speaking skills by using correct vocabulary and technical terms. This was seen in a Year 6 English lesson, when pupils were encouraged to use words such as *trachea*, *aveoli* and *larynx* correctly when describing the respiratory system. In science and mathematics, there is a good emphasis on developing investigative skills, while in other subjects such as history and geography, good use is made of visiting speakers and of visits in the local area. There is an over-reliance on worksheets in geography in Year 5, however, and this limits the development of pupils' research skills.

27. Very good relationships between teachers and pupils produce a pleasant, hard-working and creative atmosphere. Very good class management is reflected in pupils' very good behaviour and positive attitudes to work. As a result, pupils are eager to learn and their intellectual and creative effort is very strong.
28. Teachers use time and resources well. In literacy and numeracy lessons, for instance, teachers time the different activities well and lessons move at a brisk pace. As a result, pupils work productively and maintain a busy pace of learning. The use of classroom assistants is effective, and teachers and support staff work closely together. Teachers make good use of a wide variety of teaching resources and this helps to stimulate pupils' interest and curiosity. There are many interesting displays in classrooms and around the school to stimulate pupils' thinking. Pupils' work is attractively displayed, and this reflects the appreciation that teachers show for pupils' efforts.
29. Teachers make regular assessments of pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics, and make good use of the results to guide their planning and teaching. In other subjects, informal assessments are used on a daily basis to check pupils' learning and to plan for subsequent lessons, but there is little detailed assessment of pupils' skills and insufficient tracking of pupils' progress to identify specific areas where they need additional help. The day-to-day use of homework to reinforce and extend learning is good, especially in literacy and numeracy. Pupils take reading books home regularly and are set an appropriate amount of work to do at home. The marking of pupils' work is carried out regularly by teachers and praise is often used to encourage pupils. The best marking includes helpful written comments on how pupils can improve their work, but much of the marking does not indicate how the work could be better.
30. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good throughout the school. The special educational needs co-ordinator liaises closely with all staff. With her support, teachers write Individual Education Plans that give a clear indication of what pupils need to learn and do. Targets are detailed, specific and achievable in the short term. The plans are reviewed and modified twice a term and teachers match pupils' work with the targets indicated. Pupils receive very good support from teachers and support staff both in the classroom and when taught in small groups. A group of pupils in Year 2, for example, were helped effectively to develop their knowledge of simple fractions by playing a game that involved identifying a half and a quarter of a pizza. Pupils' work is carefully structured and based on an accurate assessment of their needs. They receive sensible guidance on behaviour where necessary. Very good relationships with teachers and assistants help pupils to feel confident and to make good progress.

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

31. The school provides a generally broad, balanced and relevant curriculum containing all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. It meets the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum and all pupils, including those with special educational needs, have equal access to all areas of the curriculum. The quality and range of learning opportunities are good, overall. A good addition to the curriculum is the provision of French for all pupils at Key Stage 2. Geography, however, is not covered in sufficient depth in Year 6 and this results in below-average standards.
32. At the previous inspection, there was a lack of detailed schemes of work, and curriculum review and development had not been systematically adopted in most subjects. The staff have worked hard to resolve these issues. The school has adopted schemes of work based on national guidelines in most subjects, to ensure step-by-step development of what pupils should know, be able to do and understand. Planning for lessons is now very good. An overall plan shows when different aspects of each subject will be taught, and this framework is implemented effectively and consistently throughout the school. Skills are developed progressively from term to term and planning is well matched to the age and ability of pupils in each class. The successful implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies has contributed effectively to improved lesson planning in literacy and numeracy.
33. The school's provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Since the previous inspection, the school has made good progress in ensuring that the work for lower-attaining pupils, and those with special educational needs, is well-matched to their abilities. All pupils with special needs have Individual Education Plans that contain both literacy and numeracy targets. In addition, teachers write support plans for classroom assistants that enable them to focus more closely on the specific needs of pupils.
34. There is a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities to extend pupils' interests. Seasonal sports are offered, including football and netball and also choir, recorder and drama clubs. Educational visits, including trips to Formby nature reserve, Jodrell Bank, the Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, and an annual residential visit, enrich and support the curriculum. Visitors to the school, such as members of the fire service, the school nurse and a policeman, enhance pupils' understanding of emergency services and health awareness.
35. The school works hard to ensure that all pupils are included in all that it provides. The school's policy for equal opportunities is well understood by all staff and pupils and is implemented appropriately throughout the school. All sporting activities are accessible to both girls and boys. Pupils with special educational needs receive well-structured support and they join in with the wide range of classroom activities. Strategies are in place to deal with any racial or gender-based incidents should they occur. There is only one pupil with English as a second language, and no pupils are currently at an early stage of learning English. The one pupil who was receiving extra support has made good progress and is able to take a full part in lessons.
36. The school makes sound provision for pupils' personal, social and health education. These aspects are taught in assemblies, as separate lessons and as part of science lessons. This helps pupils to develop self-awareness, confidence and independence in every aspect of their lives. Visiting health professionals support the provision of health education. The school nurse, for example, talks to pupils about personal hygiene. The recent introduction of a school council has provided good opportunities for pupils to develop their responsibilities towards the school and its environment.
37. The school has good links with the community. The local church plays an important role in the religious education curriculum, and the vicar, curate and youth worker are regular visitors to the school. The school makes good use of the local area to support work in art, geography, history and science. Visitors offer opportunities for pupils to join in musical activities and pupils take part in the Aughton schools music festival. There are sound links with four schools to which pupils transfer at the age of eleven. The school makes good use of initial teacher training students, supports their teaching well and provides them with invaluable experience.

38. The school's provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is good, overall, maintaining the standard reported at the previous inspection. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. Spirituality is particularly well developed through assemblies, in which clear messages and appropriate songs and prayers are used to reinforce the ethos of the school. Prayers provide an opportunity for pupils to think quietly about how the theme affects themselves and others. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. 'Circle Time', during lessons, gives pupils the opportunity to reflect on the consequences of their actions and to celebrate their own and others' achievements. Achievement assemblies give pupils opportunities to reflect on what the school values. There is a strong sense of purpose in the school, which encourages pupils to value themselves and others. Support of national charity appeals such as 'Operation Christmas Child' and 'Kind' allow pupils to reflect on those less fortunate than themselves.
39. The provision for pupils' moral development is very good. Assemblies are used effectively to teach the difference between right and wrong and to help pupils recognise the benefits of co-operation, respect, kindness and friendship. Personal and social education lessons are used to develop moral values by making pupils consider how to manage their own actions; for example, when they are angry. The school has very good systems in place to ensure that all pupils have a clear understanding of right and wrong. Rules are positive and are displayed prominently in classrooms and in the main areas of the school. These encourage pupils to adopt appropriate attitudes and behaviour within the school community. Pupils are encouraged to understand the consequences of their actions, to be honest, to show self-restraint and to contribute to the welfare of others in the school. Parents recognise that these values have a positive effect on their children. All staff provide good role models and this helps to reinforce the moral provision in the school.
40. The provision for social development continues to be good. Opportunities are often provided during lessons for co-operative and collaborative work; for instance, when identifying different types of bread in food technology and when reading together in groups. There is a very good working atmosphere, reflecting positive relationships. Pupils are encouraged to adopt appropriate social skills in relation to themselves and to one another. As a result, they are polite, and treat one another, adults and visitors with respect and courtesy. School productions, such as 'The Wizard of Oz', and participation in inter-school sports and music festivals further enhances their social skills.
41. The cultural development of pupils is satisfactory, overall. The school provides a good range of opportunities to visit theatres, concerts and museums, and to experience the performances of visiting theatre groups. Many subjects, such as history and geography, enhance pupils' understanding of their own culture, past cultures and cultures in other places. As at the previous inspection, however, there are fewer opportunities for pupils to develop an appreciation of the diversity of cultures within the society in which they live. Religious education lessons include opportunities to widen pupils' understanding of the major world faiths, but the previous link with a school with many ethnic minority pupils no longer exists, and there are no trips to other places of worship or visits by representatives of other faiths.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

42. The school has good procedures for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare. The headteacher, who is the designated child protection officer, has attended relevant training and keeps staff updated about current practices and procedures. All staff, including lunchtime supervisory staff, are fully aware of their responsibilities. Checks on fire-fighting equipment and electrical appliances are carried out regularly and there is an annual health and safety audit of the premises. There are good arrangements for first aid and for dealing with pupils with specific medical problems.
43. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are satisfactory. The headteacher monitors attendance regularly and the education welfare officer follows up any problems that the headteacher is unable to resolve. Pupils with 100 per cent attendance at the end of the school year are suitably rewarded.

44. Arrangements for promoting good behaviour and eliminating oppressive behaviour are effective. The behaviour policy has an emphasis on rewarding good behaviour and encouraging self-discipline. All staff are consistent in the way that the policy is applied and this makes a positive contribution to the very high standard of behaviour seen during the inspection.
45. Children are assessed soon after they enter the reception class to help the teacher to determine appropriate starting points. They are reassessed towards the end of their time in reception so that the teacher can measure the progress that individual children have made. At Key Stages 1 and 2 there are detailed assessment procedures for English and mathematics, using checklists of skills from the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Assessment in other subjects of the curriculum, however, has not yet been developed sufficiently to identify specific areas where individual pupils are experiencing difficulties. This makes it more difficult for teachers to base future lessons on the skills that individual pupils need to develop. In addition to the compulsory national tests, at the ages of seven and eleven, pupils take optional tests in Years 3, 4 and 5 in English and mathematics. Data from these results is analysed and used to identify any gaps in the teaching plans and to reveal any aspects of the curriculum that pupils have not fully understood. In other subjects, teachers' assessments are not used sufficiently well to identify targets for individual pupils to improve their standards or to track the progress of pupils, especially those experiencing difficulties. There are good assessment, record-keeping and communication systems that enable the progress of pupils with special educational needs to be monitored regularly.
46. The school has satisfactory procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development. There is a head girl and head boy and a deputy head girl and boy. Throughout the school there are opportunities for pupils to take responsibility, either by looking after younger pupils or by carrying out tasks such as caring for plants or taking registers to the school office. A school council has recently been established, although only pupils in Year 6 currently take an active part in its discussions. Pupils are presented with certificates at the weekly achievement assembly for a wide range of school activities, reflecting their personal development.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

47. Parents have very positive views of the school. The school places great value on the role of parents as co-educators and has developed very positive relationships with them. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Almost half the parents responded to the questionnaire and most aspects of the school's provision were supported by over 90 per cent of parents who replied.
48. The school keeps parents well informed about school life and forthcoming events in the weekly newsletter. It provides an opportunity for parents to meet their child's class teacher early in the autumn term when expectations of work and behaviour are explained. At this meeting the teacher also explains the work that the class will be covering during the year. Later in the autumn term parents have the opportunity to meet their child's teacher individually to discuss work and progress. A written report is produced at the end of the summer term, and parents are able to add their written comments.
49. Almost a third of the parents who replied to the questionnaire did not consider that they were kept informed well enough about how their children were getting on. While the quality of information provided for parents is generally satisfactory, there are three areas where there is scope for improvement. Firstly, the quality of the written annual reports is variable and some do not give a clear picture of what pupils know, understand and can do; neither do all reports contain individual targets or areas for improvement. Secondly, there is no formal parents' evening in the spring term. A substantial number of parents would like the opportunity to discuss their children's progress with the class teacher half way through the year. The school has recognised this wish and is proposing to hold an additional parents' meeting during the next school year. Thirdly, there are several important items of information omitted from the prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents. The prospectus, although attractive

and clear, does not mention parents' right to withdraw children from collective worship; the governors' annual report does not contain the percentage attendance rates of pupils, and there is little information about provision for pupils with disabilities.

50. The school's induction programme for children joining the reception class is good. There is an informal meeting for parents, which is held in the evening in order to encourage both parents to attend, and information about the teaching of literacy and numeracy is provided. Children are introduced into the school in small groups, spending several afternoons in the reception class before attending full time.
51. The school offers a Parents as Educators course, which, as well as encouraging parents to become more involved in their children's education, has produced additional literacy support materials for the school. There are plans to introduce a Dads and Literacy scheme in September 2001 in an attempt to encourage boys' reading. The parent helpers' association has an active committee, which meets regularly and raises a considerable amount of money for the school. All school events are very well attended by parents; nearly seventy parents and grandparents attended an assembly held during the inspection.
52. Parents make a good contribution to pupils' learning at school and at home. Several parents help regularly in class and there is always a good number of volunteers to help with trips and other events. Parents provide invaluable assistance by listening to their children reading at home and by helping them with project work.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

53. The management and efficiency of the school are good, as at the previous inspection. The headteacher provides very good leadership of the school. She has clear aims and appropriate plans for the future, and is supported well by an effective deputy headteacher. As a result, the school is moving forward with clear educational direction. During her seven years in post, the headteacher has established good relationships with parents and has gained the respect of her pupils. She is committed to raising standards in the school and has developed good aims and values to support the effective learning of pupils.
54. The headteacher monitors teaching and teachers planning effectively. Although she has a heavy teaching load, which has not yet been reduced sufficiently since the last inspection, she visits classrooms regularly and has observed every teacher at work. She feeds back her observations to individual teachers, making suggestions for future development. These visits form part of the performance management system introduced to identify teachers' professional development needs. The headteacher systematically checks the standard of pupils' written work by looking at samples of pupils' work. Together with the assessment co-ordinator, she analyses National Curriculum test results, optional tests and baseline assessments to identify areas that need improvement, and discusses her findings with subject co-ordinators in order to identify and take action to address weaker areas of the curriculum.
55. The aims and values of the school are reflected clearly in its work. The school works hard to enable pupils to develop their talents, to promote Christian values and to encourage a sense of decency, respect for others, commitment, self-reliance, responsibility and a healthy self-esteem. Teachers have very high expectations of pupils, and ensure that each child has an equal opportunity to succeed. It has a very good shared commitment to improving the quality of teaching and learning and a very good capacity to improve pupils' standards. Realistic targets have been set for standards in English and mathematics in the National Curriculum tests in 2001. To meet these targets, the school has focused on raising standards of pupils' writing and numeracy skills, and effective support for pupils with special needs.
56. Responsibility for subject areas is delegated to subject co-ordinators who manage spending on resources and feed back information to other staff after attending training courses. During the last year, the literacy and numeracy co-ordinators have observed teaching in their subjects and have fed back points requiring action to individual teachers. Other subject co-ordinators monitor teachers' planning and evaluate pupils' work, but their role has not been developed

sufficiently as they have not had the opportunity to observe lessons and to assist their colleagues in order to raise standards further. This is because the headteacher's teaching commitment has not yet been reduced sufficiently to enable her to cover lessons for her colleagues. The school intends to abolish her regular classroom commitment next term in order to enable her to do this effectively. All staff have job descriptions that specify their roles clearly.

57. The special educational needs co-ordinator provides good leadership. She has established effective liaison with the local authority's learning support teacher and encourages a strong commitment amongst all the support staff. Pupils' Individual Education Plans give clear targets that meet their specific needs. Good use is made of assessments to check pupils' progress. Pupils' Individual Education Plans are reviewed regularly and amended to take account of their needs. The school's policy has clear aims but lacks criteria for success. It also requires updating to take account of the requirements of the Code of Practice and inclusion principles. The special needs co-ordinator provides good support both for teachers and for individual pupils.
58. The governors provide good support for the headteacher. Governors have a good working knowledge of the school and have a sound understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. They are kept up-to-date by comprehensive reports from the headteacher and by presentations from subject co-ordinators. Most governors visit the school regularly to assist in the classroom, look at pupils' work and talk to teachers and pupils, but there is insufficient monitoring and feedback to other governors on the school's provision in different subject areas. The full governing body meets termly and committees meet regularly to discuss staffing, the curriculum, catering, buildings and finance. They discuss management and budget issues, and play an effective role in helping to shape the future direction of the school. They fulfil nearly all their statutory responsibilities well, with the exception of a few items omitted in the school prospectus and the annual report to parents.
59. The school supports educational priorities well through its financial planning. The school improvement plan identifies appropriate targets and ensures that the resources available are directed towards raising pupils' attainment. The personnel, resources and timings are identified clearly, and there are specific criteria by which the impact of these developments can be evaluated. There are no costings, however, to link new developments effectively to the five-year financial plan or the annual budget. The large carry-over is earmarked for further building projects and for safeguarding staffing levels in the coming school year. The school makes good use of funding that is allocated to support specific areas, such as special educational needs. The governing body monitors the school budget regularly and satisfactory financial controls are in place. The principles of best value are applied to all major spending decisions to ensure that the school receives satisfactory value for money. Day-to-day administration is efficient and computers are used effectively for placing orders and for keeping pupils' records.
60. The school has a sufficient number of suitably qualified teaching and support staff to deliver the curriculum effectively. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. The staff form a hardworking and committed team, working well together to provide good quality education in a caring setting. All staff are trained appropriately and most are very experienced. They are encouraged to attend courses for their own professional development and the school is currently working towards the prestigious Investors in People award and the Basic Skills award. There are good systems in place for the induction of new staff and the school has a good potential for training new teachers.
61. The accommodation provides sufficient space for the number of pupils on roll, although rising numbers are putting increasing pressure on space. The staff room, for example, is now barely adequate to accommodate all the staff, and there is a shortage of small group space for teaching pupils with special educational needs and for music tuition. The library is quite small and, situated as it is at the side of the hall, is not conducive to private study. However, the kitchen is soon to be taken out of use and this will provide the opportunity to create additional teaching space. The school building has been improved over the last four years by the provision of new windows in all classrooms and by the refurbishment of the infant toilets.

There are plans to improve the junior toilets in the near future. Outside there are extensive grassed areas and two playgrounds, one of which has recently been resurfaced.

62. Resources are satisfactory, overall. They are good in English, mathematics, ICT, religious education, history and art. Resources for geography are unsatisfactory. Although resources for music are satisfactory, overall, some instruments need replacing and there is a shortage of instruments from other cultures. There is generally a good range of practical resources to support the learning of pupils with special educational needs, but additional multi-sensory resources, such as touch-screens, would support pupils further in developing new skills and knowledge.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

63. In order to improve the quality of education provided, the governing body, headteacher and staff should:

- (1) make more use of computers to assist pupils' learning across other subjects of the curriculum; (see paragraphs 6, 11, 25, 82, 88, 92, 99, 107, 116, 122, 127)
- (2) increase the amount of time spent teaching geography in Year 6 in order to raise standards at the end of Key Stage 2; (see paragraphs 7, 23, 31, 102, 103, 106)
- (3) ensure that all subject co-ordinators monitor and evaluate teaching and learning in their subjects and share their expertise with other teachers; (see paragraphs 56, 92, 97, 101, 107, 122, 127, 131)

(The school is aware of this issue and already has plans to enable co-ordinators to monitor teaching from the beginning of the autumn term.)

- (4) extend the good practice in literacy and numeracy by ensuring that pupils' skills are assessed effectively in all subjects, targets are set for individual pupils to improve their work, and the progress of individual pupils is tracked more closely. (see paragraphs 29, 45, 92, 97, 101, 107, 112, 117, 122, 127, 131, 136)

(The school is aware of this issue and already has plans to use assessment data to help evaluate pupils' learning and to set targets to improve future learning.)

In addition to the key issues above, the school should consider including the following minor issues in its action plan:

- (1) Marking should be more consistent in helping pupils to identify how their work can be improved; (see paragraphs 29, 81, 88, 112, 117)
- (2) The school should provide more opportunities for pupils to develop an appreciation of the diversity of cultures within the society in which they live; (see paragraphs 41, 131)
- (3) The governing body should ensure that it fulfils all statutory requirements relating to the school prospectus and the annual report to parents. (see paragraphs 49, 58)

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	28

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
9	38	42	11	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)		205
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		12

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		8
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		36

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	4
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	6

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.3
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	12	15	27

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	11	12
	Girls	15	15	15
	Total	26	26	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	96 (91)	96 (88)	100 (100)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	12	12	12
	Girls	15	15	15
	Total	27	27	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (91)	100 (100)	100 (94)
	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	12	14	26

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	9	10
	Girls	14	11	12
	Total	23	20	22
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	88 (84)	77 (84)	85 (88)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	9	10
	Girls	12	12	12
	Total	20	21	22
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	77 (84)	81 (84)	85 (88)
	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	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	174
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)	8.3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.7
Average class size	29.3

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	130

Financial information

Financial year	2000/2001
	£
Total income	367,206
Total expenditure	361,743
Expenditure per pupil	1827
Balance brought forward from previous year	17,297
Balance carried forward to next year	22,760

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate 43%

Number of questionnaires sent out	205
Number of questionnaires returned	88

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	57	35	6	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	47	39	7	2	5
Behaviour in the school is good.	40	56	4	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	36	56	8	0	0
The teaching is good.	56	35	7	1	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	28	40	24	7	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	56	31	9	2	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	55	41	3	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	35	44	11	8	1
The school is well led and managed.	52	39	8	0	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	41	53	3	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	24	60	9	1	6

Other issues raised by parents

No other issues were raised by a significant number of parents.

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

64. The school has continued to make very good provision for children in the reception class since the previous inspection. The very good teaching and the broad curriculum have a positive impact on children's learning. Children enjoy their time in the reception class. They are enthusiastic, listen carefully to their teacher and make good progress. Their behaviour and their attitudes to learning are very good because they are managed well and do not have time to get bored. A wide variety of interesting activities is provided and assessments are used effectively to track the progress of individual children. Planning for lessons is very detailed, but there is no overall policy for the foundation stage. Work is well-matched to the needs of children of different abilities, and pupils with Statements of Special Educational Needs receive very good support from the special needs assistants. They develop their communication skills well by being fully included in all class activities. Homework activities, such as reading and counting exercises, are used effectively to consolidate and extend children's learning in class.
65. Most children attend the privately funded nursery on the school premises part-time when they are three years old. Together with children from other nurseries, they join the reception class at the beginning of the autumn term of the school year in which they become five. During the inspection, there were 30 children attending full-time in the reception class. When children join the reception class, they have above-average skills for their age. All children, including those who have special educational needs, make good progress and most will have exceeded the levels expected for their age in all areas of learning when they leave the reception class.

Personal, social and emotional development

66. Great emphasis is placed on developing social skills in the reception class. Teaching is very good and children learn quickly. Activities during lessons are organised so children are encouraged to make choices and to take decisions. This soon builds up children's confidence. In one lesson, for example, children invented names such as *Fruity Flamingos* for a packet of sweets, and decided on appropriate ingredients. Children quickly become familiar with classroom routines. They know they have to put their hand up to answer questions and they learn to take turns. At snack time, children join in a prayer before drinking their milk sensibly. They are keen to discuss the work they have achieved, and listen patiently to one another's contributions. Their growing confidence was well illustrated when those wearing the magic glasses were encouraged to share positive feelings about their friends in order to provide them with encouragement. All staff provide excellent role models and develop very good relationships with the children. Consequently, the atmosphere in the reception class is very positive and children respond well to this by being polite, kind and helpful to others. Most children will exceed the level of personal, social and emotional development expected by the end of the reception year.

Communication, Language and Literacy

67. Most children enjoy talking about the work they have done during lessons, and are keen to answer the teacher's questions. They speak clearly and confidently about themselves and their friends, and are beginning to express their likes and dislikes. One girl, for example, told others her name and age, and added *I don't like birds falling out of their nest*. Children enjoy discussing stories they have been reading together, and join in rhymes such as *Little Miss Muffet* and *Hickory Dickory Dock*. They discuss their pets' illnesses at the *Animal Hospital* and are keen to tell other children about their holidays to Scotland and Greece. The teacher makes every effort to broaden the children's vocabulary by introducing new words such as *toucan* and *icebergs*. This helps children to develop their communication skills effectively and most will have a higher level of language skills than those usually expected by the end of the reception year.
68. Children enjoy sharing books. They listen attentively when the teacher reads a story, follow the text carefully in the 'big book' and respond well to questions about the words and the

characters. They learn the sounds and names of letters, and associate the letters successfully with the initial sounds of common words. During one lesson, two children used a computer program to identify objects beginning with *ch* and *w*, while another group used magnetic letters to spell out the names of animals such as *panda*, *tiger* and *snake*. They identified successfully objects beginning with *sh*, *ch* and *th*, and recognised similar endings in rhyming words such as *kind* and *find*. Most children soon recognise common letter patterns and read simple words with understanding. Most children are able to read simple books by the end of the school year, although average and lower-attaining children still need some assistance to work out unknown words. The standard of reading is generally above the standard expected nationally at this age.

69. Children are given many opportunities to develop their writing skills. They successfully trace over letters, and most can write letters accurately without assistance and copy simple words and names correctly. Most children can write their own name unaided, while average and higher-attaining children write short sentences with some assistance. Children vividly describe an adventure in the jungle or a visit to the fair. One child wrote *I can hear a lion roaring*, while another observed *the baboon jumped on the elephant's trunk*. Overall, as a result of very good teaching, levels of attainment in speaking, reading and writing are above those expected for children of their age.

Mathematical Development

70. Very good teaching ensures that children are given many opportunities to develop mathematical skills and knowledge. Children sing a range of songs and number rhymes, and most can count and write numbers from one to twenty confidently. Children enjoyed using a number line to count up to twenty in twos, and some higher-attaining children can count to twenty in twos unaided. Children begin to have some knowledge of simple mathematical vocabulary. They can estimate which items are *heavier* or *lighter* and check the accuracy of their estimates by using weighing scales. They identify *squares*, *circles* and *triangles*, and use these shapes to construct a building or a vehicle. By visiting local shops, children learn that coins are used for payment, and they can draw the coins needed to make 4p or 5p. Good use is made of large clock-faces when teaching children how to recognise *four o'clock* or *nine o'clock*, and children enjoy practising their newly found skills when playing *What time is it, Mr Wolf?* in the playground. Classroom assistants are used effectively to support groups and individuals during mathematical activities to ensure that all children are fully involved and make good progress. By the end of the reception year, the majority of children will have mastered the skills and knowledge expected for their age, and most will have higher standards.

Knowledge and Understanding of the World

71. The teacher provides many opportunities for learning within the classroom, during outdoor activities and on visits out of school, to ensure that children make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world. Observational skills are developed as children visit a local garden centre and travel by train to a clinic in Ormskirk. They draw maps of their route from home to school, showing the buildings that they pass en route. They visit a department store in Southport and learn how items are stored in the stock room before being displayed in categories. Children take gifts to the local church at harvest time, listen to a visiting farmer, and learn how to make fruit salads and Christmas cakes. Excellent use is made of several toy rabbits that are taken on holiday by parents, pupils and helpers. Postcards and photographs of the rabbits and their holiday destinations are displayed on the classroom wall. In one lesson, children talked about taking the rabbits to Scotland and to Spain, and were able to point out on a world map other places the rabbits had visited such as Argentina and Menorca. By looking at artefacts such as a head-dress brought back from Israel and a model donkey from Greece, children learn about the climate and way of life in other countries. Scientific concepts are developed as children look carefully at the life cycle of a frog. They understand that a frog begins as spawn, then develops as a tadpole before growing legs and becoming a frog. Children plant seeds, observe the growth of spring bulbs, and learn to recognise *leaves*, *roots* and *stems*. They observe a range of objects, and identify which are made of wood, plastic, metal or glass. Children learn about different religions and cultures by visiting the local church, drawing colourful Rangoli patterns, acting out the story of Rama and Sita, and celebrating

Chinese New Year. As a result of the very good teaching, most children exceed the levels expected for their age at the end of the reception year.

Physical Development

72. Children make good progress in developing physical skills as a result of very good teaching. Most children's physical development is above what is expected nationally by the end of the reception year. The teacher provides many opportunities for children to handle construction equipment, to play in sand and water trays and to use scissors, crayons and paintbrushes. Children develop good control and co-ordination, and co-operate well when working in pairs or in small groups. In a dance lesson, for example, they skipped around the hall and learnt to shake hands, cross hands and swing their partner round. Very clear instructions ensured that they made good progress in practising the sequences of a country-dance. Good emphasis on safety factors and on warming-up and cooling-down contributed to the effective teaching. Outdoors, children use large wheeled toys to negotiate their way around the playground, and keep their balance as they negotiate the chain bridge and the climbing-frame. They learn to take turns and share resources well, using the outdoor space safely and imaginatively.

Creative Development

73. There is a rich variety of opportunities to develop creative skills, and children have access to a wide range of tools and materials. They work hard, concentrate well and use the resources effectively. As a result of the very good teaching, they make good progress and achieve skills better than expected for their age when they leave the reception class. The teacher ensures that activities help to develop the main themes and topics of the lesson. They draw pictures of jaguars and snakes, using pastels, and produce paintings of cats and zebras. They produce a painting of the Eiffel Tower in the style of Seurat, using cotton wool buds to produce hundreds of paint dots. They print patterns by slicing vegetables and dipping them in paint, and draw pencil portraits of themselves and their friends. Children make models using a variety of materials. They make a collage using seeds and leaves, and make cardboard models of the shops in Ormskirk. They cut out macaws for the rainforest mural from cardboard and stick on beaks, eyes and feathers. They make snakes from different materials and cut out small orange fish to swim in the river. They use large and small construction equipment to make model houses and vehicles, and make imaginative structures, such as an enclosure for wild animals, from large wooden blocks. Very good use is made of artefacts and recorded music from Zimbabwe to introduce children to African music. Children clapped and tapped out the rhythm of *Nyangara Chena* before joining in the chorus of the song as the teacher read the story of *Nyangara the Python*.

ENGLISH

74. Standards in English are broadly in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1, and above national expectations at the end of Key Stage 2. In the National Curriculum tests for seven-year-olds, in 2000, pupils achieved standards in reading that were well above the national average and well above the average in similar schools. In writing, standards were well above the national average and above the average in similar schools. Inspection findings indicate that, by the age of seven, standards are in line with those expected nationally and pupils are making satisfactory progress. This is not as good as the test results in 2000 because there are more pupils with learning difficulties in the current Year 2. The results of the tests for 11-year-olds in 2000 placed pupils above the national average when compared with all schools and close to the national average when compared with similar schools. Inspection findings indicate that standards are also above the national average in the current Year 6. A large proportion of pupils are on course to achieve the expected level by the age of eleven, though fewer pupils than the national average are likely to achieve higher levels. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs make good progress. The school has made satisfactory progress in the subject since the previous inspection.
75. Standards in speaking and listening are above national expectations at the end of both key stages. There are good opportunities to practise the use of standard English in different

situations. Most pupils are confident speakers and readily engage in discussions during lessons. Year 1 and Year 2 pupils, for example, speak clearly and coherently as they respond enthusiastically to questions about shared stories such as 'A Dark, Dark Tale'. Teachers are successful in using many opportunities to develop and extend vocabulary and pupils are constantly engaged in relevant discussions. In Year 1, for instance, the examination of plants is used effectively to discuss rates of growth and to stimulate mathematical and scientific vocabulary. One pupil, for example, exclaimed excitedly and triumphantly, *'My plant is taller than the pot. It has grown 14 centimetres'*. Pupils listen carefully to the views and opinions of others and co-operate sensibly when working in small groups.

76. By the end of Year 6, pupils' speaking and listening skills are well developed and they achieve standards above those expected for their age. Most pupils speak fluently, lucidly and with confidence. Teachers encourage a high level of discussion, and in response, the pupils include relevant details and express their ideas clearly. Pupils are confident when entering into the protocol of discussion and debate and presenting their points of view. They listen with increasing attention, sustain longer conversations and make mature contributions to class discussions. In Year 3, pupils expressed clearly the changes that occur in their lives and recount stories they have heard. In Year 6, pupils listened attentively to the discussion on the range of non-fiction types of writing and used precise, scientific vocabulary in their response, such as *'trachea'*, *'capillaries'* and *'alveoli'*. Pupils perform publicly in school productions and assemblies and these offer valuable opportunities for them to use spoken language in more formal settings.
77. In reading, pupils' attainment is typical of most pupils by the age of seven, with some strong performances, particularly in Year 1. Attainment, at the previous inspection, was found to be particularly good at the end of the key stage. Inspection findings indicate that, while higher-attaining pupils reach standards that are above those expected nationally, there is also a significant number of pupils with special educational needs who are making good progress but have not yet reached the nationally expected standard. All pupils express an enjoyment of reading and show enthusiasm when they do so. Most pupils have developed secure strategies for working out unknown words, mostly by combining the sounds of individual letters and groups of letters. Strong home-school links and the wide range of reading activities continue to be effective and make a positive contribution to standards. The introduction of homework diaries has encouraged pupils and parents to work together to improve standards.
78. By the age of eleven, standards in reading are above the national average for the majority of pupils. Most read fluently, expressively and with confidence. Higher-attaining and average pupils infer meaning and predict outcomes from the text, but these more advanced skills are less well used by lower-attaining pupils. Most pupils have developed the ability to read in complete phrases rather than reading word by word. This demonstrates their ability to 'read' ahead and understand what they are reading about. Using the pictures and illustrations to consider what word would make sense in the context is less well developed among lower-attaining pupils. Teachers have implemented effective learning strategies, which are monitored and assessed by classroom teachers, the English co-ordinator and the headteacher. Individual targets are not set for pupils and the school is aware of the need to do this in the near future. The school library area is well used. It is small, but is attractive and generally well stocked. There are plans to relocate the library to a larger area, which would allow greater access for more pupils.
79. At Key Stage 1, standards of writing and spelling in the current Year 2 are broadly typical for their age. Handwriting has continued to improve since the previous inspection. This is because handwriting skills follow a newly introduced handwriting scheme and are taught effectively, with joined-up writing now being introduced in Year 2. Formal handwriting lessons take place outside the literacy hour to encourage correct formation and proportion of letters. The school is continuing to monitor the progress of handwriting skills to correct inconsistencies in pupil practice. Good use of the National Literacy Strategy ensures that pupils gain confidence and develop skills in a logical progression throughout the key stage. Pupils write regularly during both formal and informal activities such as literacy lessons and role-play. They write descriptively about characters of their own choice, and extend their ideas into short sentences. A Year 1 pupil, for example, wrote *'Inside a dark castle, in a dark, dark wood, was a witch with a dark cat'*. Sentences are usually punctuated with capital letters and full stops. Some higher-

attaining pupils understand the use of question marks and exclamation marks. Higher-attaining pupils are beginning to understand the distinction between fact and fiction, and use simple procedures when taking notes. Spelling is developed well throughout the key stage by concentrating on the sounds of specific groups of letters and by looking at simple word patterns.

80. By the age of eleven, pupils achieve standards in writing that are above those expected nationally. There is a clear focus on different types of writing, such as fiction, persuasive writing, play scripts and formal letter writing, and pupils analyse their characteristics and their relevant styles. In a Year 6 class, for instance, pupils were encouraged very successfully to write factual scientific reports on *'The Ozone Layer'* and *'The Respiratory System'*. The standard of handwriting continues to be satisfactory. The newly introduced handwriting scheme has not yet had sufficient time to make a significant impact on older pupils' writing. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour in lessons are very good because teachers manage pupils very well and provide relevant and interesting experiences for them. Attractive displays show a wide range of independent writing, some of which is linked successfully with other areas of the curriculum such as science, history and geography. Pupils consolidate their writing skills as they write about the tomb of Tutankhamun, for example, and recount their times in the nursery. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because their work is matched appropriately to their level of ability. This is an improvement on the previous inspection.
81. Teaching is good, overall, at both key stages, with some excellent teaching at Key Stage 1. In the best lesson, the pupils were left in no doubt as to what they were expected to do. Their learning was enhanced by extremely skilful teaching, easy access to very good literacy resources, very good organisation and effective management of the class. These factors ensured that all pupils worked very hard, were very enthusiastic and made excellent progress. In contrast, in another lesson that was no more than satisfactory, some pupils contributed enthusiastically to the lesson, but others demonstrated a lack of interest in what was being taught, because of the lack of teacher intervention at appropriate moments during the lesson. Teachers make good provision for pupils with special educational needs. Strategies to teach spelling and punctuation are well established and are taught systematically. The teaching of handwriting has improved since the previous inspection. It now has a clear, whole-school focus. Classroom assistants are used effectively to support groups of lower-attaining pupils. Marking is inconsistent. While, in many instances, work is marked regularly and extends pupils' learning, in others it lacks helpful remarks which would encourage pupils to improve their standard. The consistent and effective approach to planning and teaching is having a positive effect on pupils' learning and enhances work in phonics, spelling, vocabulary and grammar. Teachers are confident and effective in teaching literacy and provide good opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy skills in other subjects such as religious education, physical education and science.
82. The management and co-ordination of English are good. The co-ordinator has worked effectively with teachers, governors, pupils and parents to raise standards. She has analysed data from national and school-based tests to identify strengths and weaknesses in the teaching and in the quality of pupils' work. Assessment is used well to track the progress of groups of pupils and the progress of each year group. As a result, challenging but achievable targets are set to raise standards for each year group. Parents' links with the school are very good. Parents are encouraged to help in school, attend literacy workshops and drama productions, and support homework and reading activities. Reading books have been banded according to National Curriculum levels at Key Stage 1, and paired reading in Years 1 and 2 is used to stimulate pupils' interest and confidence in reading. The attractive library, though small, is well stocked and books are chosen carefully to avoid stereotypes. Resources for the subject are very good and are used well. The use of computers to support pupils' learning throughout the school is limited. Computers are used well to support spelling and reading, and to word process finished items, but pupils are not always able to draft work directly onto the screen, or edit and redraft work before completion.

MATHEMATICS

83. Standards are in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and above national expectations at the end of Key Stage 2. In the National Curriculum tests for seven-year-olds in 2000, standards were well above the national average. Standards were also well above average in comparison with similar schools. The results of the tests for 11-year-olds in 2000 were in line with the national average but below average when compared with similar schools. Inspection findings indicate that standards in the current Year 2 are broadly in line with national expectations, with fewer pupils than usual gaining above-average grades. This is not as good as last year because there are considerably more pupils in this year group who have learning difficulties. Over the previous three years, both boys and girls performed above national expectations in the Key Stage 1 tests. Inspection findings indicate that standards in the current Year 6 are better than last year, with many pupils achieving standards above national expectations. This is because three pupils with special educational needs joined the school last year at the beginning of Year 6 and their standards were lower than most of the other pupils in the year group. Overall, pupils at both key stages, including those with special educational needs, are making at least satisfactory and often good progress. Over the last three years attainment has improved faster than the national upward trend at Key Stage 1, and broadly in line with national trends at Key Stage 2. This is because of good teaching across both key stages.
84. At Key Stage 1, the implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy is having a positive impact on standards. In a Year 1 lesson, for example, the teacher made excellent use of number fans to develop pupils' skills in adding and subtracting numbers within 10. The lesson was delivered at a brisk pace and the majority of pupils identified missing numbers to 20 with ease as the teacher made good use of a game activity to increase their mental agility. Higher-attaining pupils recognised and drew *o'clock* and *half past* times on analogue clock-faces and demonstrated very good problem-solving skills by answering questions such as *What was the time 7 hours before 2 o'clock?* Frequent practice during mental mathematics sessions ensures that most pupils in Year 2 can identify tens and units accurately and some higher-attaining pupils can identify hundreds, tens and units. Most pupils are gaining confidence in the use of the two, ten and five times tables to work out multiplication problems. They use practical methods to identify and recognise simple fractions like a quarter, a half and three-quarters. Higher-attaining pupils, for example, cut triangles and squares out of paper and experimented by folding the shapes in a variety of ways to make fractions such as $1/8^{\text{th}}$ and $1/16^{\text{th}}$.
85. At Key Stage 2, frequent use of quick-fire questions by teachers encourages pupils to make mental calculations rapidly in their heads. In a Year 4 lesson, for instance, good use was made of *true* or *false* cards to assess pupils answers to questions involving addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. Pupils used quick recall of multiplication facts to solve division problems involving the five and the eight times tables. Good use was made of TV programme listings to work out the answers to questions like *How much have I missed if a programme starts at 10.45 pm and I turn it on at 11.15 pm?* There is a growing emphasis on using practical methods and problem-solving techniques. Pupils in Year 3, for example, chose a fraction such as $1/4^{\text{th}}$ or $1/8^{\text{th}}$ by rolling a die and then coloured in the appropriate number of squares on a piece of paper divided into $1/16^{\text{th}}$ s. Pupils in Year 5 estimated and then measured smaller and larger amounts of water in millilitres, while in a Year 6 lesson, pupils matched fractions with their decimal and percentage equivalents.
86. The quality of teaching is consistently good at both key stages and pupils make good progress as a result. There have been considerable improvements since the previous inspection. The successful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy ensures that pupils learn mathematical skills in a logical progression. Teachers' lesson planning now indicates what pupils of differing abilities should achieve and which resources will be used to support them. On-going assessments are used effectively to match work closely to the needs of individual pupils and additional extension work is provided for higher-attaining pupils who complete exercises more quickly. Lessons have clear learning objectives and most teachers share the objectives of the lesson with pupils at the beginning of the session. This helps pupils to focus on what they are to learn. As a result, pupils have very positive attitudes and most concentrate well. They listen carefully to their teachers during mental mathematics sessions and are keen to answer questions. They are well behaved and co-operate well when working in pairs or in

small groups. Relationships between pupils and teachers are very good, and this ensures that pupils work hard and do their best. Occasionally, teachers forget to ask pupils to explain their calculations and share different problem-solving strategies, and this limits their learning.

87. Pupils with special educational needs are given appropriate assistance and make good progress towards the targets in their Individual Education Plans. Support staff are well briefed on the main learning objectives of lessons to ensure that help is well focused. During whole-class activities, support assistants are sometimes left unoccupied and are not always used efficiently to prepare resources or to monitor pupils' progress. Teachers set homework regularly and use it well to consolidate work begun in lessons.
88. The subject co-ordinator provides good leadership in the subject. Monitoring of the subject has improved since the previous inspection as the co-ordinator now scrutinises pupils' work, reviews teachers' lesson planning and observes teaching across the school. This has had a beneficial effect on raising standards. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are secure, but are not used for setting targets for individual pupils. Teachers' marking is inconsistent. The best marking helps pupils to move ahead, but comments do not always tell pupils how they can improve their attainment. Resources are good and are generally used well to assist pupils' learning. However, there is insufficient use of appropriate ICT software to consolidate and support learning during lessons.

SCIENCE

89. Standards in science are above those expected for seven-year-olds and in line with standards expected for 11-year-olds. This is broadly similar to the standards reported at the previous inspection. In the teacher assessments for seven-year-olds, in 2000, standards were well above the national average, while standards were below the national average for 11-year-olds. In comparison with similar schools, standards were well above average for seven-year-olds and well below average for 11-year-olds. Inspection findings indicate that the discrepancy in standards is due largely to the number of children with special educational needs in different year groups. Standards for seven-year-olds are lower than last year because there are far more children with special educational needs in the current Year 2. Standards in the current Year 6 are higher than last year as three pupils with special educational needs joined the school last year at the beginning of Year 6. There are no significant differences between the attainment of boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress at Key Stage 1 and satisfactory progress at Key Stage 2.
90. The quality of teaching is good, overall, at both key stages, and some teaching is very good. This has helped to maintain or improve standards, particularly where teachers have a high level of expertise that inspires pupils to make good progress. Pupils conduct investigations quietly and sensibly, matching the expectations of their teachers and are thoroughly absorbed in what they are doing and learning. Teachers encourage a scientific approach from an early age. In a Year 1 lesson, pupils observed beans and sunflowers they had planted previously in controlled conditions. Pupils were fascinated to see that the plants deprived of water and sunlight had withered and died, while plants receiving plenty of water and light were strong and healthy. Pupils in Year 2 set up their own investigations to see how far a toy car would travel down a ramp inclined at different angles. After pupils had made their predictions, they measured the distance the car had travelled and tested whether their predictions were true. Good use of questioning by the teacher encouraged pupils to explain why certain cars had travelled further.
91. Teachers stress the importance of investigative and experimental science at both key stages. In a Year 4 lesson, for instance, the teacher made effective use of a planning board to encourage pupils to see which variables could be altered to affect the brightness of a bulb when constructing a circuit. Pupils predicted the effect of altering the number of batteries, and then worked sensibly in groups, carrying out a fair test to observe whether their predictions were true. Older pupils are encouraged to use their investigations as a springboard for further research. Pupils in a Year 6 lesson, for example, carried out an investigation to compare the efficiency of the fermentation process when different amounts of sugar were mixed with the

same amount of yeast. They predicted the outcome of their investigations and showed an understanding of the need for careful observation. Pupils recorded their work in a scientific manner using diagrams and tables, and explained clearly how they had ensured a fair test. Pupils then related their investigation to the effect of alcohol on the liver and to the dangers of alcohol abuse. This was a good use of an interesting investigation that pupils thoroughly enjoyed, and they learned effectively from it.

92. The subject is led well by the co-ordinator, who has raised the profile of science in the school curriculum. The adoption of a scheme of work based on national guidelines has helped to raise standards in the subject, and recent improvements in resources have provided the necessary equipment for carrying out regular investigations. The co-ordinator monitors teachers' planning and pupils' work, but has not yet had the opportunity to observe colleagues teaching in order to raise standards further. Resources are now generally adequate, but there is a need for more information books for pupils to follow up their own research, and insufficient computer software prevents teachers from developing the possibilities of using ICT in science. In the Year 6 lesson on fermentation, for example, pupils did not use the computers to plot the results from their investigations or use CD-ROMs or the Internet to discover more about the fermentation process or the effects of alcohol abuse. This limits the progress pupils make in using ICT to support and extend their learning in science. There is some limited assessment of pupils' progress at the end of each topic, but specific skills are not checked in sufficient detail to ensure that future work is tailored to meet the needs of pupils of different abilities. Very good use is made of a wide range of visits, for example, to the Manchester Museum of Science and Technology, to the Catalyst Museum, to the Formby nature reserve to examine mini-beasts in different habitats and to Jodrell Bank to develop pupils' individual research on their space projects.

ART AND DESIGN

93. Standards in art and design are above those expected nationally at the end of both key stages. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection.
94. At Key Stage 1, pupils are given many opportunities to explore colour, pattern, texture, line and tone, and to combine and organise them for different purposes. Observational drawing and sketching form the foundation of pupils' two-dimensional work. They experience a range of media and apply colour in pastels, chalk, paint and crayon. They produce still-life drawings of what they see, remember and imagine. Pupils' sketches of abstract drawings from the observation of bicycle parts in Year 2, and pupils' work on shells in Year 1, show an eye for detail and a developing use of light and dark shading. Pupils paint self-portraits, print patterns and create attractive collages of living things they have seen during visits to Formby nature reserve. They have opportunities to study and recreate the style of famous artists such as Modigliani and Warhol. Pupils develop their modelling skills well as they learn new techniques, and use a variety of materials to fashion tiles and diva pots and decorate them with vibrant colours. Computer-generated artwork, used to produce spiral shell patterns, demonstrates pupils' skills in selecting a range of colours and controlling their application.
95. By Year 6, pupils express their own ideas and interpretations with increasing confidence and sophistication. Techniques in drawing, painting, printmaking, collage, sculpture and textiles develop well. Pupils examine body gesture, movement and facial expressions through the examination of different artists' work and techniques. Year 6 pupils, for example, successfully recreated pictures in the style of Lowry and produced well-executed clay models of buildings in the industrial North. Pupils in Year 4 study the work of traditionalist artists such as Turner, while pupils in Year 6 compare these works with the freer style of the Impressionists, such as Monet. There are effective cross-curricular links with other subjects, such as history and geography. Pupils in Year 4 make Egyptian death masks, linking their work successfully to their historical studies of ancient Egypt. Pupils in Year 3 design pictures and create high quality collages, replicating the patterns and textures found in the lush, tropical rainforests of St Lucia, studied in geography.

96. The standard of teaching is good at both key stages. As a result, the quality of the artwork on display in the hall and around the school is above national expectations. Good use is made of careful planning to develop pupils' ideas over a series of lessons. In Year 6, for example, pupils drew on previous knowledge to compare the work of L. S. Lowry with that of the Impressionists, such as Monet. Well-organised lessons and very good use of resources to stimulate pupils' imagination are strengths of the teaching.
97. The co-ordinator provides enthusiastic leadership of the subject. She has attended a number of courses and has disseminated the information gained to other staff. The art policy has been updated, and a new scheme of work, based on national guidelines, has been introduced successfully. Art is used well to support learning in other areas of the curriculum. The use of sketchbooks provides a valuable contribution to the development of ideas, knowledge and understanding. However, this good practice is not consistent in quality throughout the school. Monitoring and evaluation of teachers' planning takes place informally, but there has been no monitoring and evaluation of teaching to improve standards. There is no formal assessment of pupils' skills and no samples of assessed work to help teachers judge the standard of pupils' work. This makes it more difficult for teachers to base lessons on the skills that individual pupils need to develop. Resources are good, overall, are accessible and are used well.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

98. Standards in design and technology are in line with those expected nationally at the end of both key stages. Only one lesson was observed, as design and technology is taught in a block of lessons each term and few lessons were being taught during the inspection. While insufficient teaching was observed to make an overall judgement, teaching in the lesson observed at Key Stage 2 was good. Photographs, displays and examples of pupils' work indicate that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make sound progress. Standards at Key Stage 1 are similar to those at the previous inspection; but standards have improved at Key Stage 2, where they were found to be unsatisfactory. This is because all pupils now have opportunities to use the design process, evaluate their work as it develops, draw alternatives and make choices between them. Pupils in Year 4, for example, were challenged to make an illuminated sign depicting their own name. They considered the possible problems and various solutions. They then designed their own signs, drilled the holes in the front, made a switch and connected it to the outside of the frame. After an unsuccessful attempt at making a circuit and fixing it inside, they re-evaluated the possibilities and decided on a better solution.
99. At Key Stage 1, pupils use models, pictures and words to describe their designs. They develop skills and techniques in handling paper, card and malleable materials, and learn to cut, shape, join and combine materials to make models such as houses and hand puppets. They cut out components accurately, with the aid of templates, and join them with split pins, staples, glue and thread. Pupils develop ways to introduce movement, such as simple levers, and use large construction apparatus to make moving vehicles, such as cars, with axles and wheels fixed to a simple chassis. Annotated design books and classroom displays illustrate how pupils in Year 2 identify the strengths and weaknesses of their own designs and evaluate the finished products by seeing how well they fit the original design. There is less evidence, however, of pupils using computer-generated designs.
100. Pupils at Key Stage 2 build on the knowledge and skills acquired at Key Stage 1. They have a sound knowledge of the design and construction process. Pupils use sketchbooks well and plan, design and evaluate their work carefully. In a Year 3 lesson, for example, pupils learned the importance of hygiene in food preparation and used tools safely and effectively as they assembled sandwiches competently for a summer picnic, using fillings of their own choice. Pupils decide which materials they will need and critically assess their work to see how they can improve their designs. Pupils in Year 3, for instance, design and make boxes to given specifications, while pupils in Year 4 build model chairs from wood. Pupils learn about fabric construction, decorating techniques and appliqué and use advanced joining techniques, such as running stitch and backstitch when making slippers. Pupils in Year 6 design and make controllable toys, using switches and motors.

101. Leadership of the subject is satisfactory. There is an effective scheme of work that has addressed the criticism of the previous inspection report. This gives detailed guidance on the skills and techniques that pupils need to know. Teachers' planning is monitored by the co-ordinator and supports learning effectively in other areas of the curriculum. There has been no opportunity, however, for the co-ordinator to observe and evaluate lessons in order to improve classroom practice. There is no formal assessment of pupils' skills and no samples of assessed work to help teachers judge the standard of pupils' work. This makes it difficult for teachers to know which skills individual pupils need to develop. Overall, resources are satisfactory and are supplemented with relevant equipment as new units of work are taught.

GEOGRAPHY

102. Standards are broadly in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1. There is insufficient teaching of geography at Key Stage 2, particularly in Year 6, and, as a result, standards are below those expected nationally. This is not as good as at the previous inspection when standards were in line with national expectations at both key stages.
103. Although there is insufficient teaching of geography to older pupils, there have, nevertheless, been some improvements in the overall quality of teaching. Teachers' planning has benefited greatly from the introduction this year of a good scheme of work based on national guidelines and adapted to meet the needs of the school and its locality. As a result, pupils now learn systematically, step by step. Because of good teaching at Key Stage 1, they progress from drawing a simple map of their route to school in Year 1 to a more detailed map showing features such as farms and a village on a Scottish island in Year 2. At Key Stage 2, teaching is satisfactory, overall. Pupils extend their knowledge to other parts of the world, comparing their own locality with the Caribbean island of St Lucia in Year 3, and with an Indian village in Year 4. Too much reliance on worksheets in Year 5, however, limits the development of pupils' individual research skills, and in Year 6 there is very little opportunity for pupils to develop their geographical understanding further.
104. At Key Stage 1, pupils develop a sound knowledge of their own locality and compare some of its features with more distant places. Pupils use the area around the school to study types of housing and to develop mapping skills. They compare natural physical features such as mountains and trees with man-made features such as farms and houses. They conduct a survey of their favourite holiday locations, and contrast the characteristics of hot and cold climates. In a Year 1 lesson, for instance, pupils enjoyed choosing suitable clothes for *Barnaby Bear* to take on a beach holiday in Spain and for a skiing holiday in Norway. The teacher ensured that the work was suitably challenging for pupils of different abilities. Higher-attaining pupils, for example, excitedly wrote packing lists for two contrasting locations chosen by themselves from holiday brochures, while lower-attaining pupils worked hard cutting out pictures of hot and cold climates to stick into *Barnaby's* suitcase.
105. At Key Stage 2, pupils contrast life in Britain with life in developing countries. Pupils in Year 3, for example, carry out research on a country of their own choice such as Egypt. Pupils in Year 4 study life in an Indian village and contrast local farming and settlements with those found in Britain. In Year 5, pupils study the development of rivers and contrast the growth of Southport as a tourist resort with more recent developments in Barcelona. In a Year 5 lesson, pupils were very keen to conduct their own research from secondary sources, such as holiday brochures and foreign recipe books, and co-operated well when planning a holiday to a European destination.
106. A strength of the teaching is the emphasis placed on practical investigations, especially at Key Stage 1. Teachers of even the youngest pupils place a strong emphasis on fieldwork and begin to build up a good geographical vocabulary topic by topic. Pupils in Year 1, for instance, walk round the local area and discuss which features are attractive and unattractive. Pupils in Year 2 use holiday brochures to extract information about seaside resorts and share information on the places they have visited themselves. In Year 3, pupils draw a plan of their own bedroom. By the time pupils reach Year 4 they have a good knowledge of the local

environment and compare this with photographs of Chembakolli village in India. In Years 5 and 6, however, there is insufficient use of the local area when studying topics such as river development and environmental change.

107. The role of the co-ordinator has not yet been developed sufficiently. At present, there is insufficient monitoring of teaching, lesson planning and pupils' work to ensure that standards are high enough in all year groups. Resources are unsatisfactory and are stored in a cupboard with only limited access. There are few posters, videos, maps and artefacts to assist the teaching of the new scheme of work, and pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to use computers to assist their learning. There is some general assessment of pupils' attainment at the end of each topic, but there is no list of appropriate skills against which teachers can check pupils' progress and ensure that future work meets the needs of individual pupils.

HISTORY

108. Standards are above those expected nationally at both key stages. This is similar to the standards reported at the previous inspection.
109. At Key Stage 1, there is a good emphasis on using primary and secondary sources of information, such as photographs and diaries. In a Year 2 lesson, for example, pupils compared photographs of seaside resorts during Victorian times with the present day. They looked at photographs and pictures of war memorials when discussing the origins of Remembrance Day, read about the lives of famous people such as Florence Nightingale, and imagined what it was like to live in the past. They used eyewitness accounts, such as the diary of Samuel Pepys, to re-live the Great Fire of London, and wrote their own personal diaries of what it was like to be involved in this disaster.
110. At Key Stage 2, the emphasis on practical and investigative work makes history enjoyable. Pupils in Year 4, for example, tried to understand how ancient Egyptians used hieroglyphic writing to record events. They wrote their own name in hieroglyphics and enjoyed trying to read the names of their friends. Older pupils discussed what it was like to be an evacuee during the Second World War, and compared transport and technology in post-war Britain with the present day. Pupils in Year 6 carried out their own historical investigations. They used primary and secondary sources to find out as much as they could about John Lennon, how he became famous and what happened after the Beatles. In doing so, they discovered facts and opinions about fashion, design and culture in the 1960s and 1970s. Good use was made of a visit to *The Beatles Story* and pupils used the Internet effectively as a major reference source to gather further information.
111. Teaching is good at both key stages. Teachers use a wide variety of resources to stimulate learning. In a Year 4 lesson, for instance, some pupils worked out how to write their names in Egyptian hieroglyphics while others explored information about the Egyptian civilization on a CD-ROM. Teachers use a wide range of approaches to make lessons interesting and consequently, pupils are keen to learn. They use a good range of educational visits to enrich the curriculum, including visits to Rufford Old Hall, Roman Ribchester, and a Liverpool museum to look at Greek artefacts. Good use is made of visitors who give 'real life' accounts of what it was like to have lived through major events such as the Second World War. In a Year 1 lesson, for example, a guest speaker used black and white photographs to show what people wore over 50 years ago and discussed the problems of going on holiday when war broke out. This stimulating experience sustained the pupils' interest well and helped to develop their listening skills. As pupils get older, teachers build on their ability to discover and interpret information for themselves. In Year 4, for instance, pupils are given a homework project on ancient Egypt. Pupils use a wide variety of secondary sources, including newspapers, CD-ROMS, the Internet and reference books, and many produce work of a very high quality.
112. The good quality of leadership in the subject gives the school the capacity to raise standards further. The co-ordinator has established very good links with the local authority adviser, and

this ensures that the school is well informed of recent developments in the subject. The co-ordinator has worked hard to establish a wide range of good quality resources, including computer software to support learning. Current monitoring of the subject, however, lacks rigour. The co-ordinator is aware of the need for more detailed assessment procedures to track pupils' progress and is currently reviewing which skill-based checklist would be best for the school. Teachers' marking is conscientious but rarely tells pupils what they need to do to achieve better results. The subject makes an effective contribution to pupils' social and cultural development.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

113. Standards in ICT have improved since the previous inspection and are now broadly in line with national expectations at both key stages.
114. At Key Stage 1, pupils search encyclopaedic CD-ROMs to discover information. They are taught how to use menus and indexes to find out information on a given topic. Pupils learn how to hold down the mouse for scrolling information. They invent questions such as *Does your house have a chimney, a garden, central heating, or a satellite dish?* to find out information from databases. Pupils increase their word processing skills by learning how to use the space bar to create a space and the backspace key to correct mistakes. Pupils enjoy developing their graphics skills by creating spiral shell pictures using a paint program.
115. At Key Stage 2, older pupils develop independent research skills by using the Internet to gather and interpret information. They gain good expertise in copying images and text from web pages, and paste these accurately into word processing packages. They are beginning to understand how a *favourites* list is compiled and can use a search engine to access information quickly. Most pupils can locate a particular web site quickly by entering the correct address. Pupils learn how to use e-mail and are exploring how to put web pages on to a web site. They study spreadsheet modelling and work out the perimeter and area of a rectangle by using a spreadsheet. They can copy formulae from one cell to another. Pupils develop their desktop publishing skills by designing multi-media presentations linked to their topic work involving sound bites and graphic images.
116. There is insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement on the standard of teaching as only two lessons were observed, and both involved the same teacher supporting a small group of pupils in Year 2. In these lessons, however, the quality of teaching ranged from satisfactory to good. Overall, pupils made satisfactory progress, but several pupils needed individual help to enable them to phrase questions correctly to search a simple database. The teacher had high expectations of what all the pupils should achieve by the end of the lesson, and as a result, the pupils had a very good attitude towards the subject and were eager learners. Teaching in the subject has benefited from the adoption of a new scheme of work based on national guidelines. Teachers' planning indicates that pupils are now covering appropriate work that develops pupils' skills in a variety of areas such as data-handling and the use of spreadsheets. While there is some good use of ICT to aid research in history lessons and pupils use word processing skills in English, there is insufficient use of computers to aid teaching and learning in most other subjects of the curriculum.
117. The subject is well led, and the co-ordinator has a good grasp of what needs to be done to raise standards. She has produced a sound development plan and recognises the need to establish e-mail links with other schools and to improve resources that enable pupils to create sequences of instructions to make things happen. Although she has introduced successfully a scheme of work based on nationally agreed guidelines, the system for assessing pupils' attainment is insecure and there is currently no skills-based checklist to monitor pupils' progress. Teachers mark pupils' work conscientiously, but comments rarely tell pupils what they need to do to improve. Resources have been developed well. All the school's computers are now networked and older pupils regularly use the Internet for topic-based research in history. There is a computer suite containing ten computers and each classroom has two stand-alone machines. In addition, the school has purchased data-logging software that will shortly enable pupils to measure changes in temperature, sound and light conditions. The

school has also acquired a digital camera, a video camera and a computerised microscope that will give pupils the opportunity to record single picture frames as well as moving pictures. Generally, there is a good range of resources, but there are no devices such as concept keyboards or touch-screens that would enable pupils with learning difficulties to have better access to the curriculum. All teachers continue to develop their ICT skills and have recently completed the first module of a National Grid for Learning training course.

MUSIC

118. Standards are in line with those expected nationally at the end of both key stages. This is similar to standards at the time of the previous inspection. By the time they leave school, pupils have been introduced to a variety of musical styles, and their own compositions are beginning to convey a range of different moods and textures.
119. Insufficient teaching was seen to make a judgement on the overall quality, but teaching in the lesson seen was good. Teachers plan work carefully and lessons have appropriate learning objectives. Teachers' planning has benefited from the introduction of a new scheme of work based on national guidelines. As a result, planning is now co-ordinated across the school, and pupils learn musical skills in a logical progression. Teachers make good use of correct musical terms and introduce a variety of activities and resources to gain pupils' interest. In Year 6, for example, pupils discuss the lyrics in a variety of songs and then write their own lyrics for a song about football. Pupils develop their musical appreciation effectively by listening to a range of music from different countries. They understand how changes in musical elements, such as tempo, texture and dynamics create different moods in a piece of music. Pupils in Year 2, for instance, invent their own symbols to show when the music gets louder or faster, while pupils in Year 6 listen to a variety of music by British, Spanish and Austrian composers. They discuss the effects of using different instruments and describe the atmosphere portrayed in pieces such as the *William Tell Overture* and the *Ritual Fire Dance*.
120. There is a strong emphasis on composing and performing, and pupils are keen to create a range of moods by using different instruments, rhythms and textures. Pupils in Year 5, for instance, listen to *Mars, Mercury* and *Neptune* from Holst's *Planets Suite*, and then compose their own piece representing a journey into space. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils concentrated well when clapping out a sequence of rhythms they had created during the previous lesson, and then chose suitable percussion instruments to compose a piece representing a storm. This emphasis on practical activities helps to maintain pupils' interest and concentration. As a result, pupils enjoy music lessons and have good attitudes to music.
121. Pupils listen to a variety of music when entering and leaving school assemblies and opportunities are sometimes taken to discuss the composer and the mood conveyed by the music. Pupils sing a variety of hymns and modern songs during collective worship. They sing tunefully, with reasonably clear diction and maintain the pitch and rhythm well. Each week, a hymn practice is usually held to encourage a higher standard of singing.
122. The subject is led by an experienced co-ordinator who is maintaining satisfactory standards. The role of the co-ordinator has not yet been developed sufficiently, however, as there is insufficient monitoring and evaluation of teaching and lesson planning to enable the co-ordinator to raise standards further throughout the school. In addition, there is not enough assessment of pupils' musical skills to ensure that future work meets the specific needs of each pupil. The school has a satisfactory number of percussion instruments and a broad selection of recorded music, though some of the instruments need replacing, and there is an insufficient range of instruments from different countries around the world. Pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to use ICT to assist their learning. A good number of pupils receive guitar, flute, clarinet and keyboard lessons and many pupils learn to play the recorder. There is a flourishing school choir, which practices regularly during the autumn and spring terms, and pupils enjoy taking part in singing for the Christmas production. They also sing and dance in the spring term drama production and play their recorders regularly during school assemblies. Pupils enjoy performing at a music festival, organised by the school, in which other local schools also take part. Older pupils go to an annual concert performed by the Royal Liverpool

Philharmonic Orchestra and a musician visits the school each year to demonstrate a variety of instruments to the pupils.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

123. During the inspection, three games lessons and one athletics lesson were observed, but no dance or gymnastics was seen. In games and athletics, standards have improved since the last inspection and are now above those expected nationally at both key stages. The majority of pupils make good progress in swimming, and most pupils gain their 25 metres award by the end of Year 4.
124. At Key Stage 1, pupils explore basic skills in dance, gymnastics and games. In a Year 1 lesson, for example, pupils developed their hand and eye co-ordination by practising catching and batting. They hit a ball thrown by a partner at different levels and gradually increased the distance they hit the ball. Pupils show respect for the equipment they use and are encouraged to pay attention to safety rules. In Year 2, pupils develop their basic skills by playing team games that involve making simple choices on how to use space and avoid opponents. They develop their skills to determine how they can outwit the opposition. Classroom support staff are used effectively during lessons to ensure that pupils with special educational needs are included in all activities.
125. Pupils continue to develop and build on their existing skills at Key Stage 2. They understand the need to warm up their bodies before taking part in strenuous exercise. They develop the skills of throwing, catching and aiming, working well within small groups, and participate in games related to cricket. Pupils in Year 6, for example, made good progress in throwing and catching skills because the correct techniques were demonstrated effectively by their teacher. They were able to catch using a downward cradle technique when standing still and on the move. In a Year 3 lesson, led by a visiting tennis coach, pupils demonstrated good co-ordination skills by being able to execute a downward volley on the move. They learnt some of the rules of tennis, developed their scoring skills and worked co-operatively and sensibly with a partner when practising individual skills. In Year 4, pupils investigated different techniques associated with running fast. They participated in appropriate warm-up activities and ran short distances with their legs straight and their arms behind their back. They enjoyed trying out different ways of running and soon begin to realise the importance of legs and arms in the technique of power sprinting. They tried to improve on their original sprint times by learning from their own efforts and listened carefully to the teacher's suggestions. Behaviour in lessons is good and is often very good. Relationships between pupils are very good and as a result, pupils are able to participate in exciting and challenging activities without feeling that someone might evaluate their performance in a negative way.
126. The quality of teaching is good at both key stages. The best lessons move along at a good pace, activities are demonstrated effectively and lessons are planned to include appropriate warming-up and cooling-down activities. Teachers manage pupils and activities very well, thereby promoting good behaviour and attitudes. All teachers dress appropriately for lessons, providing pupils with a good role model, and stress the aspects of safety that pupils need to consider during lessons. Pupils respond quickly to teachers' instructions and work together well.
127. The subject is well managed by an enthusiastic co-ordinator who is keen to develop the subject further. Recent initiatives have included the revision of the physical education curriculum and the introduction of a new scheme of work based on national guidelines. Assessment of pupils' skills is insecure, however, as there are no skill-based checklists to monitor pupils' progress at both key stages. In addition, there are some aspects of the co-ordinator's role that have not been developed sufficiently. The co-ordinator has had insufficient time, for example, to monitor the effectiveness of teaching. The school's physical education policy requires updating to make appropriate links with other subject areas, including ICT. Although, resources are generally satisfactory and are used well, the storage of large equipment is unsatisfactory. The school recognises this, and there are plans to improve the storage when more appropriate facilities become available. Some small equipment also needs supplementing. In a Year 1

lesson, for instance, there were insufficient quantities of appropriate bats and balls. There is a satisfactory range of extra-curricular sporting activities, and the school offers older pupils the opportunity to take part in an annual residential visit to develop outdoor and adventurous activities. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' personal and social development.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

128. Pupils achieve standards that are broadly in line with the recommendations of the locally agreed syllabus at the end of both key stages. Standards are similar to those at the previous inspection. The school develops pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity and several other world faiths, including Judaism and Hinduism at Key Stage 1 and Sikhism and Buddhism at Key Stage 2. Pupils also develop their own personal response to issues by reflecting on their own feelings, values and experiences and by researching into different biblical accounts of the gospels.
129. The quality of teaching is good, overall, as at the previous inspection. Teachers' knowledge of the subject has improved, however, and all the lessons seen were carefully planned and prepared for pupils of different abilities. By the age of eleven, most pupils have acquired a reasonable knowledge and understanding of the major world religions and the major events in the Christian church's calendar. In successful lessons, such as a Year 3 lesson on the conversion of Paul on the road to Damascus, there is a good balance of teacher exposition and appropriate activities for pupils. Pupils located relevant passages in The Bible, for example, and recounted their findings successfully to others in the class. Mutual respect and skilful questioning by teachers allow pupils to share their own experiences, such as in the high quality discussion by pupils in Year 4 on the cyclical nature of the Christian church's calendar. However, there are aspects of their learning where pupils show less certainty. The teacher's questioning of pupils in Year 2, for example, revealed that few pupils were able to recall the symbolism of the artefacts on the Hindu puja tray and recollection of the procedures involved in Hindu prayer rituals required much prompting by the teacher.
130. At Key Stage 1, much of the work is oral. This is appropriate for pupils of this age because they gain much from talking, discussing and listening. Pupils begin to develop their own faith through exploring their own feelings and those of others in relationship to friendship, new beginnings and giving. They learn about special occasions in Christianity, such as Christmas and Easter, and events such as baptism. They reinforce this knowledge by regular visits to the local church and by listening to speakers such as the church youth worker and his wife. At Key Stage 2, sound progress is made as Christianity and other major faiths are studied in more depth. Pupils extend their knowledge and understanding of these faiths and at the same time refine their own beliefs and value systems. Opportunities are provided for quiet reflection by the introduction of 'Circle Time', and the school's acts of corporate worship are linked appropriately to the religious education themes being studied.
131. The co-ordination of the subject continues to be satisfactory. There is an enthusiastic co-ordinator who has clear ideas about how to develop the subject further. The school is awaiting the arrival of the revised Lancashire Agreed Syllabus before reviewing its scheme of work. This will enable the school to plan clearly and to audit its resources for religious education. There is no formal assessment of pupils' skills at present, and there are no samples of assessed work to help teachers judge the standard of pupils' work. Monitoring of pupils' work is done through the scrutiny of teachers' planning, but the co-ordinator has not yet been given time to improve standards by observing and evaluating teaching and learning. The school makes good use of the local church for Christian celebrations such as Christmas and Easter, but there have been no recent visits to other places of worship, and no visits from members of other major faiths to enhance the work done in school. Resources are adequate, overall, but the school intends to make further purchases of artefacts to cover all the religions studied. Bibles are well used and many are in need of replacement.

FRENCH

132. Since January 2001, all pupils in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 have taken part in an hourly French lesson each week. Each year group is taught by the same teacher, and this ensures a consistent approach to the subject.
133. All pupils, including those with special needs, make good progress. They develop their listening and speaking skills well, and many pupils in all year groups hold simple conversations fluently in French. They ask the name of their partner, their age and their date of birth, and reply accurately in French. They enquire about other members of the family, and reply with details of their parents and their brothers and sisters. Pupils are starting to recognise simple words and phrases written in French, and are beginning to appreciate some of the cultural differences in the French way of life.
134. The quality of teaching is good. The teacher displays a good knowledge of basic grammar and vocabulary, and has the expertise required to hold conversations confidently in French. Lessons are well planned, and the teacher makes good use of videos, songs and an interesting variety of games. In a Year 4 lesson, for example, pupils sang *Frère Jacques* enthusiastically as a round in two parts, watched a video programme about *Madame Mimi*, played *lotto* to revise the parts of the body, and finished with a game of *éliminez* to reinforce the learning of numbers. The teacher's expectations are high. Work is suitably challenging for all year groups, and all pupils are expected to converse confidently.
135. The approach is predominantly oral, and this enables all pupils, including those with special educational needs, to make good progress. As a result, pupils enjoy French lessons. They concentrate very well on learning new vocabulary, and converse sensibly. They are keen to speak in French, and are proud to display their newly acquired communication skills. Pupils behave very well and show respect for the attempts of other pupils to converse in French. Good use is made of soft toys and frequent questioning to re-inforce the learning of simple vocabulary. In a Year 3 lesson, for instance, pupils were asked *Qu'est-ce que c'est dans la sac?* and replied correctly *C'est un chat* and *C'est un oiseau*. The pupils then used the soft toys to identify *les yeux*, *le bec* and *la tête*, and sung *Allouette* to reinforce their learning. Pupils are managed well, and the brisk pace to lessons, with frequent changes of activity, helps to retain pupils' interest.
136. The co-ordinator provides enthusiastic leadership of the subject. She plans each lesson carefully and evaluates the progress of pupils informally, although she has not yet introduced any formal assessment of pupils' skills. There is, currently, no policy document, but the scheme of work, based on national guidelines, ensures that pupils develop skills in a logical progression. The co-ordinator has worked hard to build up the resources to provide a variety of interesting activities. Attractive displays of words, pictures and photographs - labelled in French - help pupils to recognise the meaning of simple words and phrases. Arrangements have been made for pupils in Year 6 to write simple letters to pen friends in France, and there are plans to establish e-mail and other links with a French school.