

# INSPECTION REPORT

**ST MICHAEL'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL**

LIVERPOOL

LEA area: Liverpool

Unique reference number: 104656

Headteacher: Mr A Hegarty

Reporting inspector: Mr D S Roberts  
1743

Dates of inspection: 18th – 22nd September 2000

Inspection number: 224672

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior School

School category: Voluntary Aided

Age range of pupils: 3 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Guion Street  
Liverpool

Postcode: L6 9DU

Telephone number: 0151 263 8460

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr J A Walsh

Date of previous inspection: 1<sup>st</sup> July 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr D Roberts	Registered inspector	English	What sort of school is it?
		Information and communication technology	What should the school do to improve further?
		Art and design	School's results and achievements
		Design and technology	How well are pupils taught?
			How well is the school led and managed?
Mrs F Kennedy	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values, personal development
			How well does the school care for its pupils?
			How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Mr B Frost	Team inspector	Mathematics	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
		Physical Education	
		Foundation stage	
Mr A Watson	Team inspector	Equal opportunities	
		Special educational needs	
		English as an additional language	
		Music	
Mrs S Power	Team inspector	Science	
		Geography	
		History	

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Alexandra House  
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London WC2B 6SE

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

This is a larger than average size primary school for boys and girls from three to eleven years old. The school provides full-time education for 336 pupils, and part-time education for a further 60 pupils in the nursery. Over 60 per cent of pupils are entitled to receive free school meals. This is well above the national average. The pupils' attainment on entry to the nursery is generally very low compared with that found nationally. Currently, 30 per cent of the pupils are on the register for special educational needs. This is well above the national average. There are 17 pupils at stages three to five, most of whom have moderate learning difficulties, and there are individual needs for dyslexia, emotional and behavioural problems and autism. Over four per cent of pupils are from ethnic minority families, including nine for whom English is an additional language, which is higher than the national average.

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

St Michael's is an improving school which offers a high level of support for pupils' personal development and provides them with a good level of care and guidance. The teaching is generally of good quality, and the large majority of pupils make good progress in most subjects during their time in the school. However, there is scope for improvement in the quality of pupils' written work and for raising the standards achieved by pupils in scientific enquiry, particularly at Key Stage 2. The headteacher, deputy headteacher, governors and staff work together successfully to create a positive ethos for learning. The school is managed very efficiently and provides good value for money.

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

- The great majority of pupils make good progress in developing their literacy and numeracy skills.
- Standards are particularly high in information and communication technology and physical education.
- The quality of teaching is good throughout the school.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes towards their work and their behaviour is of a high standard.
- Very good provision is made for the pupils' moral and social development.
- The school is very well led and managed.

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

- The quality of written work across the curriculum.
- The standards achieved by pupils in the area of scientific enquiry at Key Stage 2.

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

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE THE LAST INSPECTION**

The school has made good progress since the last inspection. During the three years up to 1999, the rate of improvement in standards achieved is better than the national picture at the end of Key Stage 1, and in line with that found nationally at the end of Key Stage 2. Compared to figures published in the last inspection report, the proportion reaching national standards at the end of Key Stage 2 has increased from 54 per cent to 62 per cent in English, and from 33 per cent to 59 per cent in mathematics. The quality of teaching has continued to improve. The proportion of lessons judged to be at least satisfactory has increased from 81 per cent to 100 per cent, and the proportion judged to be very good or better from 0 per cent to 28 per cent. The school has been successful in addressing most of the key issues identified in the last inspection report. Provision for pupils with special educational needs has improved considerably. Highly effective arrangements for monitoring school performance have been introduced. Opportunities have been created for co-ordinators to improve their skills, and this has resulted in closer liaison between key stages. In addition, standards have improved significantly in information and communication technology, which is now a strength of the school, and standards in art and music now meet the national expectations. The school is well placed to continue improving by building on its strengths and addressing weaknesses. Improving the quality of pupils' written work and standards in scientific enquiry remain as priorities for the school to address.

## 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
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	D	C	E	B
Mathematics	D	E	E	C
Science	D	E	E	C

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

The table shows that in 1999 the school's test results for English were well below the average for all schools, but above average compared to schools with similar characteristics. In mathematics and science, results were well below the average for all schools but in line with similar schools. The school's overall performance was in line with that of schools with similar characteristics.

Inspection findings indicate that children make good and often very good progress in the nursery and reception classes. By the time they reach the end of the foundation stage, they achieve the early learning goals in all areas of learning except communication, language and literacy. By the end of Key Stage 1, standards are at least in line with the national average in all subjects. This is confirmed by the 1999 national test results, which also show the school's performance at Key Stage 1 to be well above that of similar schools.

By the end of Key Stage 2, standards in English are close to those found nationally. Standards in mathematics are below the national average, but a majority of pupils are on course to reach, and an increasing minority to exceed, the national expectation. This represents a significant improvement on the 1999 national test results. The successful implementation of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy is an important factor in the improving picture. In science, although standards are generally in line with those found nationally, many pupils are capable of making better progress in the area of scientific enquiry at Key Stage 2.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Throughout the school, pupils show very good attitudes towards their school work. They show interest and enthusiasm, are eager to learn and generally give of their best at all times.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is consistently of a very high standard in classrooms and about the school.
Personal development and relationships	Very good throughout the school. Pupils show enthusiasm to accept responsibility and show respect for each other's feelings, values and beliefs.
Attendance	Satisfactory.



## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is generally good. During the inspection, all lessons observed were at least satisfactory, 88 per cent were good or better, and 28 per cent were very good. Throughout the school, there is a close match between the quality of teaching and learning.

Teaching of children at the foundation stage, in nursery and reception classes, is good and at times very good. Teaching of literacy and numeracy is consistently good at Key Stage 1 and generally good at Key Stage 2. Science teaching is good at Key Stage 1 and generally satisfactory at Key Stage 2, but insufficient emphasis is placed on scientific enquiry. This contributes towards some underachievement by pupils in this important aspect of the work. Teaching of information technology is good at Key Stage 1 and very good at Key Stage 2. In other subjects, teaching is generally good and sometimes of high quality, particularly in physical education. The valuable and effective work of support staff has a very positive impact on pupils' progress.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a good curriculum for pupils at the foundation stage. At both key stages, the curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant. Development of literacy and numeracy skills is strongly emphasised. There is scope for greater emphasis on quality of writing throughout the curriculum and on scientific enquiry. Some inconsistency exists in provision of opportunities for pupils to extend their skills in information and communication technology through work in other subjects.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good provision throughout the school. Work is pitched at an appropriate level to challenge pupils, and is based on the targets set in individual education plans. Good support provided by classroom assistants and other support staff.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The school makes good provision for pupils for whom English is an additional language. Class teachers provide work which is appropriately challenging. The school draws effectively on external support when necessary.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	All dimensions are promoted successfully through assemblies and across the curriculum. Very good provision for moral and social development, through formal and extra-curricular activities. This contributes greatly towards pupils' very good behaviour and positive attitudes.
How well the school cares for its pupils	There are very good procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development and very strong educational guidance and support. Highly effective procedures are in place for promoting good behaviour. There are sound arrangements for child protection. Assessment arrangements are generally good, but there is a need for greater consistency in its use to inform planning in science and subjects other than English and mathematics. Procedures for promoting attendance are good.

A very strong partnership has been developed with parents, almost all of whom would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or problems.

### HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Headteacher and deputy headteacher work together very effectively to provide strong and purposeful leadership. They are well supported by co-ordinators for subjects and aspects of the curriculum.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governing body works effectively with the headteacher to provide clear direction and a strong sense of purpose. Governors successfully ensure that all statutory requirements are met.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good use is made of national and local comparative information to evaluate and set targets for improvement which are appropriately challenging.
The strategic use of resources	Highly effective school development planning enables money to be spent wisely on educational priorities. All resources are managed efficiently.

The overall quality of leadership and management is very good. The governors successfully apply best value principles. The school is well staffed and resourced.

### PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The children like school.</li> <li>• The children make good progress.</li> <li>• Behaviour is good.</li> <li>• They get the right amount of homework.</li> <li>• The teaching is good.</li> <li>• Parents are well informed about their child/ren's progress.</li> <li>• They would feel comfortable in approaching the school with questions or problems.</li> <li>• The school expects their child/ren to work hard and achieve their best.</li> <li>• The school works closely with parents.</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed.</li> <li>• The school is helping their children to become mature and responsible.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A small minority would like a greater range of learning activities outside the classroom.</li> </ul>

The inspectors agree with parents' positive views about the school. They find the range of extra-curricular opportunities offered to pupils to be good.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

- 1 The attainment levels of children on entry to the nursery are generally very low. They make good progress at the foundation stage in the nursery and reception classes. By the time they enter Key Stage 1, the majority of children meet the early learning goals in their personal, social and emotional development, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, and in their physical and creative development. The proportion attaining the relevant goals in communication, language and literacy is less than might be expected by the time they are ready for Year 1. In all areas of learning, the great majority of pupils at all levels of ability, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in relation to their prior attainment.
- 2 Comparative information, based on the 1999 National Curriculum test results, indicates that the performance of pupils reaching the end of Key Stage 1 in reading and writing was broadly in line with the average for all schools, but well above average in comparison with pupils in schools with similar characteristics. In mathematics, pupils' performance was below those in all schools, but above the average for similar schools.
- 3 Comparative information for pupils reaching the end of Key Stage 2 in the 1999 national tests, indicates that the pupils' performance in English was well below the average for all schools, but above average in comparison with pupils in similar schools. In mathematics and science, the pupils' performance was well below the average for all schools, but in line with that of similar schools.
- 4 Key Stage 2 national test results for the three years up to 1999, indicate a rate of improvement in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, which is in line with that found nationally. During the same period, the performance of pupils showed no significant variation in terms of gender.
- 5 Inspection findings for the end of Key Stage 1, indicate that standards are broadly in line with the those found nationally in speaking and listening, reading, writing, mathematics and science. Pupils' achievements in relation to prior attainment are good in all aspects of English, mathematics and science.
- 6 Inspection findings for the end of Key Stage 2, indicate that standards are close to the national average in English and science. Standards in mathematics are below the national average, but a majority of pupils are on course to achieve, and an increasing proportion to exceed, national standards by the end of the key stage. This represents a significant improvement on the 1999 national test results. However, the most recent national test results, for Year 2000, indicate a considerable increase in the proportion of pupils exceeding the national standard in all of these subjects. Although pupils' achievement in relation to prior attainment is generally good in all of these subjects, many are capable of reaching higher standards in scientific enquiry.

- 7 In English, the majority of pupils at both key stages make particularly good progress and reach standards which are at least appropriate for their age in speaking and listening. Standards in reading are in line with national expectation, and a significant number exceed the levels set by the National Curriculum. At Key Stage 1, pupils benefit greatly from the valuable support of parents in reading with them at home. At Key Stage 2, pupils at all levels of ability build successfully on their early skills, and a significant proportion read widely and demonstrate good levels of fluency and accuracy. Higher attainers read challenging novels of their own choice. They talk enthusiastically about their reading and are able to discuss confidently the plot, characters and style of the books. In writing, pupils make good progress at Key Stage 1, and the majority are on course to reach the national standard. At Key Stage 2, standards in writing are not as high as they are in speaking and listening and reading, and pupils' progress is less consistent. This is often reflected in the quality of written work in other subjects, where the standard of pupils' handwriting and presentation is below that expected for their age.
- 8 In mathematics, pupils at all levels of attainment make generally good progress in developing their numeracy skills. The majority of pupils reaching the end of Key Stage 1 have a good recall of addition and subtraction facts to ten. They demonstrate an increasing understanding of place value and are confident in ordering numbers to 100. By the end of Key Stage 2, the majority of pupils are reasonably competent in using accurately the four rules of number. Higher attaining pupils present their work in a clear and organised manner and are confident in explaining the strategies they use to solve problems. However, the progress of some lower attaining pupils is restricted by their limited language skills.
- 9 In science, standards at the end of both key stages are close to the levels set by the National Curriculum. Most pupils, at all levels of attainment, make satisfactory progress in extending their scientific knowledge. However, the lack of emphasis placed on developing scientific enquiry, in some classes at Key Stage 2, restricts the progress of pupils in this important area of science and contributes towards some underachievement.
- 10 Standards in information technology are broadly in line with the levels set by the National Curriculum at Key Stage 1 and above the national expectation at Key Stage 2. At Key Stage 2, the very good use made of the computer suite to facilitate whole-group teaching and effective demonstration, contributes greatly towards the very good achievement by pupils at all levels of ability in relation to their prior attainment. By the end of Key Stage 2, the ability of pupils to exchange information and communicate with others in a variety of ways, including the confident use of electronic mail and video conferencing facilities, are very strong features in their learning.
- 11 Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs make very good progress towards the targets set in their individual education plans. Good provision is made for all pupils, meeting their particular needs in terms of gender, race, background and ability. In all of these categories, pupils make generally good progress during their time in the school.

- 12 In all other subjects, standards at both key stages are at least in line with the expectations set by the National Curriculum. Standards in physical education are above the national expectation at both key stages.
- 13 Pupils at both key stages make generally good progress in extending their literacy and numeracy skills, although progress in writing is less consistent than in other aspects of English. The successful implementation of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy at both key stages has a positive impact on pupils' achievement.
- 14 The governors have set appropriately challenging targets for improvements in English and mathematics for future years, which take account of the varying ability levels of different cohorts of pupils. The school is on course to achieving the targets set for 2001.
- 15 The overall improvement in standards since the last inspection is good. At Key Stage 2, the proportion reaching Level 4, the national standard, by the end of the key stage, has increased from 54 per cent to 62 per cent in English and from 33 per cent to 59 per cent in mathematics. In information technology, better resources are contributing towards a significant improvement in standards at the end of Key Stage 2. In addition, standards in art and music are now in line with the national expectation. Standards in writing and scientific enquiry remain as priorities to be addressed.

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

- 16 Behaviour throughout the school is very good. The pupils enjoy school and are enthusiastic about all school activities. The vast majority behave well in assembly, in lessons, in the playground and in the dining room. They move around the school quietly and this contributes very positively to the calm and purposeful atmosphere which exists in all areas of the school. The pupils have a good understanding of the school rules and conventions and they respond to and appreciate the praise and rewards so generously given, by their teachers, for hard work and good behaviour. They are kind and friendly towards one another, having a good knowledge of how their words and actions can affect other people. Incidents of bullying or other serious misconduct are rare. However, there were three fixed period exclusions during the last academic year, for behaviour which the school considered to be totally unacceptable.
- 17 Relationships throughout the school are very good. Caring for others is emphasised in all aspects of school life and this is extended to the wider community by fund raising efforts for a wide range of charities, helping to develop the pupils' understanding of citizenship. Inside school the pupils are extremely helpful and polite to visitors, always ready to open doors, give directions or explain what they are doing in lessons. The pupils relate well to their teachers and to all the adults who work with them. They are keen to assist with routine tasks such as returning registers to the office, collecting in books and tidying up after practical work. The Year 6 pupils are given appropriate additional responsibilities. For example, they help to supervise younger pupils during wet breaks and lunch times. A very strong sense of community exists within the school, with everyone working together for a common purpose. The pride which the pupils take in their studies and their school is reflected in the many attractive displays of their work in classrooms and open areas and in the large school grounds which are entirely free from litter.
- 18 The pupils' very good attitudes to learning contribute significantly to the standards they achieve. During lessons, the great majority sustain good concentration and draw well

on knowledge gained in previous lessons to answer questions and enter into class discussion. In practical lessons, such as design technology, the pupils handle tools and equipment sensibly, mindful of their own and other people's safety. They respond promptly to instructions in physical education and are helpful in getting out and putting away the apparatus. When working with a partner or as part of a small group, for example in literacy and numeracy lessons, the pupils are willing to share ideas and to learn from one another. Key Stage 2 pupils, in particular, work enthusiastically in information and communication technology and demonstrate a capacity to persevere and learn from their mistakes.

- 19 Pupils at both key stages are keen to gain certificates for regular attendance and to win the class trophies which have been introduced, since the last inspection, in an attempt to improve levels of attendance. There has been some improvement, and attendance for the last reporting year was above 90%. This is satisfactory, given that almost all absence is due to illness or holidays, but the attendance rate remains below the national average. The rate of unauthorised absence is very low, below the national average for primary schools. Punctuality has improved significantly since the last inspection. The vast majority of the pupils now arrive on time in the mornings and lessons start promptly.

#### **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?**

- 20 The quality of teaching and learning is generally good. During the inspection, the teaching was at least satisfactory in 100 per cent of lessons. It was good or better in 88 per cent and very good in 28 per cent of lessons. Throughout the school, there is a close match between the quality of teaching and the quality of learning and this is reflected in lesson evaluations.
- 21 The quality of teaching for children at the foundation stage is consistently of good quality. Over 93 per cent of lessons observed were judged to be good and 20 per cent were very good. The effective contribution of support staff is a strong feature in all of the classes for the under fives. Good teaching in all areas of the curriculum has a positive impact on children's learning, and helps those at all levels of ability to achieve good standards in relation to their prior attainment.
- 22 In the nursery and reception classes, teaching is particularly successful in promoting the children's personal and social development and this helps them to settle quickly and make good progress in all areas of learning. Throughout the foundation stage, good teaching is particularly effective in developing the children's speaking and listening skills. This enables children to contribute more confidently and take greater advantage of the range of learning opportunities provided for them.
- 23 The good standard of teaching during their time at the foundation stage enables the majority of children to achieve well in relation to prior attainment in all areas of the curriculum. It helps most children to make good progress in developing their early literacy and numeracy skills and in extending their knowledge and understanding of the world. Good class management and lesson organisation contribute positively towards the children's good progress in the physical and creative areas of learning. The consistent emphasis placed on extending children's literacy and numeracy skills during work in all areas of learning is a strong feature in the work. Planning and assessment of work are completed efficiently in all classes, and the teaching of children with special educational needs is of good quality throughout the foundation stage.

- 24 The quality of teaching at Key Stage 1 is nearly always good and often very good. Over 96 per cent of lessons observed were judged to be good or better and 30 per cent were very good. The quality of teaching at Key Stage 2 is generally good. Over 82 per cent of lessons observed were judged to be good or better and 27 per cent were very good.
- 25 The teaching of English and mathematics is consistently good at Key Stage 1 and generally good at Key Stage 2. The quality of teaching has benefited considerably from the successful implementation of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy. This is an important factor which contributes towards the good progress made by pupils at both key stages in developing their literacy and numeracy skills.
- 26 In English at both key stages, teachers have a secure knowledge of the subject and a good understanding of how pupils learn. Lessons follow closely the structure of the National Literacy Strategy and this enables pupils to build progressively on their skills as they move through the school. Speaking and listening and reading are particularly well taught. This is reflected in pupils' growing confidence in expressing themselves and their increasing interest in reading for pleasure. Although good attention is given to developing writing skills during literacy lessons, insufficient emphasis is placed on developing and extending these skills during lessons in other subjects, such as history and geography, particularly at Key Stage 2. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is consistently good. This is an important factor in the very good progress made by most of them towards the targets set in their individual education plans. The teaching also makes good provision for the minority of pupils for whom English is an additional language. It enables them to make good progress in extending their language skills.
- 27 The teaching of mathematics demonstrates a good understanding of the expectations described in the National Numeracy Strategy. The content of work is usually well matched to the pupils' levels of attainment. This enables pupils at all levels of attainment to make good progress in most aspects of mathematics. Good provision is made for those with special educational needs, enabling them to achieve very well in relation to their prior attainment. In the best lessons, a good balance is achieved in mental work, direct teaching, learning activities and the final plenary session. However, an appropriate balance is not always achieved in some lessons and this requires attention.
- 28 The teaching of science is good at Key Stage 1 and generally satisfactory at Key Stage 2. The teaching at both key stages is effective in extending pupils' knowledge of science. This is apparent in most lessons, as pupils are appropriately extended intellectually and many demonstrate a good knowledge of the areas they have studied. However, teaching at Key Stage 2 is less effective in developing pupils' skills in scientific enquiry, and some teachers lack confidence in this aspect of the subject. This restricts pupils' progress in carrying out experiments, collecting and recording data, and analysing and interpreting results.
- 29 In information and communication technology, teaching is good at Key Stage 1 and very good at Key Stage 2. This enables pupils to gain confidence and appropriate skills in the early stages, and make rapid progress at Key Stage 2. The high quality of ICT teaching at Key Stage 2 is a strength of the school. All of the lessons observed were at least good and over 60 per cent were very good. Teachers are secure in their subject knowledge, the planning is well conceived and expectations of the pupils are high. This enables pupils to make confident use of the good facilities available in ICT, including accessing the Internet, communicating by electronic mail and video

conferencing.

- 30 Throughout the curriculum, teachers make good provision for pupils at all levels of attainment and respond effectively to the differing needs of boys, girls and pupils from ethnic minority groups. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good throughout the school. The very effective co-operation between teachers and support staff is a strong feature which helps to promote very good progress by pupils in this category. Their work is supported by good quality individual education plans. This enables the pupils to work systematically towards the realistic and manageable targets set for them.
- 31 In other subjects, tasks are pitched at an appropriate level to challenge pupils. Opportunities are generally taken effectively to extend literacy and numeracy skills. However, insufficient attention is given to the development of writing skills. In subjects such as history and geography, teachers create worthwhile opportunities for pupils to engage in extended writing activities arising from their studies, but there is some inconsistency in the emphasis placed on the quality of presentation and handwriting. Through work in art, design and technology and music, the teaching promotes successfully the pupils' creative development. At both key stages, the teaching of physical education is generally of high quality, enabling pupils to reach standards which are above the national expectations. High expectations and good class management are strong features in the teaching of physical education. Pupils are encouraged to think carefully about ways of improving the quality of their performance and this contributes towards good progress and high quality work by those at all levels of attainment.
- 32 The school has made very good progress in improving the quality of teaching since the last inspection. The proportion of lessons judged to be satisfactory or better has increased from 81 per cent in the last inspection to 100 per cent, and the proportion judged to be very good or better from 0 per cent to 28 per cent. Considerable improvements have been achieved in the provision made by class teachers for pupils with special educational needs. The teachers' expertise in information and communication technology has improved considerably, and improvements have been achieved in the teaching of art and music. The successful implementation of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy has contributed greatly towards better quality teaching throughout the school.

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

- 33 The school provides a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum which, in nearly all respects, reflects the requirements of the National Curriculum. The exception is in science, where too few opportunities are created for pupils to develop skills in scientific enquiry at Key Stage 2. The curriculum for the children under five, at the foundation stage, is based appropriately on the nationally agreed programme for their learning. In the nursery and in the two reception classes, the programme is well planned to support the pupils' progress towards the early learning goals for each area of learning. Although the school has recently expended much time and effort implementing the national strategies for literacy and numeracy, the basic curriculum continues to provide the pupils with relevant and interesting experiences, which are generally well matched to the pupils' needs.
- 34 The school has established effective strategies for teaching the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. In information and communication technology, appropriate provision



is made for pupils to extend their skills during lessons timetabled for the subject. However, while some teachers create useful opportunities for pupils to consolidate and extend their skills during lessons in other subjects, this is an inconsistent feature of provision throughout the school.

- 35 The statutory curriculum is effectively enhanced by a varied programme of extra-curricular activities which are well attended by boys and girls. Many members of staff give willingly of their own time to teach pupils a variety of aesthetic, creative, cultural, intellectual and sporting activities. In addition, the older pupils are offered residential experiences, including those to the local authority's centre at Colomendy in North Wales and also to Tawd Vale, the Merseyside scout camping centre. Such visits make an important contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- 36 Overall, the school makes very good provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Their spiritual development is successfully promoted. The requirements for collective worship are met fully. Assemblies are reverent occasions, which emphasise Catholic traditions and the tenets of Christian worship. The pupils are helped to relate ideas to their own experiences. For example, in an assembly exploring feelings, the pupils were aware of the fact that if we are loved we feel good and if we feel good we make other people feel good. Pupils bring items for the "focus table" in their classroom and these objects are used to illustrate the awe and wonder of the created world. Support for a range of charitable organisations such as 'Operation Christmas Child' and the 'Nugent Care Society', develop a caring attitude in pupils for those who are less fortunate than themselves. The pupils' spiritual development is also encouraged by their growing appreciation of the beauty, structure and order of the natural world. This happens, for example, during their lessons in literature, geography, science and music and through participation in field trips, such as the visit to Freshfield, to see the red squirrels, and to Colomendy in North Wales for environmental studies and outdoor activities.
- 37 Very good provision is made for pupils' moral development. The code of conduct, displayed in all classrooms, upholds good standards of respect and care. All pupils are taught the difference between right and wrong and are encouraged to consider how their actions and behaviour might affect other pupils and adults in the school community. They are provided with many opportunities which enable them to tolerate each other's point of view and to respect opinions which are different from their own. They are helped in many ways, particularly through assemblies, stories and by the manner in which all the adults in the school provide very good role models. The pupils develop a concern for their environment through work on such themes as "Good People in Our Area", and a programme of visits from the Liverpool Park Ranger Service.

- 38 Very good provision is made for pupils' social development. They mix and collaborate effectively. In lessons, they work well as a class, in small groups and individually. The good quality of relationships within the school is a major factor contributing to this aspect of the pupils' development. Extra-curricular activities are inclusive, and boys as well as girls receive both soccer and netball coaching. The pupils relate well to the adults working in and visiting the school. A number of pupils are encouraged to take responsibilities as monitors. Parents' courses, for example, 'parents as educators' and 'additional literacy support' make an important contribution to the pupils' academic and social development. Extra-curricular opportunities contribute significantly to the development of the pupils' social skills.
- 39 The curriculum makes an important contribution to the pupils' cultural development. In subjects such as history and geography, the pupils develop a good appreciation of their own cultural traditions and the diversity and richness of other cultures. Visits to the school from such organisations as the "Black Box Theatre" and a local drama group, give the pupils a good insight into life in Tudor and Victorian times.
- 40 The governing body's policy for equal opportunities is fully implemented throughout the school. Boys and girls are treated fairly and given equal opportunity in all aspects of school life. The school curriculum is successful in providing equality of opportunity for all pupils. On the occasions when pupils are withdrawn from lessons for additional literacy and numeracy support, for example, positive steps are taken to minimise the disruption to their learning in the lessons from which they are withdrawn. The curriculum provides opportunities for the pupils to develop positive attitudes towards the achievements of both men and women. This is helped by the fact that pupils observe good male and female role models throughout the school. Care is taken to ensure that pupils with special educational needs are able to participate and benefit from the full range of school activities. There are no pupils for whom the curriculum is disappplied and all pupils, including those who require support for English as an additional language, receive their full curriculum entitlement.
- 41 At both key stages, the school makes good provision for the pupils with special educational needs. Good identification procedures are in place and individual educational plans are completed for the pupils who are at Stage 2 or above on the Code of Practice. The plans are well written and contain precise and measurable targets which are reviewed at regular intervals. A range of effective support is provided through small group work, withdrawal from lessons and additional attention in the classroom, to assist the learning of the pupils' with special educational needs. The close involvement of classroom assistants makes an important contribution towards provision. In addition, help is provided by support staff from the local education authority. Since the last inspection the quality and use of individual education plans have improved considerably.
- 42 The school makes good provision for the nine pupils for whom English is an additional language. They are integrated into all aspects of the curriculum. The pupils' language and communication skills are carefully assessed and appropriate support is provided within the school. Some who are placed in a lower age group receive additional help, but care is taken to ensure that they receive their full curriculum entitlement.

- 43 The school is particularly successful in providing its pupils with a relevant and coherent curriculum which gives appropriate emphasis to the pupils' personal and social development. An effective health education programme is taught in all classes and includes appropriate attention to drug misuse and sex education. The pupils are given essential facts and the necessary skills and knowledge to enable them to make informed decisions now and in the future.
- 44 Very good links have been established with the local community. They are used effectively to contribute to the pupils' learning. For example, a good contribution is made to the pupils' environmental education through the involvement of the Liverpool Parks' Ranger Department. In addition, interesting visits are arranged to support the pupils' learning in many areas. For example, some of the Key Stage 2 pupils were able to visit the North West Water Authority's premises at Worthington Lakes near Wigan. This experience made an important contribution to their geographical studies. The school maintains strong parish links and local visitors frequently provide the pupils with additional support in computer work, reading, aspects of physical education and environmental studies.
- 45 Constructive relationships with local secondary schools are well established and a smooth system exists for the transfer of relevant records and attainment data. Appropriate induction opportunities enable the oldest pupils to transfer confidently to their secondary schools.
- 46 Since the last inspection, the school has made a number of improvements to the curriculum. The planning of work now gives appropriate emphasis to learning objectives. These are shared with the pupils and are used effectively, particularly in literacy and numeracy, to assess the pupils' progress in lessons. In addition, individual education plans are now used more effectively to plan work to match the pupils' needs. Improvements have also been made to the programme for personal and social education. The new scheme and policy document enables the work to be planned more successfully to secure improved continuity and systematic development of pupils' knowledge and experience.

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

- 47 The school provides a good level of care for its pupils and is successful in ensuring their welfare, health and safety. Child protection procedures are good, adhering to guidelines provided by the local education authority. Regular attendance and punctuality are strongly encouraged. Since the last inspection the school has worked hard in this area and there has been a significant improvement in punctuality and some improvement in levels of attendance. Individual and whole class rewards have been introduced for good attendance and parents have been kept fully informed as to the importance of regular attendance in relation to their children's attainment and progress. Procedures for monitoring attendance are thorough and good use is made of the educational welfare service in following up unexplained or persistent absence.
- 48 Good procedures are in place for assessing pupils' progress, and significant improvement has been made in this area since the last inspection. The data produced by the formal systems now established for assessing and monitoring the attainment of pupils in the core subjects is carefully analysed and used effectively to improve curriculum provision and identify areas in need of development. There are good systems for recording the progress of individual pupils in literacy and numeracy. The teachers monitor the progress of individual pupils very well in these subjects, and the information they gain is used effectively to provide the correct levels of challenge

for all pupils in future lessons. However, in some subjects other than English and mathematics there is some lack of consistency in the way assessment information is used to inform future learning and this requires attention.

- 49 The use of target setting in Year 2 and Year 6 is a strong feature. The parents and pupils are involved in the identification and review of the targets and this is very successful in providing motivation and challenge to raise attainment. The school is already in the early stages of extending this good practice to other age groups throughout the school. The parents are kept well informed about how their children are doing in school through well written reports which state clearly what the pupils are good at and what they need to do to improve.
- 50 Procedures for monitoring and supporting the pupils' personal development are very good. The Christian ethos of the school is central to all of its work and the pupils are taught to care for one another inside school and to reach out to the wider community through fund raising activities for various charities and through participation in inter-school sporting competition and community events. Hard work and positive attitudes are rewarded consistently with verbal praise, stickers, house points at Key Stage 2 and certificates. The school has a "Golden Book" for pupils and one for parents, in which special achievements are recorded. The parents' "Golden Book" is on display in the foyer, recording the certificates which have been awarded to parents on successful completion of courses undertaken inside school. The certificates are presented to the parents in assembly, setting a good example to the pupils and encouraging them to recognise and value their parents' and their own achievements. The partnership between home and school is seen by the school as essential in promoting the pupils' personal development and establishing good patterns of behaviour. Parents are involved at an early stage whenever problems with work or behaviour are giving cause for concern.
- 51 The school places great emphasis on developing good relationships and a healthy lifestyle. Through class discussion, role play, problem solving activities and collaborative group work the pupils learn to support and trust one another and to value other people's views and ideas. This is extended for Year 5 and 6 pupils through residential visits which provide valuable opportunities for adventure, team work and developing social skills and independence. For example, last July the school held a successful "Health Week", with lots of activities for staff and pupils, such as an exercise class before school each morning, talks by visiting speakers and workshops conducted by an ex Olympic gymnast. During the week the teachers and the pupils kept food diaries to encourage them to eat healthily. The kitchen staff played their part by changing the menu for the week and by persuading the pupils to think about their food diaries.
- 52 Behaviour management is a strength of the school. In addition to encouraging and rewarding good behaviour, the staff are skilled in managing difficult behaviour, and isolated incidents of misconduct are not allowed to disrupt learning for others in the class. The small minority of pupils who have difficulty in following the accepted code of behaviour are sensitively supported by the school. Where necessary they have individual behaviour plans, drawn up by specialist staff in close consultation with parents. The school makes good use of a wide range of external agencies in supporting pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties and other special educational needs.

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

- 53 The school has successfully built upon the strengths identified in the previous inspection report and now has very strong links with parents. The consultation exercise, prior to the inspection, revealed that, in the parents' view, the school is excellent. Almost all the parents feel comfortable in approaching the school with problems or questions concerning their children. The parents are almost totally in agreement that their children like school. They consider the school to be well led and managed. They feel that the teaching is good, and are of the view that the school expects their children to work hard and achieve of their best. They feel that the school helps their children to become mature and responsible. The vast majority of the parents consider their children to be making good progress and are of the opinion that behaviour in the school is good. They take the view that the school works closely with them, keeps them well informed as to how their children are getting on and gives their children the right amount of homework. The inspection findings support all these positive views. A small minority of parents would like a greater range of learning opportunities for their children outside the classroom. However, the inspection finds the provision of extra-curricular opportunities to be good.
- 54 The quality of the information provided for parents and carers, by the school, is very good. Through the prospectus, the governing body's annual report and regular correspondence and newsletters, parents are kept fully informed in relation to the school's mission statement and aims and with regard to school procedures and events. Pupils' annual written reports are of high quality and provide parents with a great deal of helpful information about their children's attainment and progress. Parents' meetings are arranged at suitable intervals in the school year, giving parents and carers the opportunity to discuss their children's progress with class teachers and to be involved closely with setting and reviewing targets for further development.
- 55 The home-school agreement, which came into effect a year ago, was drawn up in consultation with parents. The agreement sets out very clearly what parents can expect from the school and what the school expects in terms of regular attendance, good behaviour and support for school policies and guidelines.
- 56 Communications with parents and carers of the under-fives are excellent. The parents are encouraged to come into the nursery and the reception classes, with their children, in the mornings and help them to find a book to read or to look at or to settle into the first activity of the day. Parents and carers are invited into the nursery once a week for story time and singing. This gives the parents a good insight into how young children learn and is an outstanding feature of the school's provision for children at the foundation stage of their education.
- 57 A significant number of parents, governors and other volunteers help regularly inside school, often supporting small groups of pupils, for example, in the Literacy Hour. Many parents give generously of their time to accompany the pupils on educational visits and to organise social and fund raising activities through the Parent Teacher Association. The school has supported the parents in setting up a community action group which strives to improve facilities in the school and the local community. With funding from the National Lottery the group has set up a parents' room inside school which is designed to give parents access to a wide range of information and communication technology equipment. The action group funds creche facilities inside school so that parents can take advantage of the many courses organised by the school in conjunction with Liverpool's Parent School Partnership scheme. These courses, which usually involve working alongside pupils in lessons, give parents worthwhile opportunities to gain access to further or higher education and, at the

same time, they give them the confidence and skill to support their children's learning and help them acquire maximum benefit from their education.

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

- 58 The quality of leadership and management is very good. The headteacher and deputy headteacher work together very effectively to provide strong and purposeful leadership. They co-operate effectively with the chair of governors to provide clear vision and direction for the work of the school. They are well supported by the senior management team and staff and members of the governing body.
- 59 Hard work by curriculum co-ordinators contributes strongly towards the good quality of teaching which now exists. Perceptive leadership provided by the co-ordinators for English and mathematics has helped the successful implementation of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy throughout the school. The school is well placed to continue to improve by building on existing strengths and addressing the areas for improvement included in the current school development plan; giving particular attention to the weaknesses in writing and science identified in this report.
- 60 Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Their increasingly purposeful involvement is an important factor in the good rate of improvement achieved by the school since the last inspection. Appropriate governing body committees have been established. They work effectively and successfully to ensure that statutory requirements are met. Some governors are particularly generous with their time, and work very hard in the interest of the pupils.
- 61 The school's mission statement and main aims are communicated effectively to parents through the prospectus. They include making pupils aware of, and helping them to achieve, their potential in all aspects of education. The careful attention given to the mission statement is reflected consistently in all of the school's work.
- 62 Governors successfully ensure that the school makes appropriate provision for all pupils including those with special educational needs and provides equality of access and opportunity for all of its pupils. The requirements of the Code of Practice for special educational needs are met very effectively.
- 63 Good procedures are in place for monitoring teaching and the curriculum. The headteacher, deputy headteacher, co-ordinators for literacy and numeracy and local education authority link inspector, visit classrooms regularly to evaluate the quality of teaching and curricular provision. A fresh cycle of monitoring by the senior management team, in line with school development plan priorities, is to commence in the near future. The standard and quality of work produced by pupils are monitored at regular intervals by the headteacher, senior staff and co-ordinators.

- 64 Responsibilities for co-ordinating subjects and aspects of the curriculum are appropriately shared and defined. Medium and short-term planning is scrutinised by relevant co-ordinators in order to check curricular balance and provision in their subjects. These arrangements have not only ensured appropriate emphasis on the development of literacy and numeracy skills, but have also been successful in maintaining a broad curriculum during the implementation of the literacy and numeracy strategies.
- 65 The school development planning process is well conceived and ensures that the views of all staff and governors are considered when identifying priorities. Development planning is appropriately seen as an on-going process, with regular reviews conducted to assess progress and adjust targets if necessary. Curriculum action plans, completed by subject co-ordinators, are incorporated into the school plan, and targets for improvements are listed clearly. Appropriate information is provided about deadlines for meeting targets, persons responsible, and criteria for evaluating the success of initiatives. The effective use of the plan to inform spending ensures that money is spent appropriately on relevant educational priorities.
- 66 The school makes very good use of its income. Grants for specific purposes are used appropriately, and good use is made of the element within the school's budget for making provision for pupils with special educational needs. The relatively large amount of money carried forward from the last financial year was built up to overcome any difficulties arising from fluctuating numbers on role and their effect on the budget. The school anticipates that this balance will be considerably reduced during the current financial year.
- 67 The governors' finance committee co-operates effectively with the headteacher and highly efficient school administration to monitor spending and ensure efficient financial control. Administrative staff are appropriately trained and the school makes good use of information technology to support financial management. When particular difficulties arise the school is able to call on expert support from the local education authority. A recent audit of finance by the local authority found financial matters and procedures to be sound. The minor points for improvements have all been addressed.
- 68 Very strong procedures are in place to monitor school performance. The headteacher systematically provides information to enable the governors to compare the school's performance with that of other schools. The governors demonstrate good awareness of the school's performance and priorities for improvement. Staff appraisal is seen as an important aspect of performance management. All requirements are met, and are supported very effectively by the arrangements to conduct regular interviews and set personal targets with individual teachers. There are good procedures for supporting the induction of newly qualified teachers and staff who are new to the school. Strong emphasis is placed on staff development. Teaching, support staff, governors and voluntary helpers are given opportunities to attend relevant in-service training.
- 69 The strategic management of all resources is very good. The school has sufficient suitably qualified and experienced teachers and support staff to meet the demands of the curriculum for pupils at all stages of their education; they are deployed very effectively.

- 70 Very good use is made of the range of facilities provided by the accommodation. The accommodation for the foundation stage and for pupils at both key stages is of good quality and entirely appropriate for the delivery of the curriculum. Library areas and the computer suite are valuable resources which are well used. The governing body seeks to secure best quality and value when purchasing resources and arranging for work to be completed. This is illustrated by the steps taken to plan and develop the computer suite. Care was taken to ensure that best value was secured in adopting the most suitable system and purchasing the best quality hardware and furniture for the money available.
- 71 Standards of cleaning and caretaking are high, and the grounds are well maintained. The quality of the internal environment is considerably enhanced by displays of pupils' work which are of good quality.
- 72 Since the last inspection, considerable progress has been made by the school in monitoring its own performance in terms of its success in raising standards and improving the quality of provision. Arrangements for monitoring teaching and learning have been significantly strengthened. In addition, the resourcing of key areas, particularly information technology, has been considerably improved.



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

73 In order to raise standards and quality of work further, the governing body, headteacher and staff should:

1. Improve the quality of pupils' written work by:
  - a) achieving greater consistency in standards of handwriting and presentation in pupils' written work produced in all subjects; and
  - b) monitoring carefully to see that new skills acquired during literacy lessons are applied consistently in all written work, placing particular emphasis on spelling and punctuation:

(paragraph reference: 7, 26, 91, 114, 129)

2. Raise standards achieved in scientific enquiry by pupils at Key Stage 2 by:
  - a) increasing the emphasis placed on this aspect in the planning for science;
  - b) improving teacher expertise; and
  - c) using effectively the information from the assessment of pupils' work to inform the next stage of planning.

(paragraph reference: 9, 28, 113)

**In addition to the key issues above, the following recommendations should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:**

- seek to provide more consistent opportunities for pupils to extend their skills in information and communication technology through work in other subjects.

(Paragraph reference: 34, 104, 132)

- Improve the use of assessment information to inform future teaching and learning in subjects other than English and mathematics.

(Paragraph reference: 48, 117, 132)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	90
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	25

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0%	28%	60%	12%	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)	30	336
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		205

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	4	128

#### English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	9

#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	34
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	34

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	9.1
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2000	27	28

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	14	21
	Girls	21	21	23
	Total	35	35	45
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	63 (83)	64 (77)	82 (87)
	National	N/a (83)	N/a (84)	N/a (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	18	22
	Girls	21	22	24
	Total	35	40	46
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	64 (83)	73 (85)	84 (91)
	National	N/a (82)	N/a (86)	N/a (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	13	28

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	6	4	8
	Girls	20	17	24
	Total	26	21	32
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	63(63)	51(59)	78(63)
	National	N/a (70)	N/a (69)	N/a (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	7	5	8
	Girls	16	17	22
	Total	23	22	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	56(N/a)	54 (N/a)	73 (N/a)
	National	N/a (68)	N/a (69)	N/a (75)

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

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	
Black – African heritage	5
Black – other	2
Indian	
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	2
White	278
Any other minority ethnic group	3

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

### ***Exclusions in the last school year***

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage		
Black – African heritage		
Black – other		
Indian		
Pakistani		
Bangladeshi		
Chinese		
White	3	0
Other minority ethnic groups		

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

### ***Teachers and classes***

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	17
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21
Average class size	24

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	172

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	30

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	21.5

Number of pupils per FTE adult	15
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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	1999
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	£
Total income	710808
Total expenditure	723813
Expenditure per pupil	1926
Balance brought forward from previous year	79625
Balance carried forward to next year	66620

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

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	366
Number of questionnaires returned	92

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	73	23	1	3	0
My child is making good progress in school.	71	23	7	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	58	37	4	1	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	52	38	8	1	1
The teaching is good.	78	21	1	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	68	23	9	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	73	26	0	10	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	72	24	1	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	65	32	2	1	0
The school is well led and managed.	68	30	0	0	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	73	26	0	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	37	35	12	3	13

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

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

- 74 The children under five are taught in the nursery initially and move on to one of the two reception classes prior to beginning Key Stage 1. Of the 46 children currently in the reception classes, 44 attended the nursery.
- 75 Many of the children enter the nursery class with limited personal skills. In addition they have under developed skills in communication, language and literacy, in their mathematical development, in their knowledge and understanding of the world and in their physical and creative development. By the time they leave the reception classes prior to Year 1, the majority attain the early learning goals in all areas except communication, language and literacy. Although many of the children start from a low baseline, they make good and often very good progress through the foundation stage where the quality of the teaching is generally good in all areas of their learning. This, together with the good quality of the planning is an important factor in helping children to make significant gains in their learning.
- 76 In the personal, social and emotional area of their learning few enter the nursery with confidence. The limited language skills of many is reflected in the difficulties they have interacting with each other and with the adults who help them. Some of the youngest nursery children find it difficult to concentrate, and to co-operate successfully or to share with others without adult interaction. However, during their time in the nursery and reception classes, they make rapid progress in achieving the early learning goals in this area of their learning. The good quality of the teaching enables them to become more independent in selecting activities and resources. They show respect for others and for the equipment they use, and many demonstrate an ability to work with increasing concentration and perseverance. All of the adults working at the foundation stage are good role models and treat each other and the children with courtesy and respect. Good relationships are quickly established, and by the time they are in the reception class, the children show sensitivity to others and work willingly together. For example, a group of reception class children listened to a taped story. They handled the headphones confidently and organised their books to follow the story sensibly. One child controlled the buttons on the tape recorder and waited for each person to signal they were ready before pressing the play button.
- 77 Throughout the foundation stage, many of the children find difficulty in the communication, language and literacy area of their learning. Few nursery children turn readily to books when selecting activities. However, the children enjoy stories read to them. The arrangement in the nursery for parents to join in the final group activity before collecting their child is an outstanding feature. For example, an excellent atmosphere was created in the nursery as children sat with their parents to enjoy the final session of the day. The story was lively and very well told. It was followed by rhymes and counting songs during which all were encouraged to join in, giving parents ideas about ways they could consolidate and extend their child's learning. As they move into the reception classes many children recognise that print and pictures carry meaning. They begin to recognise their own names and some familiar words. However, few can write their names with appropriate use of upper and lower case letters at this early stage in the school year. Teaching quality is good, and is very effective in emphasising the development of listening and speaking skills. For example, in the nursery during outdoor play, good opportunities were created to extend the children's vocabulary. A group were encouraged to look at bubbles and to

talk about what they saw as the wind blew through the holder causing the formation of many different sized bubbles. They were encouraged to respond to questions and to describe how the bubbles felt, which they did to good effect.

- 78 Strong emphasis is placed on the children's mathematical development throughout the foundation stage. Many have poor mathematical skills on entry to the nursery, but by the reception class stage, they make good progress towards the early learning goals. Good quality teaching adopts a range of imaginative strategies to support children's learning. Reception class children know how to count to 10 and beyond. They can recognise numerals and are able, for example, to choose the correct one to represent their score in skittles. Some of the children have a growing awareness of the order of numbers and know how to sequence digits that are deliberately placed out of order on a number line. Many are beginning to acquire an increasing mathematical vocabulary which they use spontaneously in, for example, building games. They use accurate comparative language when talking about the height of their structures.
- 79 Children make good progress in the area of learning related to their knowledge and understanding of the world. Good teaching creates a variety of valuable experiences and children respond with enthusiasm. They use the computer confidently in the nursery when working with an adult and show increasing skills in using the mouse to draw on screen. Reception class children know how to use accurately many of the important keys, although they have limited time to work independently. They talk about themselves and their families with growing confidence and from photographs can distinguish present and past events in their own lives. A group of reception class children, in a role-play activity, bought various food items for their teacher's lunch. In discussion, they were able to talk about their own likes and dislikes and to suggest ways the food items were different. The children's learning is well supported in this area of their learning by helpful adult interaction which encourages their linguistic skills and helps to increase their confidence and self-esteem.
- 80 By the time they reach the reception class, the children are generally confident in the physical area of their learning. Outdoors, they use space with due consideration for others. They make good progress in throwing and catching activities and can run and jump with increasing control of their bodies. In the classroom, much progress is made throughout the foundation stage in manipulating tools to cut, saw or join, from a low level of competency when the children enter the nursery. Good quality teaching is an important factor contributing towards children's progress in this area of learning. Very effective lesson organisation and class management are particularly strong features.
- 81 From the earliest days in the nursery the children are encouraged to develop their creative skills through well planned and relevant activities. Good teaching creates many opportunities for children to explore colour, texture, shape and form. They develop early confidence in using a range of media. For example, in the nursery the children worked in small groups with adult guidance, to observe and paint sunflowers. They mixed paint successfully and produced bold and well formed paintings which were later used to display their achievements to others. The reception children build progressively on the early skills in music which they acquire in nursery. They have a good repertoire of songs and their singing is tuneful and quite nicely pitched.
- 82 Throughout the foundation stage, staff have a good knowledge of the needs of the children and work and plan together successfully to support, consolidate and extend the children's learning. Assessment is used effectively to plan future experiences

which does much to assist the children's confidence. The foundation stage staff are sensitive and hardworking and are successful in providing a secure and interesting learning environment which values the contribution of each child.

## ENGLISH

- 83 Inspection evidence indicates that standards at the end Key Stage 1 are close to the national average. This is consistent with the 1999 National Curriculum test results which showed the pupils' performance to be broadly in line with that of pupils in all schools and well above the average for similar schools.
- 84 At the end of Key Stage 2, standards are close to the national average. This is significantly better than the 1999 national test results, which showed the pupils' performance to be well below all schools, although above the average for similar schools. The improving picture is supported by the most recent national test results for Year 2000, although comparative information is not yet available. The most significant improvement has been in the proportion of pupils exceeding the national standard and reaching Level 5. In 1999, none of the pupils reached this level, but 22 per cent reached Level 5 in the most recent national tests. The successful implementation of the National Literacy Strategy, better teaching and the valuable contribution of support staff are important factors in the improving picture.
- 85 At both key stages, pupils at all levels of attainment make generally good progress in relation to prior attainment. This is particularly apparent in speaking and listening and reading, throughout the school. However, their progress in writing at Key Stage 2 is less consistent, and this is often reflected in the poor quality of pupils' writing in other subjects.
- 86 At both key stages, pupils with special educational needs make very good progress towards the targets set in their individual education plans. The small minority of pupils for whom English is an additional language are effectively supported and make consistently good progress.
- 87 In speaking and listening, the great majority of pupils at all levels of attainment, make good progress at both key stages. Younger pupils build progressively on the good foundation provided in reception classes. Pupils participate very effectively during the introductory activities for literacy lessons. They listen attentively during the whole-class elements of the lessons and demonstrate growing confidence in responding to their teacher's questions. They benefit considerably from systematic opportunities to interact with their teacher, particularly during word-level work, and many are quick to offer clearly expressed answers to questions arising from the "big book" used to display the text or more specific questions arising from word-level work. By the end of the key stage, the great majority of pupils demonstrate a growing vocabulary and an increasing awareness of the need for a more formal vocabulary in some situations.



- 88 At Key Stage 2, the majority of pupils communicate effectively in an increasing range of situations. In history, for example, they enter into role-play to explore certain issues and how characters from history might have responded to certain questions. For example, in Year 4, pupils showed confidence and a growing vocabulary in questioning Henry V<sup>111</sup> about the reasons for some of his actions. By the end of key stage, the pupils' ability to listen carefully and make contributions by asking relevant questions is very apparent during the whole-class elements of literacy lessons. The majority are able to adapt their talk and use appropriate vocabulary for different purposes. They benefit from numerous opportunities to discuss and consider issues which affect them. For example, pupils in Year 3 considered how they might persuade the local council to take action to clean up the subway beneath the busy main road which some pupils cross when making their way to school.
- 89 In reading, pupils at all levels of attainment make good progress and a large majority reach appropriate standards for their age by the end of both key stages. Younger pupils, in particular, benefit greatly from the support and interest provided by their parents for the school's home reading scheme. By the end of Key Stage 1, most average and high attainers read with growing accuracy and understanding, and make appropriate use of an increasing range of strategies to read unfamiliar words and establish meaning. A significant proportion are able to read with increasing fluency and good expression. Lower attainers and those with special educational needs benefit greatly from the additional attention provided by support staff. Although their reading standards are well below those expected for their age, they make very good progress in relation to prior attainment.
- 90 At Key Stage 2, pupils extend their range of reading significantly. Most begin to read independently from fiction and non-fiction books and materials. The very strong emphasis placed on developing information and communication technology skills is having a positive effect on pupils' reading. The requirement to be able to read to gain access to various computer facilities is providing strong motivation for pupils to extend their reading skills. Older pupils show considerable confidence in searching for and retrieving information to support their studies in various subjects. By the end of Key Stage 2, the majority of pupils read fluently and accurately from books selected from the school library and other sources. Higher and average attainers begin to express preferences for certain types of books and a significant proportion are able to give reasons why they like particular characters in the stories they have read. Some visit bookshops with their parents in order to satisfy their growing appetite for reading. Pupils with special educational needs continue to benefit from carefully focused support and make very good progress towards the targets set in their individual educational plans.
- 91 In writing, pupils at Key Stage 1 make good progress and most are on course to reach appropriate standards for their age by the end of Year 2. The majority of pupils are beginning to express their ideas in a sequence of sentences, making increasingly appropriate use of capital letters and full stops. At Key Stage 2, although the majority of pupils make satisfactory progress in extending their skills in writing, standards are lower than those achieved in speaking and listening and reading. Their knowledge and understanding of writing techniques are considerably enhanced through work covered during literacy lessons. They draw well on examples provided in introductory text work. In Year 5, for example, this helped the pupils to write their own diaries, and in Year 6 it contributed towards some good quality work following the examination of Roald Dahl's autobiography in his book "Boy". The writing of the majority of pupils during the group and independent elements of literacy lessons is generally of satisfactory quality with appropriate attention given to standards of presentation and

handwriting. A significant minority produce work of particularly good quality, using imaginative vocabulary and developing their ideas in an organised and interesting manner. However the quality of writing in work produced as part of the pupils' studies of other subject is often below that expected for their age. Careless spelling, handwriting and presentation often spoils the quality of the pupils' work.

- 92 The quality of teaching and learning is good at both key stages. All of the lessons observed were at least satisfactory; over 90 per cent were good or better and nearly 30 per cent were very good. Teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of how pupils learn. This is particularly apparent in literacy lessons, during which the great majority of pupils make good progress in extending their language skills. In most classes, the purpose of the lesson is explained to the pupils giving them a clear understanding of what is expected of them. Teachers' planning is usually clear and lessons are well structured, following the guidance given in the National Literacy Strategy. At Key Stage 1, the effective interaction between class teachers and pupils during the whole-class elements of literacy lessons, helps to capture pupils' interest and sustain their concentration. In Year 2, for example, the very effective use of writing boards to enable pupils to write responses to aspects of word level work helps to develop and reinforce phonic skills, spelling and vocabulary. At Key Stage 2, good questioning skills enable pupils to draw on their imagination and build on the illustrations provided by well selected texts for the introductory activities for literacy lessons. This helps pupils to work productively as well as extending them intellectually. Pupils respond well to challenging new work and enjoy learning new skills. This was apparent in Year 6, for example, when they considered how they might improve the quality of their writing by using complex sentences. Clear explanation and good use of questioning help to promote pupils' awareness of particular events in the texts they study and develop their interest in the main characters. The assessment of pupils' work during English lessons is carried out effectively and is used appropriately to plan the next stage of teaching and learning.
- 93 During literacy lessons, most teachers are successful in consolidating and extending learning, always emphasising the importance of handwriting and presentation, and the need for accurate use of punctuation and spelling. However, this is not a consistent feature in written work in other subjects, which is reflected in the lower standard of written work produced during these lessons.
- 94 The work in English is effectively co-ordinated and this is an important factor in the successful implementation of the National Literacy Strategy. Good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs, enabling them to make very good progress. Since the last inspection, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard by the end of Key Stage 2 has increased from 54 per cent to 63 per cent, and the proportion exceeding the national expectation from 0 per cent to 22 per cent. This reflects the significant improvement in the provision for higher attaining pupils since the last inspection. The literacy strategy is having a positive effect on the quality and standard of work produced in formal English lessons, but its effect has yet to extend to written work produced in other subjects.

## MATHEMATICS

- 95 Inspection evidence indicates that standards at the end of Key Stage 1 are broadly in line with the national average. This is consistent with the 1999 National Curriculum test results, which showed the proportion of the pupils reaching the national standards to be close to the national average for all schools and above the average for similar schools.
- 96 By the end of Key Stage 2, standards are below the national average, although a majority of pupils are on course to reach appropriate standards for their age by the end of Year 6. An increasing number of pupils exceed the national standard. This is consistent with the most recent national test results, which show that 14 per cent of pupils reach Level 5, compared with 5 per cent in 1999. Test results for the last three years indicate no significant variation in the performance of pupils in terms of gender. Since the last inspection, the proportion of pupils achieving the national standard has increased from 33 per cent to 59 per cent.
- 97 The great majority of pupils, at all levels of attainment, make consistently good progress at Key Stage 1, and generally good progress at Key Stage 2. However, a significant minority find the subject very demanding. This is often because of the difficulties they have with spoken and written English and the increased mental demands of the subject. Pupils with special educational needs start from a very low baseline, but at both key stages they make generally very good progress towards the targets set for them.
- 98 By Year 2, many of the pupils have a satisfactory understanding of basic number work. Higher and average attaining pupils can read, write and order numbers to 100 and beyond. Many of the pupils understand how to recognise sequences, including odd and even numbers, although the lower attaining pupils find this more difficult. Most of the Year 2 pupils can recall and use basic addition and subtraction facts to 10. The higher attainers are confident to 20 and demonstrate good mental recall. They also know that in horizontal addition they will obtain the same result no matter in which order they tackle the digits.
- 99 Many of the Key Stage 2 pupils build successfully upon their earlier work, but a significant minority have difficulties because of poor recall of basic number facts. Some also find it hard to remember relevant mathematical language and to extract the mathematics from the written text when solving problems in number and money. By Year 6, the higher and average attaining pupils make increasing progress in understanding place value, and are reasonably confident and competent in using accurately the four rules of number. Many demonstrate a growing understanding of the extension of the number system, including negative numbers and the relationship of fractions, decimals and percentages.
- 100 At Key Stage 1, the pupils make satisfactory progress in work related to shapes, space and measures. They are able to use a range of non-standard units with reasonable accuracy. They know how to use a range of measures and can describe some of the main properties of many common three and two dimensional shapes. The oldest pupils understand and recognise that an angle is the degree of turn and, through their involvement in making right angle measures, they can recognise right angle turns in relevant contexts.

- 101 By Year 6, many of the pupils build progressively upon these earlier skills. They can calculate perimeters and areas of simple shapes, expressing answers accurately in square units, and they know how to find areas of some irregular compound shapes. For example, many know how to measure angles to the nearest degree. They can calculate quite accurately the angle sum of various triangles and use related vocabulary when describing different types of angles.
- 102 By Year 6, the pupils demonstrate increasing skills in handling data. They understand how to collect data, record their results and interpret their findings using an appropriate range of graphs, charts, diagrams and frequency tables. Higher attaining pupils are beginning to understand and use the term mode as a measure of average and to understand that range is a measure of spread when describing some data sets.
- 103 Throughout the school, the higher attaining pupils make good progress in using and applying their mathematical skills. They are beginning to apply some of the skills they learn in mental work, for example, partitioning to help them solve problems. They present their work in a clear and organised manner and are confident in explaining the strategies they use.
- 104 Although there are some examples of the pupils consolidating their numeracy skills in other subjects, this is not a very well developed aspect of their learning and few examples exist in records of their previous work. Similarly the pupils have too few opportunities to use information technology to support their learning in mathematics.
- 105 At both key stages, teachers are successful in helping pupils to develop good attitudes towards their work in mathematics. The pupils listen attentively, answer questions willingly and co-operate sensibly in group work. They are well behaved and enjoy the experiences offered to them.
- 106 Throughout the school, the quality of teaching is at least good and frequently very good. All lessons observed were good, and 46 per cent were very good. Teaching in Year 2 is consistently of a very good standard. Throughout the school, lessons are planned effectively in accordance with the national numeracy format but, in a minority of classes, the balance of time allocated to the different elements of the numeracy lesson is inappropriate. In such lessons, this reduces the amount of time for pupils to develop mental strategies, to engage in group work or to contribute to the final plenary session. At both key stages, teaching expertise is often reflected in the good quality of the teachers' questioning, which is used well to consolidate learning, to help correct misconceptions and, in the best lessons, to extend the pupils' thinking. Classes are very well managed and organised. Good use is made of individual education plans in mathematics to plan work closely to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs. This, together with much additional support offered by the competent classroom assistants, is an important factor in helping these pupils make very good progress towards the targets set for them.
- 107 The school has made a good start in implementing the National Numeracy Strategy and has built up a bank of appropriate resources to support the pupils' learning. Lesson objectives are shared with the pupils and form the basis for effective evaluation. For example, in a Year 6 class, assessments of the previous day's work on partitioning formed the basis for the next lesson, helping to correct some misconceptions and to consolidate effectively the pupils' learning. Group work was planned carefully to meet the needs of pupils of different levels of ability. This enabled almost all pupils in this lesson to make good progress in relation to their prior

attainment.

- 108 Since the last inspection, the quality of teaching has improved significantly, especially in planning, where the work is now matched more closely to the needs of pupils of different levels of ability. Much better use is made of assessment strategies to plan future work. In addition, teachers' expectations are higher and learning objectives are now shared with the pupils.
- 109 The subject is well co-ordinated and monitored. Careful analysis of test results is a regular feature in mathematics. In the attempt to raise standards further, the introduction of the Maths Recovery Project and the appointment of more classroom assistants to help those pupils identified for additional support is having a positive impact. The content of the work meets fully the requirements of the National Curriculum and the subject makes an important contribution, not only to the aims of the school, but also to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school is making good progress in providing a more inclusive curriculum, especially in setting its pupils appropriate challenges and in responding to their diverse learning needs.

## **SCIENCE**

- 110 Inspection evidence indicates that standards at the end of Key Stage 1 are broadly in line with those found nationally. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in relation to their prior attainment.
- 111 At the end of Key Stage 2, the overall standards achieved by the majority of pupils are close to national expectations, although their attainment in investigative science is below that expected for their age. The performance of pupils over time shows an improving picture and this is confirmed by the most recent test results, which show an increase in the proportion of pupils reaching or exceeding Level 4, the national standard. This is a better picture than that existing at the time of the last inspection. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in relation to their prior attainment.
- 112 At Key Stage 1, the pupils extend their scientific knowledge and skills effectively through their investigations into observable differences between their hair and eye colour, and use non-standard measurement to make comparisons of their heights. They are able to record these differences in graphs and charts. Through their studies of the food they eat, they begin to group foods into healthy and unhealthy categories and to understand the importance of a balanced diet. They study an appropriate range of science topics, with sufficient emphasis on practical investigation, and learn to record their observations in appropriate ways for their age, for example in labelled drawings and block graphs. They learn about pushes and pulls, things that work by electricity, the properties of materials and the basic needs of living things. Through activities such as cooking pasta and toasting bread they learn very successfully about how materials can be changed permanently.
- 113 At Key Stage 2, pupils study a good range of subject matter and acquire an appropriate scientific vocabulary to support their learning. They are given opportunities to explore magnetic phenomena and know which materials are attracted to magnets. Through their investigations into the preference of worms for light or dark they extend their knowledge of habitats and the needs of living things. In their investigation of air as a material they know that they must repeat their experiment in order to check their results. In their studies of root systems they note observable features and compare the functions of roots in plants of different sizes. Through their

scientific investigations they are acquiring a sound basis of factual knowledge but their ability to carry out systematic experiments, collect accurate data and record this in appropriate ways is below that expected for their ages. There are too few opportunities for representing their results in line and bar graphs and for analysing and interpreting their results in order to answer scientific questions.

- 114 Throughout the school most pupils take part in science lessons with enthusiasm and co-operate well with each other in their group work. They are keen to show what they know by answering teachers' questions and they enjoy practical activities. They are less good at sustaining effort in their written work and often fail to complete the tasks they are set in the time allowed.
- 115 At Key Stage 1, the quality of teaching is consistently good. The activities chosen are well matched to the abilities and interests of the pupils and teachers use good questioning techniques to consolidate and extend the pupils' learning. The lessons are well organised and managed and the teachers have high expectations of their pupils. The learning objectives for lessons are clear and achievable and appropriate provision is made for pupils with special educational needs.
- 116 At Key Stage 2, the teaching is satisfactory and often good. All of the lessons observed were at least satisfactory and 46 per cent were good. In the good lessons teachers give their pupils sufficient levels of challenge through practical investigative work, for example in investigating air as a material. The pupils are required to reflect on the accuracy of their results and to evaluate their findings in terms of the question under investigation. In a minority of less successful lessons the pupils take part in suitable practical activities but their scientific enquiry skills are not developed to a sufficiently high level. The teachers do not plan sufficient opportunities that require the pupils to record careful data in charts and graphs that they can evaluate and interpret. In some classes the teachers lack confidence in their own subject knowledge in this aspect of science, and do not challenge the pupils' thinking to a sufficiently high level for their ages and abilities.
- 117 The school makes good use of available test data to evaluate the standards and teaching of the subject in order to identify areas for future development. In the shorter term, assessment information is used less effectively to target the needs of pupils and raise expectations in lessons, particularly at Key Stage 2. The programme of work meets the requirements of the National Curriculum.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY, AND ART AND DESIGN**

- 118 Standards in both subjects are in line with those set by the National Curriculum at both key stages. In both subjects, pupils at all levels of ability, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in relation to their prior attainment. The school is making good progress in implementing the new curricular requirements in both subjects. Appropriate provision is made for all pupils, who have full access to all aspects of the curriculum.

- 119 In design and technology, the great majority of pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 are well on course to meet the national expectations by the end of Year 2. They generate ideas effectively and plan what to do next, drawing on previous investigation of particular topics. For example, in Year 1, pupils were able to design a teddy bear, incorporating simple lever techniques for moving parts of the bear's body. In Year 2, pupils completed investigations of different types of vehicles before designing their own. They were able to show more than one view in their designs and to label main parts clearly and accurately.
- 120 At Key Stage 2, pupils build effectively on these early skills. By the end of the key stage, they begin to take user preferences into consideration when planning and designing their products and include increasing detail in their plans. They are able to adapt their designs for various purposes. For example, in Year 4, where pupils designed a purse to be produced as a Christmas gift, one pupil included a heart in the design to signify his love for his mother. Some of the projects involve careful research. For example, in Year 5, pupils examined a range of musical instruments to find the different ways sound is produced, before designing and making their own instrument. Pupils take time to reflect on their designs in order to consider how they might be improved. During the course of the academic year, pupils engage in a range of designing and making activities which involve working with a variety of materials, incorporating different techniques for creating movement, and selecting and using appropriate tools and equipment.
- 121 In art and design, the great majority of pupils show confidence in exploring ideas, using a variety of materials. They show particularly good skills in drawing and use of pastels. In Year 1, for example, the pupils produced some very good results following direct observational drawings of fruit cut in half. They successfully explore different ways of producing designs. This was apparent, for example, when a class used polystyrene tiles to print an image on paper, and produced an attractive effect through repeated printing of the same image. Pupils comment on the degree of success they achieve and suggest ways of making improvements. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils show confidence in using visual information, which they have collected, to develop their work and create interesting compositions. In Year 5, for example, following direct observational drawings of plants and flowers during a previous lesson, pupils made effective use of the visual information they had collected to create their own compositions. During the academic year, they engage in activities which involve the use of a variety of materials and include two and three dimensional work.
- 122 The quality of teaching in both subjects is good at both key stages. Work is planned effectively to provide an appropriate challenge to pupils at all levels of ability. Pupils respond positively to challenging work, work productively and take a pride in their achievements. Clear explanation and effective questioning skills are strong features in the teaching. This gives pupils a good understanding of what is required of them and draws effectively on their imagination and creativity. Lessons are well organised, enabling pupils to have easy access to relevant equipment, resources and materials. Class management is consistently good, promoting very good standards of behaviour in all classes. The study of famous artists from this and other countries, helps to develop pupils' awareness of their own and other cultures.
- 123 Since the last inspection, standards in art and design have improved at both key stages, and standards in design and technology have been maintained. In both subjects, the quality of teaching has improved from satisfactory to good.

## HISTORY and GEOGRAPHY

- 124 Due to the timing of the inspection and the school's timetabling arrangements it was only possible to see history and geography being taught in a limited number of classes at both key stages. The evidence from these lessons and scrutiny of the pupils' work indicates that standards, at the end of both key stages, are in line with those expected for age in both subjects, and pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, make good progress.
- 125 In history at Key Stage 1, the pupils show a good understanding of the distinction between the recent past and the present when they examine old toys and compare them with their own toys. They begin to use appropriate language to describe past events and artefacts and can recognise ways in which their own lives are different from those of people in the recent past. They are able to find out about the past from stories, pictures and artefacts and by interviewing older people, for example when they talked to a visitor about how holidays have changed during living memory. In their studies of significant historical figures, for example Florence Nightingale, they develop appropriate levels of understanding of how people in the past have made a contribution to their own lives.
- 126 At Key Stage 2, the pupils' work in history shows that they are building successfully on earlier work. They are able to use successfully a variety of sources, such as books and the internet, to research information about the past. They use time lines effectively to set people and events in an historical context, and recognise that there may be different points of view about the past. Through their studies of topics such as 'The Tudors' and 'Ancient Egypt', the pupils gain a good range of factual knowledge. They are able to place events and periods studied within a chronological framework, for example, placing Henry VIII correctly in a time line, and use contemporary pictures to gain information about Tudor clothing and lifestyle. The older pupils begin to interpret information about the past and, in Year 6, they were able to identify sensitively with the feelings of evacuees during the second World War.
- 127 In geography at Key Stage 1, the pupils develop their study skills very successfully through activities related to the 'Katie Morag' stories. They learn appropriate geographical vocabulary and develop a secure knowledge of island communities and transport systems. The work in their books shows that they are able to use secondary sources, such as aerial photographs, to identify features in the local community. They become familiar with maps to represent an area such as the local park and develop their understanding of direction.
- 128 In geography at Key Stage 2, older pupils show, through their studies of their own and more distant localities, a good ability to name countries and geographical features on a larger scale. In Year 6, the pupils' research into the world's highest mountains demonstrated their ability to use maps and keys successfully to locate countries and to name some continents. In Year 3, the pupils very successfully studied their own locality, expressed opinions and preferences and wrote letters to the press describing the strengths of the area. During Key Stage 2, the pupils make good progress in developing their ideas about environmental issues such as pollution and recycling, and carry out relevant fieldwork for topics such as the water cycle and land use.



- 129 The pupils respond with interest to their work in geography and history and most behave well. They contribute confidently to class and group discussions and express opinions about the issues and localities being studied. However, their written responses do not always reflect their growing knowledge and understanding. The extent of sustained effort applied to written work and presentation is often limited and does not do justice to their learning.
- 130 The quality of teaching in history and geography at Key Stage 1 is consistently good. The teachers choose contexts which successfully engage the interests of the pupils, for example, the use of old toys to develop understanding about the past and the use of popular stories as a basis for geography study. They are very skilful in building and consolidating the pupils' understanding through questions and discussions. The good relationships which exist between the pupils and their teachers are very conducive to quality learning. The correct subject vocabulary is carefully emphasised and teachers interact very purposefully with the pupils to guide learning in group activities.
- 131 At Key Stage 2, the quality of teaching in history and geography is generally good and sometimes very good. The very good lessons are well prepared and achieve a good pace, which challenges the thinking of the pupils and captures their imagination. This was apparent, for example, when pupils in Year 4 used drama to raise and answer questions about Henry VIII. Most lessons have precise learning objectives and build securely on previous learning. A geography lesson in Year 6, about the location of the highest mountain ranges, built successfully on previous learning about how mountains are formed. The teachers know their pupils well and plan lessons to meet the range of abilities so that all can make good progress.
- 132 The subjects are very well managed. Both have recently adopted new schemes of work, and good systems are in place for monitoring their effectiveness in improving provision for the school. Standards in the subjects are effectively monitored by sampling the work of pupils throughout the school. However, the school has yet to develop appropriate systems for recording the progress of individual pupils and assessment information is not used systematically to help teachers plan the next stage of learning. Where information and communication technology is used, it is effective in supporting learning. However, in both subjects, ICT is not yet used systematically to support learning.
- 133 The programmes of work in history and geography generally meet the requirements of the National Curriculum. Good provision is made for all pupils, irrespective of race, gender, background or ability. In history, the study of great people from the past, contributes towards pupils' knowledge of their own culture. In geography, studies of other countries helps to extend pupils' awareness and appreciation of other cultures.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)**

- 134 By the end of Key Stage 1, standards are broadly in line with the national expectation, and pupils at all levels of attainment make satisfactory progress in relation to their prior attainment.

- 135 By the end of Key Stage 2, standards are generally above the national expectations, and the great majority of pupils make very good progress in relation to their prior attainment.
- 136 The programme of work meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. Although increasing emphasis is placed on creating opportunities in other subjects for pupils to extend their skills in ICT, this is not yet a consistent feature in the learning of all classes and across the subjects. The subject makes a particularly valuable contribution towards pupils' social development. They learn to co-operate effectively to overcome difficulties and share skills.
- 137 The youngest pupils develop confidence in using the mouse to control a screen image. In Year 1, for example, they were able to access and move relevant parts of clothing to dress a teddy bear. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils demonstrate confidence in using the keyboard to produce simple text, and know how to amend the text by deleting a mistake, making a space, or changing upper or lower case letters as required. During the course of the year, pupils at Key Stage 1 extend their skills in handling information. They produce pictograms to represent information gathered as part of class surveys. In addition, they extend their understanding of control technology, and are able to enter a set of instructions to programme a robotic toy to travel certain distances and change direction.
- 138 At Key Stage 2, the rate of progress increases significantly, and pupils benefit greatly from regularly timetabled lessons in the computer suite. From an early stage, they work at levels which are above those expected for their age. In Year 3, for example, the pupils confidently adjust the colour and size of font to suit the requirement of particular tasks, and a significant proportion confidently incorporate illustrations to complement text when producing a greetings card. They make very good progress in handling information and recognise the need for care and accuracy when searching for information, using the CD-ROM or the Internet. The ability of some of the younger Key Stage 2 pupils to use spreadsheet methods to solve problems in mathematics is a particularly impressive feature in their learning. In control technology, pupils extend their skills through the use of "Super Logo". They are able to enter a set of instructions to programme a screen image to draw a variety of geometrical shapes.
- 139 By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils use ICT to structure, refine and present information in different forms and styles for specific purposes. They exchange information with others in various ways including the use of e-mail. Each pupil has a password and e-mail number. They know how to "log on" and access the Internet. In Year 6, for example, pupils confidently searched for information about the Sydney Olympic Games, which commenced during the week of the inspection. A recent development has been the use of video conferencing for particular purposes, including exchanging information with other schools. This new facility is also enabling pupils to benefit from music and Spanish lessons taken by tutors based at a separate location.
- 140 Opportunities in communicating and handling information have a positive effect on the development of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. However, in some classes, insufficient opportunities are created for pupils to extend their ICT skills during work in other subjects. The school recognises this and has included it as a priority in the current school development plan.

- 141 The quality of teaching is good at Key Stage 1 and generally very good at Key Stage 2, where 60 per cent of lessons observed were in that category. Regularly timetabled lessons in the computer suite at Key Stage 2 contribute significantly towards the very good progress which pupils are making in extending their ICT skills. During these lessons, the work is pitched at a level which indicates their teachers' high expectations of them. Pupils respond positively to challenging work and show confidence in learning through trial and error. At both key stages, clear explanation and good questioning skills by teachers help to stimulate interest. Pupils concentrate well and are able to apply effectively the guidance provided by their teachers. This helps them to make good progress during their work at computer work stations at Key Stage 1, and in the computer suite at Key Stage 2. Class management is good in all lessons, and this promotes good behaviour and a high level of productivity by the pupils. The high level of teacher expertise is an important factor in promoting the very good rate of pupils' progress at Key Stage 2.
- 142 The work in ICT is co-ordinated effectively. However, assessment procedures are not clearly defined. They need to be strengthened so that they match those currently in place for English and mathematics. Since the last inspection, the school has made considerable progress in improving standards at Key Stage 2, which were described as satisfactory in the previous report. In addition, the quality of teaching at Key Stage 2, previously described as satisfactory, has improved significantly and is now very good.

## **MUSIC**

- 143 The school is currently in a transitional stage of introducing the amended National Curriculum. Standards at both key stages are broadly in line with the national expectation, and most pupils, at all levels of attainment, make at least satisfactory progress during their time in school.
- 144 Pupils at Key Stage 1 make good progress. Pupils in Year 1 are familiar with repeating musical patterns. For example, they sing "I'm a Music Man", and are able to clap in two and three time. They are able to recognise and name a range of untuned percussion instruments and are familiar with the sounds they produce. They develop a good sense of performance and are able to follow a leader. The pupils in Year 2 are familiar with a musical extract from "Jupiter" in Holst's "Planet Suite". They sing a collection of songs, such as "Catch a Falling Star" and "The City of Stars", showing increasing tonal quality. In assemblies, the pupils sing simple melodies well, supported by clapping and actions. An important contribution is made to their spiritual development as they listen to extracts from such quality music as Pachelbel's "Canon" and Bach's "Orchestral Suite".
- 145 At Key Stage 2, pupils in Year 3 are familiar with long and short sounds. They sing with good variations in speed. Pupils in Year 4 have a good understanding of the difference between beat and rhythm. Their performance of "The Fantastic Toy Shop" demonstrates a good understanding of rhythmic patterns and an ability to keep in time when following a conductor. Higher attaining pupils have a good sense of performance. Year 5 pupils develop composition skills effectively by creating musical phrases from six given notes and performing them on the glockenspiel to the class. Higher attaining pupils extend performance skills through the video conferencing link with the Liverpool Institute of Performing Arts. The pupils make a brave effort at unaccompanied singing in assemblies, but the absence of a suitable pianist is a clear disadvantage. The pupils generally respond positively to work in music. They are well behaved and handle the expensive instruments and resources they are using with

care. They collaborate effectively when playing in group activities and relationships between the pupils and the teacher are mature and productive. The pupils' enthusiasm is effectively shaped into performances of reasonable quality. They effectively appraise their own and each other's performances, and listen well in lessons and assemblies to music from a range of cultures.

- 146 The quality of teaching is satisfactory at both key stages. The majority of teachers are non-specialist musicians and depend heavily upon commercially produced schemes of work. Lessons are well prepared and planned and have clear learning objectives. The best lessons include a range of teaching strategies, which make a significant contribution to the pace of work and help to sustain the pupils' interest. Resources are used effectively to support the pupils' learning. Their work is effectively assessed as the lesson proceeds. Music makes only a limited contribution to the development of literacy and numeracy, with the emphasis being on performance rather than written work.
- 147 Since the last inspection, there has been clear progression in the planning of the music curriculum, which helps to develop the pupils' musical skills and knowledge in a systematic way. The response of the pupils at Key Stage 2 has improved significantly and the majority of them are serious minded about music lessons.
- 148 Extra-curricular music, such as participation in the Liverpool Festival of Music and Drama and a whole school production of "The Old Russian Shoemaker", serve to capture pupils' interest and extend their musical skills.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

- 149 By the end of both key stages, standards are above the national expectation. The great majority of the pupils, including those with special educational needs, make very good progress in relation to their prior attainment.
- 150 In games at Key Stage 1, the pupils demonstrate increasing ball skills, especially in sending and receiving activities. Many of the pupils are particularly agile, and by the end of the key stage they show good control of their bodily movements. They maintain this good progress during Key Stage 2, where they acquire good skills and techniques, which they apply in small sided games, using simple tactics for attacking and defending.
- 151 At Key Stage 1, in dance lessons, the pupils use movement imaginatively. For example, in a "Harvest Time" dance a class of younger pupils, responding to a well chosen piece of music, made expressive use of their hands and faces when climbing a ladder to pick apples. By the end of the lesson they were able to create and perform their own dance, using effectively basic movement patterns.
- 152 By the end of Key Stage 2, the pupils demonstrate good skills in gymnastics. They understand why they must warm up and why physical activity is good for their health. They understand how to devise and perform fluent movement sequences on the floor using variations in levels, speed and direction. The pupils respond well to evaluative comments, refining their movements and seeking improvements in their work.

- 153 The pupils enjoy work in physical education. They respond positively in all lessons and listen attentively to instructions. In group and paired work they co-operate effectively and their behaviour in lessons is generally very good.
- 154 At both key stages, the quality of teaching is at least good and frequently very good. The teaching demonstrates good subject knowledge and expertise, which are important factors in supporting the pupils' good progress. Lessons are planned effectively and the pupils are set challenging tasks which interest and motivate them. Good use is made of assessment during lessons to help the pupils to improve the quality of their performance.
- 155 The programme of work in physical education is well co-ordinated and the different elements are balanced appropriately during the academic year. In addition to the lessons observed, gymnastics at Key Stage 1, and dance, athletic activities, outdoor and adventurous activities and swimming at Key Stage 2, are taught at other times of the year. Last year, almost all Year 6 pupils were able to swim at least 25 metres unaided.
- 156 Since the last inspection, the good standards in physical education have been maintained. All pupils have full access to all aspects of the curriculum and the contributions of all pupils are valued. The curriculum meets fully the requirements of the National Curriculum and is enhanced by a range of extra-curricular sporting activities, which are well attended and open equally to boys and girls. The school competes successfully in sporting activities against other schools. Currently, the football team are league champions. In addition to extending pupils' games skills, extra-curricular activities make a significant contribution towards their social development. They learn to support each other, contribute as members of teams, and combine their skills effectively.