

# INSPECTION REPORT

**ST SILAS C OF E SCHOOL**

Liverpool

LEA area: Liverpool

Unique reference number: 104615

Headteacher: Mr P Stephens

Reporting inspector: Mr P Edwards  
21069

Dates of inspection: 30<sup>th</sup> October – 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2000

Inspection number: 225108

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior  
School category: Voluntary controlled  
Age range of pupils: 4 - 11  
Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: High Park Street  
Liverpool  
Postcode: L8 3TR  
Telephone number: 01517276067  
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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body  
Name of chair of governors: Rev D Kirkwood

Date of previous inspection: 18<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> May 1998

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr Paul Edwards	Registered inspector	Foundation Stage Information technology Music	What sort of school is it? How high are the standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
Mr Bernard Eyre	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development The quality of links with the community How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents? The extent to which the school makes the best strategic use of its resources. Staffing, accommodation and resources.
Mr John Foster	Team inspector	Science Design and technology Geography Physical education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to the pupils?
Mr Chris Scola	Team Inspector	English Art Special educational needs Equal opportunities	How well the school cultivates pupils' personal development.
Mrs Linda Parkinson	Team Inspector	Mathematics Religious education History	The effectiveness of the school's assessment procedures.

Mrs Jenny Young	Team inspector	English as an additional language	
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Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Registrar  
Inspection Quality Division  
The Office for Standards in Education  
Alexandra House  
33 Kingsway  
London WC2B 6SE

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

St Silas C of E Primary School is situated in Toxteth, Liverpool and is similar in size to the average primary school with 190 pupils on roll, 95 boys and 95 girls. Just under 80 per cent of the pupils are eligible for free school meals and this is well above the national average. Over 33 per cent of the pupils speak English as an additional language and this is very high. Two pupils have statements of special educational needs which is below the national average but 31 per cent of the pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs which is above average. Most of the pupils have experienced some pre-school education prior to starting school but their attainment on entry to St Silas is well below average. The pupil mobility in the school is relatively high with almost 17 per cent of the pupils starting school after the normal admission age and seven per cent leaving the school before they enter secondary education. The school is part of an Education Action Zone and has very recently become part of the Excellence in Cities project.

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

St Silas is an improving school. Although not yet high enough, standards are improving. The majority of teaching is at least satisfactory with a significant amount of very good teaching which has resulted in higher standards, particularly at the end of Key Stage 2. Most of the pupils behave well and enjoy coming to school. The senior management team provides good leadership and there is a shared vision for the school's continued improvement. The capacity for such improvement is good. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

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

- Good progress has been made in raising standards in science.
- There is a high proportion of very good teaching in Years 5 and 6.
- The literacy and numeracy strategies have been implemented effectively and are having a positive impact on standards.
- There is very good provision for those pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language.
- Behaviour is mostly good and the relationships between pupils and between staff and pupils are positive.

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

- Standards in English and mathematics in some classes.
- The pupils need more opportunities to carry out investigative activities in science and to develop their mathematical skills through real life situations.
- The monitoring of the pupils' individual reading is not rigorous enough.
- Attendance is unsatisfactory.
- The involvement of the governors in the work of the school.

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

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

In the two years since the previous inspection, when the school had serious weaknesses, good improvements have been made. Standards in science have improved significantly and there have been good improvements in English and mathematics, although standards in these subjects need to rise

further. The assessment procedures have been developed and implemented effectively and are being well used to help raise standards. The quality of provision for pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language is very good and helps these pupils to make rapid progress. Higher attaining pupils are provided with more challenging work in many classes but this good practice needs to be extended to all classes. The pupils' attendance is monitored rigorously, but it is still below the national average. The issues relating to the work of the governing body have been addressed satisfactorily but the workload falls on a small number of committed governors. The senior management team has been strengthened. The deputy headteacher gives very good support to the headteacher enabling the school's clear vision for improvement to be implemented.

## STANDARDS

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

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

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

This table shows that in the 2000 National Curriculum tests at age eleven the standards in English and mathematics were well below the national average but above average in science. In comparison with similar schools, standards are average in English, below average in mathematics and well above average in science. Inspection evidence shows the proportion of pupils attaining the expected level in English and mathematics has improved steadily, but the standards achieved by the current Year 6 pupils are still below national expectations for these two subjects. Just under 50 per cent of the pupils have English as an additional language, a significant number arriving from their country with no English. There is also a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in the school. Attainment in all other subjects at the end of Key Stage 2 is in line with national expectations, apart from art where it is better.

At the end of Key Stage 1 attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is below average although the pupils make satisfactory progress. Attainment in history is below national expectations and religious education is below the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus at the end of both key stages. Progress in these two subjects is affected by the pupils' inability to articulate their understanding both verbally and in writing. Attainment in all other subjects is in line with national expectations.

The children in the Foundation stage make satisfactory progress although the poor levels of attainment on entry to the school mean that few are likely to attain the early learning goals in personal, social development and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative and physical development.



## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. The vast majority of pupils have good attitudes to learning and school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. A small number of pupils demonstrate challenging behaviour in class but behaviour in the playground is good. Relationships between pupils and staff and pupils are generally good. All staff are consistent in their use of praise and encouragement.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils of different ages and backgrounds relate to each other well and to the teaching and support staff. All staff provide good role models.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. Although it has improved, the rate of attendance is still below the national average. As part of the school's involvement in the EAZ, additional staff have been employed to monitor and follow up pupils' absences.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
64 lessons seen overall	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	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 at least satisfactory in 94 per cent of the lessons. It is good in 34.5 per cent of lessons, very good in 23.5 per cent and excellent in three per cent. It is unsatisfactory in six per cent of lessons. The teaching is particularly effective in Years 5 and 6 where it is very rarely less than good. In these lessons, the pupils are challenged to achieve, the teachers' enthusiasm encourages the pupils to do their best and no time is wasted. The teaching of pupils for whom English is an additional language is very good. The quality of provision enables them to make rapid progress. The pupils with special educational needs make good progress due to the early identification of their needs and the good quality teaching. Literacy and numeracy are generally taught well, although the lessons are too long in some classes and this diminishes their effectiveness as the children become restless. The other main cause of unsatisfactory teaching is the poor management of difficult pupils and this affects the learning for all pupils in the class. The teaching of those pupils in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory overall. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage is satisfactory and appropriate emphasis is placed on subjects of the National Curriculum in Key Stages 1 and 2. More effective use could be made of time in some classes, particularly in literacy and numeracy where lessons are too long and the pupils become restless.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. The pupils are supported well and the planned work is matched closely to the pupils' individual needs. The pupils' progress is monitored very effectively. Support assistants make a valuable contribution to the pupils' learning.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Very good. The pupils receive very good teaching, particularly in their small group sessions. The stimulating teaching provides very good opportunities to accelerate the acquisition of language skills.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. Assemblies provide opportunities for spiritual development and there is a strong moral framework. The pupils contribute to the life of the school through the School Council and cultural development is effectively provided for through a range of activities both within and outside lessons.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Child protection procedures are satisfactory overall, although training should be extended to all staff. Arrangements for assessing the pupils' progress are good, as are the procedures for monitoring attendance, behaviour and the pupils' welfare.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher and deputy make an effective team that provides good leadership and a clear educational direction. There has been a focus, rightly, on improving standards in English and mathematics. Subject co-ordinators are committed and work hard to support staff and raise standards in their subjects.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	There is a strong commitment by a small number of governors. They are supportive and provide good help to the school. However, some of the meetings are inquorate and, overall, the governing body is not as effective as it might be.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The school has worked hard since the previous inspection to determine how things might be improved. Priorities for development are very relevant and have been set out clearly in the school development plan.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Good use is made of specific grants and the use of staffing for pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. The governors need to have a greater awareness

	of the impact spending on resources is having on raising standards.
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There is a good number of teaching and support staff. The accommodation is spacious and well maintained by the caretaking staff. Attention needs to be given to the leaking roofs. The quantity and quality of resources is satisfactory.

**PARENTS’ AND CARERS’ VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

<b>What pleases parents most</b>	<b>What parents would like to see improved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents say their children enjoy coming to school.</li> <li>• The children are encouraged to work hard and make good progress.</li> <li>• Teaching is good.</li> <li>• Most parents feel the school achieves good standards of behaviour.</li> <li>• Parents feel welcome at the school and find staff are approachable.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The range and number of out of school activities.</li> </ul>

Inspection findings mainly support the parents’ positive views. Whilst there is some good and very good teaching, the quality is satisfactory overall. The range and number of out of school activities is satisfactory.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. When the children start school, although the range of their attainment is very broad, their overall levels of attainment are poor. During their time in the Reception class, the children make satisfactory progress in all areas of learning but few are likely to achieve the early learning goals in these areas.
2. In 2000, in the National Curriculum tests taken at the age of seven, the percentage of pupils reaching or exceeding the expected Level 2 in reading, writing and mathematics was well below the national average. The percentage of pupils attaining the higher Level 3 was also well below average. In comparison with similar schools, the results are average for reading and writing and below average in mathematics.
3. The results of the 2000 National Curriculum tests show that at the end of Key Stage 2, the pupils' performance in English and mathematics was well below the national average. It was above the national average in science. However, when comparing the results with similar schools, attainment is broadly average in English, below average in mathematics and well above average in science. To achieve these standards, the pupils have made satisfactory progress through much of the school and good or better progress in Years 5 and 6. Whilst very few pupils have statements of special educational need, a significant proportion do find learning difficult and a high proportion of pupils have English as an additional language, many of whom are at an early stage in their learning of English. The results, therefore show that most pupils are making satisfactory progress over their time in the school but there is still room for improvement in English and mathematics.
4. The results for the four years 1997 to 2000 show the performance of pupils in English, mathematics and science to be well below the national average. Over the four years, the rate of improvement in all three core subjects has been in line with the national average. The improvement over the last two years has been more pronounced and this is due in part to the improved quality of teaching. The school has placed considerable emphasis on ensuring those pupils for whom English is an additional language achieve their full potential. The high quality of support these pupils receive has also been a factor in the improved standards over the last two years. The school exceeded the targets it had been set in both literacy and numeracy for the Year 2000.
5. The additional literacy support for pupils in Year 4 and the homework club have helped the pupils to achieve higher standards. The Parent School Partnership, a local education authority initiative, is helping to raise literacy and numeracy skills amongst parents and this is beginning to have an impact on their children's achievements.
6. The pupils start school with poor speaking and listening skills and although they make satisfactory progress in both Key Stage 1 and 2 the standards are still below average. Standards in reading are below average at the end of both key stages. The pupils in Key Stage 1 have a secure grasp of letter sounds with more able pupils developing a good sight vocabulary. In Key Stage 2 the more able pupils make good progress in their reading but the average and lower achieving pupils do not make the same rate of progress. The school has rightly identified the need to ensure all pupils are presented with regular opportunities to read to adults and for them to be set targets as to how they can improve. Attainment in writing is below average at the end of both key stages. The pupils make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1 beginning to write common words

accurately and the more able pupils compose interesting and longer stories. Their progress is inhibited due to the over-use of worksheets. Progress is better in Key Stage 2 and particularly good in Years 5 and 6. The pupils write in a range of styles, use punctuation effectively and many are developing a neat cursive script. Standards in English are improving, due to the effective implementation of the literacy strategy and the improvements in teaching.

7. Whilst attainment at the end of both key stages in mathematics is below average, progress overall is good and standards have improved. The school has implemented the National Numeracy Strategy. At the end of Key Stage 1, most of the pupils have developed sufficient numeracy skills to carry out simple addition and subtraction with higher attaining pupils adding and subtracting to a hundred and knowing the place value of numbers. Most pupils recognise 2D shapes and can measure accurately. These skills are built upon in Key Stage 2, enabling the pupils to develop their mental arithmetic skills which improve quickly as their confidence improves. The high quality of teaching in Years 5 and 6 has a significant impact on the rate of the pupils' progress.
8. The pupils make good progress in science. Improved assessment procedures, effective implementation of the science scheme and better teaching have helped to raise standards which are broadly in line with the national average. Standards in information technology have improved due to the regular teaching of skills in the recently established computer suite. Standards are broadly average at the end of both key stages, and the use of spreadsheets and Internet research skills are improving rapidly.
9. Attainment in design and technology, geography, music, and physical education is in line with that expected of pupils of a similar age at the end of both key stages and the pupils make satisfactory progress. Attainment in art is in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 but the pupils make particularly good progress towards the end of Key Stage 2 and achieve higher standards than expected. Attainment in history and religious education is below national expectations but the pupils make satisfactory progress through both key stages.
10. The pupils for whom English is an additional language make good progress. Their progress is assessed carefully and their learning targets are adjusted to best fit their individual needs. Because of the strong and effective relationships that exist between the teacher and the pupils, the pupils make very good in their knowledge and understanding of English. The pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets in their individual educational plans and in lessons. They have positive attitudes to their work.

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

11. The pupils have good attitudes to their work. Conversations with the pupils confirm that they like school and the parents who returned the pre-inspection questionnaire endorse this view.
12. The pupils enjoy lessons, although a number find it difficult to concentrate on their work. As they move up the school they become more attentive and the quality of their work reflects this. Where teachers make lessons particularly interesting, attention is sustained and good progress is made in the pupils' learning. In most lessons the pupils offer help to each other and show understanding when their colleagues find their task difficult.
13. The behaviour of the pupils is mostly good. Before the inspection a few parents expressed concerns regarding this, suggesting that there was unsatisfactory behaviour. During the inspection only a small amount of unsatisfactory behaviour was observed. Discussions with teachers and support staff confirm that the behaviour of the pupils has much improved. There

have been no exclusions. The introduction of the positive behaviour policy, coupled with the consistent use of praise and encouragement by the teachers, works effectively in most lessons.

14. The pupils of all backgrounds are considerate and they work together well. Playtimes are happy occasions; boisterousness is kept within acceptable bounds and lively games are kept at a distance from those pupils who wish to be quiet or reflective. The playground is enhanced by the excellent range of equipment that allows the children to take part in a range of games.
15. The pupils' personal development is good. There are numerous opportunities for the pupils to take responsibility. For example helping the mid-day meals supervisors to look after the younger pupils; helping in classroom routines and with administrative tasks such as taking registers to and from the office. Opportunities for independent study are less well developed although the homework makes a valuable contribution to aiding the pupils' learning.
16. Relationships throughout the school are good. Adults and the pupils relate well to each other in an open and trusting manner. Visitors are greeted warmly. The parents who help in the classrooms are fully involved. Overall, the good quality of relationships is a strength of the school; this contributes positively to the pupils' personal development and learning.
17. Attendance remains unsatisfactory although it has improved since the last inspection, especially in the amount of unauthorised absence, which, in the current academic year is now close to the national average. Additional staff made available through the Education Action Zone have been allocated to address the poor level of attendance of some pupils; there are early signs to indicate that this helping to improve attendance and punctuality.

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

18. The quality of teaching throughout the school is satisfactory overall but it is frequently good or better in Years 5 and 6. Thirty three per cent of lessons were satisfactory, 34.5 per cent good, and 23.5 per cent very good and three per cent excellent. This is an improvement since the last inspection when ten per cent of the lessons were judged to be unsatisfactory. There has also been an improvement in the amount of very good teaching.
19. Teaching is satisfactory for the children in the Foundation stage in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative and physical development. The children make satisfactory progress in all areas. In both Key Stages 1 and 2 the teaching of English, mathematics and science is satisfactory overall but particularly good towards the end of Key Stage 2. As a result, the pupils' progress is mainly satisfactory but there is considerably better progress in the pupils' final two years at the school. Both the literacy and numeracy strategies have been implemented effectively. However, the pupils enter school with low levels of attainment, and their achievements in English and mathematics are still below the national average. The teaching of science is satisfactory throughout Key Stage 1 but good in Key Stage 2 resulting in standards that are broadly average by the time the pupils leave school at the age of eleven.
20. The teaching of information and communication technology, history, geography and physical education is satisfactory and good in art, design and technology, music and religious education in both key stages. The teaching is best in Years 5 and 6.
21. The pupils for whom English is an additional language receive very good teaching, particularly in their small group sessions. The stimulating teaching provides very good opportunities to

accelerate the acquisition of language skills. The lessons are managed and organised very well. A close liaison with the class teachers and joint planning enables individual pupils' needs to be discussed and catered for very effectively. The staff have a very good knowledge and understanding of the pupils' needs. The support teacher deploys the two support assistants very effectively. High quality displays, resources and visual aids are well used throughout school. Many resources are made by the support teacher according to the topic focus or individual learning needs of the pupils. This has a significant impact on how the pupils learn and the progress that they make. There is early identification of those pupils with special educational needs. The quality of their individual education plans is very good overall. The targets are clear and measurable. In lessons, the pupils with special educational needs are well supported both by teachers and support assistants and, as a result, they make good progress.

22. The teachers' planning for literacy and numeracy is good, as is their knowledge of the subjects. In these subjects, the planning usually takes account of the pupils' abilities and work is planned in line with the recommended strategies. Good use is made of the introductory sessions to gain the pupils' interest although some sessions go on for far too long with the result that the pupils' interest wanes towards the latter part of the lesson. Many of the pupils have a very short concentration span and consideration should be given to reducing the length of the lesson and ensuring an appropriate balance to the activities both within the lesson and those that come after it.
23. The methods and strategies used by the teachers are usually effective and help the pupils to acquire new skills. In the best lessons the teachers' enthusiasm, commitment and determination that all of the pupils will do their best, ensures that they make at least good progress. For example, in an excellent Year 6 numeracy lesson, where the pupils were very lively, the teacher's vitality, enthusiasm and energy ensured the pace of the lesson never dropped. The enthusiasm was infectious; the pupils thoroughly enjoyed the lesson, concentrated well and made very good progress in their understanding of the properties of shapes and the ability to measure angles accurately. The teacher's management of potentially difficult pupils was such that they made the best possible progress.
24. Most teachers generally use time and resources effectively. There is a good balance between teacher talk and pupil activity and the pupils are encouraged to get on with their tasks efficiently. The teachers make very good use of the support staff and they have a good impact on the pupils' work. There are occasions however, when time is not used effectively resulting in unsatisfactory teaching and progress. The pupils are sometimes required to sit too long during 'carpet activities' and they become fidgety and lose concentration. The teachers then chastise them and progress is not as good as it could be. In those lessons where behaviour is not managed effectively, progress is also unsatisfactory. There are a small number of pupils who are persistently naughty and the teachers need to use the school's recommended strategies for dealing with them. In the unsatisfactory lessons, far too much time was spent confronting naughty children or in praising inappropriate behaviour. Occasionally, there is an over-emphasis on the use of mundane worksheets and this restricts the pupils' progress in writing skills. The teachers do not plan sufficiently for the pupils to carry investigative science activities or to use their mathematical skills in real life situations and this is a weakness recognised by the school.
25. The teachers' assessments of their pupils' work, particularly in English and mathematics is good. However, the school recognises the need for greater attention to be given to monitoring the pupils' individual reading. Regular homework classes run after school by the teachers and attended by a good number of pupils have a positive impact on their progress. The school should continue to work to encourage other pupils to take part in regular homework activities.

26. The teachers are committed and work hard to improve the pupils' attainments. Good progress has been made in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science in particular.

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

27. The school provides an appropriate curriculum for its pupils. The previous inspection report highlighted some inadequacies in the school's provision. These were:
- Insufficient time for the teaching of science
  - No provision for sex education
  - Weaknesses in planning and time management
  - An over-emphasis on number skills in mathematics
  - A lack of overall management of the curriculum.
28. All the above inadequacies have been addressed, though there remain some weaknesses in the use of time in lessons. The deputy headteacher has overall responsibility for the curriculum and there is now a well-formulated long-term plan for the school. Medium-term planning is identified for each subject and this shows clearly when each unit of work is to be taught and the expected levels to be reached by the pupils. Short-term planning, though variable, is satisfactory. Within the plans the time allocated for each subject is identified appropriately. The major issue relating to curriculum time for science has been rectified and this has had a positive impact on standards in the subject. There is now a draft policy for sex education and it is taught as part of the science curriculum. The management of curriculum time has yet to be fully addressed. Though the school has made better provision in the subjects identified as having too little time in the previous report, too much time is spent on teaching literacy and numeracy in some classes. Some of this time could be better used in extending the work in other subjects. The school has made a specific decision, however, to concentrate on the teaching of mathematics and English in order to raise standards.
29. The school has successfully implemented the curriculum for the Foundation Stage and is teaching towards the Early Learning Goals. There is smooth progress from the Foundation Stage to Key Stage 1. The pupils of statutory age receive an appropriate curriculum covering the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. The school provides adequately for sex education, drugs awareness and health education. There are new policies for these though they are as yet in draft form. The governing body has yet to ratify the policies though they are covered as part of the science curriculum.
30. There are appropriate policies and schemes of work for all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. These incorporate effective checks to ensure full coverage of the curriculum. The staff meet regularly to discuss the development of subjects and how planning can be most effectively used to develop the curriculum.
31. The National Literacy Strategy and National Numeracy Strategy have been successfully implemented and are used effectively to develop the pupils' learning. The planning for the curriculum ensures that the pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are used effectively in other subjects.



32. The provision for the pupils with special educational needs is very good. There has been a strong emphasis on supporting the pupils' special needs at Key Stage 2 where the provision is very good. The specialist teacher has made a significant impact on the provision for this group of pupils and this has had a positive effect on their achievements. Individual education plans are written for the pupils at each stage of the special needs code of practice. Support given to help those pupils with special educational needs is very effective. The provision for those pupils for whom English is an additional language is also very good. They are provided with a stimulating curriculum that enables them to make rapid progress.
33. A number of parents felt that the provision for activities beyond school time is inadequate. Inspection findings, however, do not support this view. The provision for extra-curricular activities is good. The pupils are given the opportunities to experience a wide variety of activities. They take part in a range of sporting activities and are able to sing in the choir. There has recently been a production of "Joseph and his Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat" in which many of the pupils participated. The pupils have the opportunity to partake in a residential field trip to Colomendy, in North Wales. There is a school council made up of representatives of each class. This works effectively in developing the pupils' levels of responsibility to their fellow pupils.
34. There are appropriate links with the local community. The local clergy visit the school and teachers from the receiving secondary school work alongside the staff. However, there are limited links to the community for children in the Foundation Stage. The school utilises the facilities at local museums and art galleries well to enhance the pupils' learning. The school has a good relationship with other educational establishments in the area. Upon transfer to secondary education the pupils, parents and teachers are jointly involved in the consultation processes. Teachers from the secondary school give lessons to the Year 6 pupils, academic and pastoral information is shared; joint sporting initiatives are undertaken and these combine to ensure that the pupils' transfer to secondary education is as successful as possible.
35. The school's provision for spiritual, moral social and cultural development is good. Spiritual development is promoted successfully through the curriculum areas of art, music and history. Through religious education lessons, circle time and in collective worship, the pupils are provided with knowledge and insight into the religious beliefs of Christians and those of other faiths. There are good links with local churches and the Rector and Curate of St Philemon are regular visitors to the school. In assemblies there is always time for personal reflection and reflection on moral issues.
36. Provision for the moral development of the pupils is good. The school's behaviour policy is effective and there is a strong moral framework for the pupils. The school successfully teaches the principles that distinguish right from wrong. There are distinct, clearly documented procedures in place to promote good behaviour and each class has its own rules and aspirations displayed. A weekly assembly to celebrate success reinforces good behaviour.
37. The social development of the pupils is good. They contribute actively to the life of the school and are taught to take responsibility from an early age. There is a School Council, elected by pupils from within the school, which meets regularly. The older pupils are involved in a range of tasks that assist the smooth running of the school such as supervising the younger pupils during their lunch. There are good links with the local community. Over the year the school supports various charities.
38. The cultural development of the pupils is good and is successfully promoted through a range of activities both within and outside lessons. The school makes good use of the local area as a resource for the pupils' learning and this develops understanding of the community and its

cultural heritage. Local art galleries are visited. Appreciation of their own and other cultures is furthered by lessons in history, art and religious education. Visits to a variety of places of worship widen the pupils' perspective of many different religions.

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

39. There has been much improvement regarding assessment procedures and the use of assessment since the previous inspection. The assessment co-ordinator and staff have put a great deal of thought into developing this area of the curriculum. Procedures are now good and the use of assessment to inform planning is satisfactory.
40. The procedures are now part of a whole school policy that staff follow conscientiously because there has been a culture change and staff now see the value of assessment. The school carries out annual tests as well as the end-of-key stage tests. These are analysed so that teachers are aware of strengths and weaknesses in the pupils' learning and achievements and are able to set targets for all pupils. The school carries out diagnostic tests of the development of the pupils' writing skills. The school is looking to develop this to other areas of the literacy curriculum.
41. In the teachers' weekly planning there is very good recording of on-going assessments. The learning objectives are first of all made clear in the planning. Assessments against these are made during the week. A recording system has been developed by the school whereby the names of the pupils who exceed the objectives, or do not meet them, are recorded on the back of the planning along with an evaluation of the teaching and notes for the following week's teaching. The school needs to improve the recording of pupils' reading progress in Key Stage 2.
42. Linked to the teachers' assessments are individual targets for pupils in English and mathematics but not as yet in science or other subjects. These targets are pasted in the pupils' books where they can refer to them themselves and they can be discussed with parents.
43. The school is aware that there are still a good number of aspects needing development in the area of assessment. There is, for example, no whole school policy on:
  - the recording of precise and accurate assessment information to inform the next teacher
  - a uniform method for passing this information at the end of the year and ensuring that teachers use it efficiently for their next class of pupils
44. The booklet that the science co-ordinator has developed is an example of good practice for recording formative assessments.
45. The school ensures the safety and welfare of its pupils. Teachers and support staff work to ensure that the school is a safe place in which to learn.
46. There are good procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour. The school's positive discipline policy is clearly understood and it is generally applied in a consistent manner. The teachers praise the pupils' efforts and achievements and the pupils are dealt with firmly and fairly. When the pupils lose their concentration, the teachers quickly intervene to check them and to ensure that they get on with their work.
47. The Child Protection procedures were judged to be satisfactory at the last inspection. This is still the case, although not all staff are aware that a new child protection co-ordinator has recently

been appointed; the new co-ordinator is to undertake training in the near future and share her knowledge with her colleagues. The headteacher acts as the link with external agencies. Other health and safety matters are given good attention with a trained member of staff conducting risk assessments.

48. At the time of the last inspection the procedures for promoting good attendance were deemed to be unsatisfactory. They are now good. The office staff maintain detailed records of absences and notes of the actions they have taken subsequently. They have been strengthened by the support very recently available through the Education Action Zone initiative. These have combined to be effective overall, although problems remain in some year groups.

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

49. The school has a satisfactory relationship with parents. In their responses to questionnaires and at the parents' meeting they confirmed that they value the work of the school. Discussions with parents who assist in the running of the school confirm that there is an awareness of the efforts the school is making to help the children achieve higher standards. A few parents expressed doubts regarding the standard of behaviour in the school. Overall, the behaviour observed during the inspection was good; discussions with teachers suggest that the problems during the last academic year have been overcome.
50. The school tries hard to work in partnership with parents and involve them in the life of the school and the adult education programme provided in the parent and community room. The few parents who do become involved in the running of the school provide valuable and much appreciated assistance in lessons. There is a small but very active group of parents who run the PTA. Drama productions such as 'Joseph and his Amazing Coloured Dreamcoat' are well supported
51. The information the school provides is satisfactory. The last report said that the annual reports provided to inform parents of their child's progress gave insufficient detail. These have improved, but there is room for further improvement. The school prospectus provides an adequate range of information and it is well presented. The report issued on behalf of the governors does not give the full range of information required, for example it does not set out the planned targets for achievement the school has set for the end of Key Stage 2. Little information is given about the professional development of staff. The school is concerned about the falling number of pupils but it does not appear to promote the things it does well. For example it provides exceptionally good support for those pupils who are at an early stage of learning English but the inspectors found no written information to parents to develop their awareness of this.
52. Letters are sent home regularly to inform parents and carers about the school's routines including details of forthcoming visits. There is a very well used homework club that benefits a number of the older pupils. Consultation arrangements with the parents whose children are transferring to secondary education are good.

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

53. At the time of the previous inspection there were significant weaknesses in the management of the school. The lack of a senior management team and an ineffective governing body was hindering the school's progress. The deputy headteacher, newly appointed at the time of the previous inspection, works very effectively with the headteacher. There has been a drive to

raise standards, which has been successful through the implementation of the literacy and numeracy strategies and greatly improved assessment procedures. These improvements have helped to improve the quality of teaching, particularly in Years 5 and 6, where there is much very good teaching. Although there is still much to do, the school has made good progress in the short space of time since the last inspection two years ago. There is a small group of committed governors who work hard to monitor and support the work of the school. However, there are too few of them. On occasions developments cannot be taken forward because the governing body is inquorate and the committees are filled by the few. This hinders the progress the school can make and remains unsatisfactory.

54. The majority of teachers have curriculum leadership responsibilities and the work they have undertaken has helped to improve the curriculum and raise standards. They take greater responsibility for their subjects including co-ordinating planning. Where appropriate, they give support to colleagues enabling their subject to be taught more effectively. Appraisal procedures are carried out effectively and training is linked to priorities identified in the School Development Plan with the emphasis on improving standards. The responsibility for managing those pupils with English as an additional language is undertaken by a member of staff employed by the education authority but based at the school full-time. The school works hard to develop links with the parents of these pupils. Thirty per cent of parents who are involved in activities at the Parents' Centre are bilingual. The Centre staff are committed to promoting a programme to aid the acquisition of language skills, in order that parents are able to participate as fully as possible in their children's learning. Because of these initiatives and the good relationships that exist between the teachers and EAL parents, a close partnership is developing between home and school. This positively impacts on the learning in this area. There is a co-ordinator for special educational needs. She performs the role very effectively meeting fully the recommendations of the Code of Practice for special educational needs. The team of educational support assistants is always very well briefed and has received suitable training. They are very effective in supporting groups where the pupils have been identified for additional literacy support and this is raising the pupils' attainment.
55. The school development plan gives a clear direction to the school. It gives appropriate priority to the school's areas for development and has relevant time scales, costings and criteria by which the success can be judged. The staff are involved in the preparation and implementation of the plan and progress towards its goals is reviewed regularly. The governors need to develop their monitoring role further to determine the progress the school is making in achieving the goals highlighted in the school development plan.
56. The accommodation is spacious and generally well maintained. Steps and stairs make movement around some areas of the school difficult and the school is not suitable for pupils who have severe difficulties with their mobility. Areas for small group tutorials are good; the two halls are of an adequate size for assemblies and physical education activities but the floor of the Key Stage 2 hall is in poor condition. During the inspection severe weather conditions resulted in numerous roof leaks and there is some evidence that long-term water ingress is causing structural damage.
57. The school has adequate resources with materials and artefacts to support topic work. Some classrooms are rather small and this is reflected in the opportunities pupils have to work independently. The computer suite is well equipped but its ventilation is poor. In some classrooms desks and chairs are of an inappropriate height. The school is aware of this but has insufficient funds at present to remedy the problem.
58. The school's procedures and systems for financial planning, control and administration are effective and the recommendations of the latest auditor's report have been met. The governing

body's finance committee is effective in monitoring expenditure but it needs to challenge itself to justify the use of resources. Spending from the budget is determined against the priorities in the School Development Plan but the school needs to be careful to ensure that the best value for money is achieved by obtaining tenders and estimates for goods and services. The school makes good use of grants and the funding for literacy and special educational needs significantly supports the pupils' learning. The efficient use of teaching staff also ensures that those pupils with English as an additional language make the progress of which they are capable. The school makes effective use of information technology for monitoring attendance. There are early indications that more systematic monitoring and following up of pupil absences is helping to improve attendance. The headteacher and governors receive regular information about the budget and this ensures that finances are kept in good order. The school's secretarial staff play an important and effective role in ensuring financial and administrative information is kept in good order.

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

59. Significant improvements have been made during the last two years and in their drive for further improvements the school should now:

- (1) Raise standards of attainment in English and mathematics by:
  - improving the quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 and in Years 3 and 4;
  - reducing the over-dependence on the use of worksheets in some classes;
  - ensuring literacy and numeracy time is used efficiently;
  - sharing the very good practice which exists within the school.(Paragraphs 19, 22, 24, 28, 72, 73, 77, 79, 80, 81 and 86)
  
- (2) Improve the pupils' skills in using and applying mathematics and science investigation skills by:
  - providing more opportunities for the pupils to plan and carry out investigative activities;
  - allowing the pupils to determine methods of recording their findings in science;
  - providing the pupils with more opportunities to practise their mathematical skills in real-life situations.(Paragraphs 77, 88 and 93)
  
- (3) Improve the procedures for monitoring the pupils' reading progress by:
  - ensuring the good procedures for recording progress in Key Stage 1 are continued throughout the school.(Paragraphs 41 and 75)
  
- (4) Improve the level of attendance by;
  - continuing with the recently introduced monitoring procedures;
  - developing strategies for rewarding regular attendance.(Paragraphs 17 and 48)
  
- (5) Improve the involvement of the whole governing body by;

- recruiting new governors;
  - ensuring governors take part in training opportunities afforded by the local education authority;
  - ensuring the workload is distributed equitably amongst the governors.
- (Paragraphs 53 and 55)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	64
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	37

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

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
3	23.5	34.5	33	6		

*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*

<b>Pupils on the school's roll</b>	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	190
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	147

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

<b>Special educational needs</b>	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	88

<b>English as an additional language</b>	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	80

<b>Pupil mobility in the last school year</b>	<b>No of pupils</b>
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	32
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	14

### ***Attendance***

#### **Authorised absence**

	<b>%</b>
School data	5.4
National comparative data	5.4

#### **Unauthorised absence**

	<b>%</b>
School data	3.1
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	11	17

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	8	7	9
	Girls	10	11	12
	Total	18	18	18
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	64 (76)	64 (76)	75 (72)
	National	(82)	(83)	(87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	7	5	3
	Girls	11	11	5
	Total	18	16	8
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	64 (72)	57 (72)	29 (59)
	National	(82)	(86)	(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	24	24

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	13	14	20
	Girls	9	10	20
	Total	22	24	40
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	46 (43)	50 (30)	83 (58)
	National	(70)	(69)	(78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	13	14
	Girls	7	8	11
	Total	15	21	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	31 (31)	44 (39)	52 (51)
	National	(68)	(69)	(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	30
Black – other	59
Indian	
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	13
Chinese	1
White	54
Any other minority ethnic group	10

*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	4	1
Indian		
Pakistani		
Bangladeshi		
Chinese		
White		1
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)	10.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	16.4
Average class size	21.1

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

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	150

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	1999/2000
	£
Total income	585,249
Total expenditure	590,848
Expenditure per pupil	2,536
Balance brought forward from previous year	58,198
Balance carried forward to next year	52,599

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	190
Number of questionnaires returned	34

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	91	9			
My child is making good progress in school.	71	29			
Behaviour in the school is good.	68	26	6		
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	62	32	6		
The teaching is good.	82	18			
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	68	32			
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	85	12			3
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	85	15			
The school works closely with parents.	62	35			3
The school is well led and managed.	74	21			6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	76	21			3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	47	26	15		6

### Other issues raised by parents

No other issues were raised by parents.

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

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

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

60. There are 22 children in the Reception class, all of whom have been in school for some six weeks prior to the inspection. The children are taught by an experienced teacher although she is new to the Reception class. The children also receive support from a classroom support assistant. Many of the children have attended a range of pre-school provision prior to starting school.
61. A range of assessments are done after the children have been in school a little while. These show, that whilst there is a very wide range of attainments on entry to the school, overall it is well below average and this is confirmed by the inspection team's observations. By the time they are ready to start Year 1, few children have attained the early learning goals in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, and knowledge and understanding of the world, creative and physical development. The teacher's planning focuses appropriately on the early learning goals. The quality of teaching in each area of learning is satisfactory.

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

62. The children make a satisfactory start to their education and most children enjoy coming to school and behave well. The teacher gives good attention to the children's personal development and most make good progress, although by the time they move into Year 1, they have still to attain the early learning goals in this aspect. The children are beginning to develop good relationships and gain experience of working with others in a group. They are beginning to develop an awareness of, and sensitivity to, the needs and feelings of others although many still lack an understanding of the need to take turns. For example, during a physical education lesson several children pushed past each other to get extra turns and, during a mathematics session involved in throwing beanbags into a basket, they didn't grasp the importance of taking turns.
63. The adults provide good role models for the children and work hard at developing trusting relationships through their caring and sensitive approach. The organisation of the activities allows the children to develop some independence in their learning by ensuring materials and resources are easily accessible although there are some missed opportunities. For example, the children could be given more responsibility for practical tasks such as giving out or collecting milk. The staff work well together and activities are planned to ensure efficient use is made of staff and helpers.

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

64. The children enter the school with poor communication skills and considerable attention is given to this aspect of their learning. They enjoy listening to stories although they do find it difficult to sit still for very long. The adults place an appropriate emphasis on listening to stories but when asked questions the children's response is limited, both in terms of vocabulary and grammatical structures. The teacher gives suitable attention to the development of spoken English during the literacy sessions. For example, before visiting the local fire station the children were encouraged to talk about their knowledge and understanding of fire fighters.

65. The children with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, are well supported by adults to ensure they can participate fully in the literacy sessions. All children enjoy looking at picture books and have a growing understanding of books read to them. The adults question the children sensitively and encourage them in their understanding of reading from left to right and the relationship between pictures and text. For example, when listening to the story of 'Rosie the Hen' they begin to associate the pictures with what is happening in the story and recognise words beginning with the letter 'f'. Some children are able to predict what will happen in a story and are keen to join in. Registration periods are used effectively to develop the children's knowledge of the days of the week. Whilst many of the children know the days of the week, they are less secure in their understanding of which day follows which.
66. Few children are forming letters correctly and their progress is hampered by not gripping writing materials correctly. They are encouraged to write random letter shapes and to write letters connected to work they are covering. For example, they concentrated on the letter 'f' when looking at the work of fire fighters. A small minority can copy simple words although the formation of upper and lower case letters is uneven. Computers are used for the children to recognise initial sounds but more use could be made of technology to help develop their language skills.

### **Mathematical development**

67. The children make satisfactory progress in mathematics and a small minority are on course to reach the appropriate levels by the time they enter Year 1. The children are well supported in their mathematical development through activities such as sorting and matching. They are learning to sequence numbers to five but the majority still find difficulty in associating the numeral with the actual number of threaded beads. A small proportion of the higher attaining children are able to understand the concept of 'two more' and 'two less than'. The children are just beginning to write their numbers correctly.
68. Activities are linked to other areas of learning and there are also opportunities to develop mathematical concepts through practical sessions, such as the use of sand and water. For example, both literacy and numeracy skills were extended when the children joined in with '...five fire engines waiting for a shout.' In creative activities, some children count out the hoses to stick onto a fire engine. Singing activities such as 'Five speckled hens' are also used effectively to improve counting skills. Mathematical vocabulary is introduced sensitively. There is an appropriate balance between mental skills and practical activities with lots of objects available for the children to practise their counting.

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

69. The children make satisfactory progress although their knowledge and understanding of the world is below expectations by the time they move to Year 1. The staff use good questioning to promote enquiry and discover how well the children understand. For example, good questioning by the teacher showed her that, prior to a visit to the fire station, the children had little knowledge of the fire fighters' work. Subsequent questioning after the visit indicated what they had learned. The children need more opportunities to use computers and programmable toys to support their learning. Adults support the children well as they investigate their surroundings and activities are planned effectively to enable the children to learn more about themselves. Many children have a very limited knowledge of the world about them with some not recognising pictures of animals and seemingly unaware of those that live on farms. The children's very limited linguistic skills make it difficult for them to demonstrate an understanding of everyday happenings.

## **Physical development**

70. The children are given regular opportunities to develop their physical and practical skills although few attain broadly average standards by the time they enter Year 1. They learn to handle simple tools but they struggle when cutting out with scissors. They enjoy the challenges they are set and persevere with activities such as cutting out and assembling fire engines. The children have regular opportunities for physical activities in the hall and they can crawl, climb, balance, run, jump and land safely. Examples of good practice are shown to all children. They do however, lack confidence and need reassurance in much of what they do. They would also benefit from guidance in how to land safely when they jump in different ways. Co-operation is encouraged and developed by the teacher but the children have yet to understand the importance of taking turns.

## **Creative development**

71. Again, the children enter school with low levels of skills and, whilst satisfactory progress is made, few have acquired the early learning goal by the time they enter Year 1. They join in quite enthusiastically with songs and nursery rhymes such as ‘The Grand Old Duke of York’ and clap in time to the beat. They move round the hall, copying the movements of the teacher, during music and dance sessions. The children work hard at making models and collages, for example the fire engines as part of their project of people at work. They use paints, glue and fabrics, gradually improving their understanding of how materials can be used to produce pictures. The children need more opportunities for role-play to allow them to develop their independence.

## **ENGLISH**

72. Inspection evidence indicates that the pupils’ attainment in reading and writing is below average by the end of Key Stage 2. Attainment in speaking and listening is also below average. The high proportion of pupils with clearly identified special educational needs, around a half in most classes, and a significant proportion of pupils learning English as an additional language are all factors that contribute to the below average standards. Since the last inspection, when the raising of standards in English was a key issue, there has been an improvement in standards with better results each year since 1997. In the last two years the school did well to exceed its targets. However, standards overall are still below the national average and there is room for improvement at the end of both key stages in English and mathematics.
73. When pupils enter the school both speaking and listening skills are poor. Most pupils are able to answer questions with varying amounts of confidence and can explain what they mean, albeit with a limited vocabulary. The teachers and classroom assistants take every opportunity to provide activities that stimulate the pupils’ imagination and require them to listen carefully to each other and to adults and then respond appropriately. For example, when the story of “Owl Babies” is being read and discussed, the pupils have to listen very attentively to the text to enable them to explain why Percy is more anxious about his mother’s return than his brother and sister. Opportunities are given for the pupils to develop confidence in their public speaking in circle time; for example, when the pupils explain to the rest of the class what makes them happy. However, although the pupils make satisfactory progress, standards are still below average at the end of this key stage.
74. In Key Stage 2, the pupils are presented with many opportunities to develop their speaking skills. For example, the Year 5 pupils when reading the story of Jason and the Argonauts spend some

time discussing and defining the qualities of 'a hero.' Year 6 pupils enthusiastically use their information technology skills to find out the meanings of such sayings as 'wipe the slate clean', or 'go to the top of the class' and explain to the rest of the class the origin of such sayings. School productions, involving all Key Stage 2 pupils are presented to parents such as the recent production of 'Joseph and his Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat'. These give the pupils opportunities to speak to a wider audience and develop skills and confidence in speaking publicly. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, are sensitively encouraged to contribute to discussions in lessons.

75. Standards in reading are below average at both Key Stages. Nevertheless, the pupils in Key Stage 1 make satisfactory progress in reading. Average and below average pupils have a secure grasp of letter sounds and this helps them tackle words that are unfamiliar to them. More able pupils develop good sight vocabulary and progress to using phonic, picture and context clues. Very few pupils reach the higher Level 3 in their reading. Lower achieving pupils and those with special educational needs, are very well supported by classroom assistants, who are very effective at using appropriate strategies to develop the pupils' reading. Although progress through the reading scheme is recorded in Key Stage 1, there is insufficient information on what pupils need to do in order to improve. Few pupils read regularly to their parents at home and for those that do there is insufficient dialogue to help parents build on the progress their children have made at school. This lack of regular individual reading has an adverse effect on progress. The use of non-fiction books is developed through a structured programme where the pupils in Key Stage 1 regularly visit the school library and undertake a range of tasks linked to the development of study skills.
76. By the age of eleven higher achieving pupils have made good progress in their reading, although their attainment is still below the national average. Above-average pupils read with interest and confidence and are able to discuss their preferences for particular authors and have well developed reference skills. However, the progress made by average and below average pupils in reading is not always as good. Although the teachers hear pupils' reading during the Literacy Hour, there are too few opportunities for them to read individually on a regular basis to an adult especially at the beginning of Key Stage 2. Those pupils with special educational needs and pupils of the lowest ability make better progress as they receive more individual support. The school has rightly identified the need to continue to raise standards in reading as the highest priority and has started to implement ways to improve the quality of teaching and learning.
77. Attainment in writing is below average at the end of both key stages. The pupils in Year 1 form most letters correctly and the most able pupils spell some common words accurately. By Year 2 most of the pupils are able to write common words correctly and some can compose a sequence of sentences in longer pieces of work. The most able pupils are able to write stories with interesting vocabulary and reach the expected Level 2, but the majority of pupils are unable to sustain their ideas when writing. They use full stops and capital letters in their independent writing. Handwriting is consistent in size and shape and many of the pupils are developing a cursive style. At both key stages, however, too many writing tasks are linked to mundane work sheets that constrain the pupils' responses, particularly those of the most able pupils.
78. Progress is better in Key Stage 2 and is particularly good at the upper end of Key Stage 2. By the time they are eleven the higher attaining pupils have developed a confident and fluent style of handwriting. They understand a range of punctuation rules and are able to use commas, apostrophes, speech and exclamation marks in their writing. They are able to draft, and edit their writing and make effective use of a word processing programme, for example when writing about 'A Day in a Victorian Workhouse.' The pupils are encouraged to write in a range of styles and for a variety of purposes across the curriculum. For example a group of pupils with special educational needs use Ted Marten's 'Deadly and Dangerous Snakes' to sort and classify

facts and produce their own piece of factual writing. Higher attaining pupils produce arguments 'from the driver's viewpoint' or reportage on 'Mysterious Death at Camelot' after studying Tennyson's poem 'The Lady of Shalott'. Work in English has good links with other subjects such as summaries of experiments in science or descriptive writing in history.

79. The quality of teaching in English ranges from unsatisfactory to very good and is satisfactory overall. At the upper end of Key Stage 2, where the teaching is of a high standard, high expectations, well matched questions and tasks are very good features of the lessons. In these classes humour and very good teacher-pupil relationships ensure the lessons move at a brisk pace and the pupils work very hard. However, across the remainder of the school the standard of teaching varies. In some lessons in Key Stage 1 tasks are not well matched to the pupils' ability and time is not well used. Some of the Literacy Hour sessions go on too long and the pupils are unable to sustain interest particularly at the lower end of the school. Support staff play a full and vital part in lessons. They ensure that the pupils learning English as an language and pupils with special educational needs take a full and active part in lessons. Consequently, these pupils make good progress. The marking of written work and feedback to the pupils is constructive and lays out clear targets for improvement. Homework is used in some classes very effectively to develop reading skills and develop independent study and enquiry, but this approach is not consistent throughout the school.

## **MATHEMATICS**

80. Inspection evidence indicates that by the end of both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment in mathematics is below that expected for their ages. Taking into account the very low baseline from which pupils start, progress over time is good, including that for pupils with special educational needs. The results of the national tests show that there is an upward trend in attainment particularly when compared with similar schools. The school has implemented the National Numeracy Strategy confidently and it is having a significant impact on the pupils' learning and achievements.
81. In Key Stage 1, the pupils' knowledge of mathematics is progressing steadily. All of the pupils are increasing their knowledge of the concepts of measuring and many pupils are using standard units of measurement correctly. The lower attaining pupils recognise simple 2-D shapes and other pupils know the properties of more complicated 2-D shapes such as hexagons. Higher attaining pupils add and subtract to a hundred and understand place value when doing sums containing tens and units. The pupils of average ability work on sums adding and subtracting to thirty. Lower attaining pupils carry out addition and subtraction to ten and twenty. The pupils can identify odd and even numbers, but they have difficulty explaining why odd numbers are odd and even numbers are even. At the end of the key stage, the pupils' mathematical thinking and mental work is not developing at a good rate because the class is given insufficient time and opportunity to carry out and explain mental calculations in the first part of each lesson. In group and independent work, the pupils would benefit from a better match of task to their needs.
82. In Key Stage 2, the pupils make good gains in their understanding in important areas of mathematics. The oldest pupils in the school are making progress in learning about the different kinds of angles and how to measure and draw angles using a protractor. They develop their knowledge and understanding of the properties of 2-D shapes such as parallelograms and begin to use the correct mathematical vocabulary. The pupils' ability to work out sums such as adding two numbers to one decimal place mentally and quickly improves. Lower ability pupils and pupils with special educational needs are given very good support. Younger pupils in Key Stage 2 begin to use decimal notation and learn more about estimating lengths and measuring accurately.

83. The quality of teaching in over half the lessons is good or better. In nearly a third of lessons the teaching is very good or excellent. The majority of the very good and excellent teaching is in Key Stage 2. There was one very good lesson in Key Stage 1. There were two unsatisfactory lessons, one in each key stage.
84. Relationships in all classes are good and the pupils' behaviour is usually good. The pupils usually sustain concentration and try hard. The level of pupils' effort and productivity is directly related to the quality of teaching.
85. In the most effective lessons in the upper part of Key Stage 2 and in Year 1, the teachers have very good subject knowledge and learning objectives are explained to the pupils very clearly and in detail. They model and insist on the correct and accurate use of mathematical vocabulary. They have good pupil management skills throughout lessons. This was evidenced when Year 5 pupils packed their equipment away quickly, efficiently and without any fuss to the music from 'Mission Impossible' as part of the routine. A strength of the subject is the way pupils are developing an interest and liking for mathematics. The teachers motivate pupils to achieve. They inspire in their pupils an enthusiasm for the subject by their own vitality, energy and enthusiasm that ensures a good pace to the lesson and a suitable level of rigour because tasks are well-matched to the pupils' needs. In the excellent lesson, the teacher made use of a game to interest pupils in the addition of decimal sums. As a result, the pupils became competitive and eager. The teachers have good techniques making pupils realise there are better ways of doing things. For example, in Year 6, the teacher allowed pupils to find out that it was difficult to draw triangles with rulers only. The teacher then led effectively into the need for the use of a compass. The teacher tells the pupils that knowing something is not effective is as good as knowing that something is effective. In this same exercise the teacher respected the pupils' questions and responded sensitively
86. In the excellent lesson the teacher made very good use of open and closed questions to make the pupils think hard referring back to the learning objectives repeatedly throughout the lesson in order to focus and refocus the pupils' knowledge of their own learning and the purpose of doing the work. In the unsatisfactory lessons, there is little or no reference to learning objectives at the beginning. In one of these lessons there was an imbalance in the time allocated to different activities and the tasks were not well matched to the pupils' needs.
87. A strength in the teaching is the good quality of assessment. Time is allowed at the end of each half term so that teachers can assess pupils' achievements. The pupils take tests annually and the results are used to inform teachers' planning and targets for their classes. The teachers record on the back of their weekly planning if pupils have particular difficulties or successes and this is effective in helping teachers to plan. The pupils are also given individual targets that are in their mathematics books. Teachers effectively group pupils according to their ability and in the main, are careful to plan work that is suitable to the pupils' needs. However, the lack of a good match of task to pupils' needs in some lessons, show that these very good assessment procedures need to be embedded in all classes.
88. The school has not extended the use of investigations in mathematics. This was highlighted in the previous report. There are too few opportunities for the pupils to practise their mathematical skills in real life situations and consequently they do not always make the progress of which they are capable.
89. The management of the subject is good. There have been a good number of improvements since the previous inspection. The co-ordinator has given a good lead and guidance to her colleagues in the implementation of the numeracy strategy. Expectations have risen and standards are rising. The co-ordinator has had very good support from the local authority consultant. Regular



meetings are held with the consultant and headteacher and regular monitoring of lessons and planning has taken place by the headteacher, co-ordinator and the local mathematics inspector. There are further plans to continue to monitor and improve the quality of teaching.

## SCIENCE

90. At the time of the previous inspection the pupils' attained standards that were below national averages at the end of both key stages. Good progress has been made since that time and pupils now attain levels that are broadly in line with the national average.
91. In the national tests for eleven-year-olds in 2000, the pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 was above the national average. When compared to standards in schools with pupils from similar backgrounds the pupils' attainment was well above the national average. The main reason for this rise in standards has been the greater percentage of pupils who attain the higher level 5 in the tests. The teacher assessments for pupils at the age of seven indicate that pupils' attainment is below that expected nationally, with less than a third of pupils attaining the expected level 2 or higher. Evidence from the inspection, however, indicates that the current Year 2 group of pupils attain levels in line with those expected nationally.
92. Over the last four years the pupils' attainment has been improving from well below average in 1997 to being well above average in 2000.
93. By the age of eleven pupils have a good grounding in scientific enquiry. They are given opportunities to do experiments and build their scientific knowledge although the school recognises the need to provide more opportunities. In Year 6 the pupils find out about the effects of heat and cooling on different types of material. They recognise that the effects of heat on some materials can be reversed when the material cools whilst changes in other materials are irreversible. They know that ice melts and changes to water, and that if heat continues to be applied the water becomes a gas known as water vapour. They are confident when they explain that cooling changes vapour back to liquid and ultimately to ice. The pupils know why the tests they conduct have to have an element of control for them to be fair tests. The lower attaining pupils, in the other Year 6 class, learn about the state of materials and are able to explain some of the changes made. The pupils in Year 5 study the effects of food on their health. They recognise that food is part of a healthy diet. They understand that different types of food are needed for different purposes. They know, for example, that milk helps them to develop strong bones and teeth and that cooking in fat is not good for their health. In Year 4 the pupils learn about their body and identify bones in the skeleton. They know the differences between their own skeletal system and that of other animals, recognising how the skeleton has been adapted for different purposes. They are able to list a number of vertebrate and invertebrate creatures.
94. By the age of seven the pupils are aware of a range of materials and describe simple properties of the materials. When they use their sense of touch only they describe a shell as being spiky and rough. When they look at the shell they add to their observations by using their sense of sight to explain the colours of the shells. They identify them as dull or shiny. Some of the pupils find difficulty in deciding whether materials are man-made or natural. This is clarified for the class when one pupil suggests that, "God made them", when referring to natural materials. The pupils in Year 2 display sound knowledge of their surroundings and needs for growth. They identify different foods that are good for growth or for giving energy.
95. The quality of teaching is variable. It is satisfactory at Key Stage 1, though at Key Stage 2 it is good. The higher quality of teaching for the older pupils has a positive effect on the progress they make in their learning. In a Year 6 class, for example, the teacher maintains good discipline

with a difficult group of pupils and this results in the pupils working with good levels of concentration. The clear explanations given to the pupils help to develop their learning.

96. The subject is effectively led by a well-qualified co-ordinator, who has a clear vision for the subject. Recently developed assessment procedures, supported by an effective scheme of work, have been major influences in raising standards in the subject. The scheme is based on the nationally recognised scheme and is supplemented by other commercial schemes. The school uses the optional tests in Years 3, 4 and 5 to supplement the statutory tests. There are frequent opportunities for the pupils to develop their school work through the homework club, when the teachers give the pupils the chance to develop their learning through extra work. This is a positive addition to the school's provision. The school participates in visits to local areas of scientific interest and also takes the pupils on residential visits to Colomendy in North Wales.

## **ART**

97. The attainment of seven year olds is in line with national expectations. Pupils of all ages enjoy a variety of art experiences as they move through the school and use a range of media and techniques. As in the previous inspection the quality of some work in drawing and painting especially at the upper end of Key Stage 2, is of a high standard.
98. In Key Stage 1, the pupils are introduced to a range of techniques and study the work of some famous artists. They produce colourful pictures and paintings which demonstrate their understanding of colour mixing and their skills of observation. Some Year 2 pupils work on shows how they have drawn 'Two Pupils Reading,' 'A Teacher and Three Pupils,' portraying relationships using Pablo Picasso's painting of Claude drawing with Françoise and Paloma. Reception pupils visit the Walker Art Gallery to look at the portrayal of faces as part of their work on self-portraits. Teachers use the work of other artists as a source of inspiration for pupils. Good examples of this are in displays of work influenced by Van Gogh and Matisse.
99. In Key Stage 2, the pupils make good progress in the development of a range of skills. Artwork is often linked to other subjects in the curriculum such as in mathematics with a study of spirals based on the work of Klimt or using colour in design and pattern linked with work on Ancient Egyptian culture. This effectively supports the pupils' cultural development. Year 6 pupils study the work of Hundertwasser and produce high quality designs of the school in his style using chalk and oil pastels to very good effect. They study the work of William Morris and produce some excellent work using lino work, sgraffito and batik to create studies from natural forms. By the time they leave the school, the pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of art from different cultures and some understanding of the work of famous artists. They have worked in a wide variety of media and they can evaluate their own and others' work.
100. The quality of teaching is good overall with lessons ranging from satisfactory to very good. It is more effective in Key Stage 2. Specific skills, such as drawing and colour mixing are well taught to all age groups, but the skill development through the school is sometimes overtaken by the desire of teachers to link art activities to class topics. Individual lessons and activities are very well planned and prepared. This was seen in a very good Year 5 lesson where pictures by famous artists such as Van Gogh encouraged the pupils to use a magnifying glass to see the detailed shape, line and form of the work. The teacher's own subject knowledge ensured that the pupils reached high standards and made very good progress. In the less successful lessons the teachers underestimated the skills of the more talented pupils and gave them little opportunity to reach their full potential.

101. The subject makes a good contribution to the development of aspects of pupils' personal, social and cultural development, by raising their awareness of other cultures and traditions and providing many good opportunities for pupils to work collaboratively and co-operatively. The standards described at the time of the last inspection have been successfully maintained.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

102. At the time of the previous inspection standards were identified as being below those expected nationally at both key stages. In the intervening period the school has successfully addressed the problem and at the end of both key stages standards are now broadly in line with national expectations. During the inspection it was possible to observe only two lessons, both towards the end of Key Stage 2. Scrutiny of the teachers' planning and photographic evidence, however, confirm this judgement.
103. By the end of Key Stage 1 the pupils begin to make designs and create models from their designs. They use a range of materials and construction kits to make models and improve the design. When they make models connected to their studies about Barnaby Bear they design and make a range of vehicles in which he could ride. The pupils are given some ideas from designs used for full sized vehicles and base their own designs on these. They draw simple plans and, with the help of their teachers, make cars and vans from their plans. They use a range of materials for their models; card, glue, boxes and wooden wheels.
104. In Key Stage 2 the pupils make good progress in their learning and achieve standards in line with those expected nationally. The good leadership of the subject and the good quality of teaching towards the end of Key Stage 2 are major factors in the raising of standards since the last inspection. In the lessons observed the pupils made good progress in their learning. In a Year 5 lesson pupils were given a range of biscuits and asked to devise profiles for them. They were given a set of criteria on which to base their findings and these were then to be used when the pupils were planning and making their own biscuits. The pupils in the Year 6 lesson were set a range of activities when they were designing and making shoes and slippers. They identified the needs for footwear that would make it attractive to buyers; the patterns, colour, shape, texture and the materials to be used. When they design their footwear, they incorporate the elements effectively. The pupils draw and make their footwear items with care. When they made musical instruments, the pupils made clear plans for their models, changed the design to incorporate better features and undertook careful evaluation of their models. One pupil, for example, realised that the design for a guitar would not work and made appropriate adjustments to the finished product.
105. The quality of teaching in the two lessons observed was good. This was the major contributor to the good progress the pupils made in these lessons. In the Year 6 lesson, for example, the teacher had planned effectively for groups of pupils to undertake different work. Whilst one group was making sandals another group was dismantling an old pair of slippers to find out how they were constructed. This led to a good understanding of the elements they needed to incorporate in their own designs. The planning for the Year 5 lesson incorporated some positive strategies for developing the pupils' understanding of how they must analyse existing artefacts in order to create the best designs. In both lessons, the teachers displayed good strategies for controlling their pupils. The excellent use of humour in the Year 6 lesson, for example, maintained the pupils' attention throughout the lesson and this resulted in good levels of learning.

106. The co-ordinator has been recently appointed to manage the subject. Though there has been limited time to make any significant impact on the subject, she has involved the school in a national award scheme operated by a manufacturer of construction kits. The school won an award in the competition and was presented with construction materials. The newly developed policy and scheme of work sets out clearly what is to be taught across the school. Numeracy and literacy are used effectively in the subject when the pupils measure materials to make their models and when they write up their evaluations of them.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

107. It was only possible to observe two lessons being taught. However, based on these observations, scrutiny of the pupils' work and discussion with the co-ordinator, inspection evidence is that standards at the end of both key stages are in line with those expected nationally. At the time of the previous inspection similar standards were recorded.
108. In the lesson observed in the Year 1 class, the pupils were working on early mapping skills. They displayed a sound knowledge of their local area and showed some understanding of other places. They know that Liverpool is situated on the River Mersey and make simple comparisons between this river and the River Hudson in America. They talk about airports and recognise that airports need to be established away from city centres because of the space needed. The quality of teaching in this lesson was good and this resulted in the good progress made by the pupils in the lesson. The teacher provided a good range of interesting resources to stimulate the pupils' interest. For example, when talking about America, the pupils were shown passports, American number plates and enlarged dollar bills.
109. The pupils in Key Stage 2 make satisfactory progress in their learning and achieve levels that are appropriate for their age. In a Year 3 lesson the pupils located the United Kingdom on a world map and began to recognise that the scale of a map is an important factor in determining the area covered by the map. Most of the pupils are able to give directions on a map; north, south, east and west. As the pupils get older they draw maps of their local area with a good degree of accuracy. They include their own streets and identify their route to school and the local shops. The pupils are taught the importance of local issues and undertake traffic surveys in order to identify where problems may exist. They record their findings in the form of pictograms or line graphs. The teacher makes appropriate comments when marking the pupils' work to help them to develop their understanding. When the pupils write about their local area they write confidently about what is good and what could be improved.
110. The co-ordinator has been in the post for one year. She is a part-time teacher and does not have time made available to her to effectively monitor the teaching and learning in the subject. However, the introduction of the scheme of work from the Qualifications and Curriculum Agency ensures that work is planned in a coherent and progressive way.

## **HISTORY**

111. Standards in history are below those expected. The pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as a second language, are making satisfactory progress in both key stages. In the previous inspection attainment was in line with national expectations.
112. By the time pupils leave school they exhibit a good deal of knowledge about Victorian schools but find it very difficult to draw their evidence together and make judgements. They display

empathy with those Victorians who lived and worked in the workhouses. They are learning to use chronological tables and order dates. Lower attaining pupils exhibit good recall of a visit to Wigan Pier and of conditions in Victorian schools. The younger pupils in Key Stage 2 have good recall of Ancient Egypt. They can define an artefact, climate, landscape and terrain when building up background knowledge about the country when having a lesson on Ancient Greece. Pupils in the lower part of the key stage learn how to use a time-line and a small number know that ancient means a long time ago. They learn to compare old and new and develop their understanding of how time passes and that things change over time.

113. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. There was one unsatisfactory lesson in Key Stage 2. In the more effective lessons the activities are stimulating and interest the pupils. In a small class for pupils with special educational needs, the emphasis on practical activities such as sewing mop caps and learning calligraphy led to a very good understanding of life in Victorian times. In a good Year 5 lesson pupils used up-to-date travel catalogues to increase their knowledge of modern day Greece in order to set the scene for learning about Ancient Greece and be able to make some comparisons later on. The pupils' response in lessons is usually good and they enjoy the subject.
114. They contribute to lessons enthusiastically when the lesson is challenging and interesting, thereby increasing their understanding. The teachers, however, do not always match activities to pupils' needs to a sufficient degree. When the activity does not have sufficient rigour the pupils put less effort into their work. The teachers also make too much use of photocopied work sheets which do not aid progress sufficiently for middle and higher attaining pupils. They do not encourage maximum effort in researching and thinking skills.
115. The scheme of work is developing which is an improvement since the previous report. The school has adopted the national scheme of work but is adapting it to the school's needs. The co-ordinator tries hard to ensure that the subject reflects the multi-cultural nature of the school. There are plans to introduce assessment procedures for history but there has not been an opportunity to do so yet.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

116. At the time of the previous inspection standards in information and communication technology were below national expectations. There has been an improvement and standards are now average at age eleven. The teaching of computer skills has become a regular part of the timetable, particularly at Key Stage 2, where the teachers' good subject knowledge enables the pupils to make good progress.
117. In Key Stage 1 the standards are below those expected for the pupils' age. The pupils enter school with low level of skills and few have access to computers at home. However, teaching is generally satisfactory and the pupils make satisfactory progress. The Year 2 pupils are able to use the computer to write stories and poems. For example, in a lesson linked to literacy, the pupils wrote a poem and entered line breaks in the correct places to make it easier to read. Whilst the school has a number of programmable toys the teachers have not planned to use them systematically and the pupils do not achieve what they are capable of. Using the computer to present graphs and charts is limited
118. The attainment of the pupils aged 11 years is in line with that expected for their age. The pupils in Years 5 and 6 are significantly more competent than those in Years 3 and 4. Whilst this is due in part to the pupils acquiring skills as they get older, a major factor is the high standards of teaching and the high expectations of what the pupils can achieve of by the teachers in Years 5

and 6. In a very good Year 6 lesson the pupils entered formulae into a spreadsheet to work out averages for test scores. The pupils in Year 5 have a secure knowledge of how to produce mathematical shapes using a drawing program and demonstrated a good knowledge of how to rotate and reverse the shapes. Other Year 5 pupils demonstrated good research skills when they visited the Tate Gallery website to learn about the work of Mondrian and Kandinsky. They then used a program to paint and print work in the style of Mondrian.

119. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 and in Years 3 and 4 is satisfactory. It is good in Years 5 and 6 where the activities for the pupils are challenging and the teachers demonstrate a very good personal knowledge of computer skills. The lessons are planned effectively and build on what the pupils have been taught in previous lessons. Where appropriate, the pupils with special educational needs or for whom English is an additional language are provided with additional support enabling them to make the progress of which they are capable. Behaviour in lessons is good and although the pupils tend to be a little noisy it rarely detracts from the quality of learning.
120. Subject co-ordination is satisfactory. Teachers are undertaking additional training to improve their skills and the co-ordinator is aware of strengths and weaknesses in the subject. The school has recently received an interactive white board through its involvement in the Education Action Zone. Some teachers are already using this very effectively as an aid to teaching. There are good links with the community. The parents have been encouraged to make use of the school's computer suite by participating in sessions organised by the Parent School Partnership and this is having a positive impact on the pupils' achievements. The pupils are encouraged to use Email to communicate with others outside the school.
121. The school has made good progress since the last inspection. Standards have risen and the subject is taught regularly and systematically. The teaching is satisfactory overall with a lot of good teaching towards the end of Key Stage 2.

## MUSIC

122. At the time of the previous inspection the pupils' attainment in music was in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages. These standards have been maintained. The co-ordinator teaches music to several classes and her skill enables most pupils to attain satisfactory standards. The pupils in Years 5 and 6 improve their singing skills through participation in the Toxteth Music Festival held in the Cathedral. The school's performance of Joseph and his Technicolour Dreamcoat was enjoyed and appreciated by the parents and friends and helped develop the pupils' confidence. A choir meets at lunchtimes and adds to the pupils' musical experiences. Very few pupils are given the opportunity to learn an instrument.
123. The singing of the pupils in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory and they show confidence in exploring sounds. They enjoy using a range of percussion instruments to accompany simple compositions. They recognise long and short sounds and recognise the contour of melodies as they ascend and descend. They enjoy performing in a group and singing in assembly although they need to be given opportunities to sing on a regular basis in assemblies to enhance their singing skills further. The teachers could also use hymns and songs to develop the pupils' reading skills during the literacy sessions.
124. No lessons were observed in Years 4, 5 and 6 but the pupils in Year 3 show satisfactory progress in performing and singing. They develop a good sense of rhythm and sing confidently. They enjoy learning new songs and using percussion to improvise rhythmic and melodic ideas. In whole school assemblies and those for Key Stage 2, the older pupils demonstrate quite good singing skills, although occasionally their over-enthusiasm results in some pupils shouting and

losing the dynamics of the song. Most, however, sing tunefully to the piano accompaniment and hold the rhythm well. Good opportunities are provided for the pupils to listen to and appreciate music from other cultures. For example, during an assembly about Bonfire Night and Diwali, good opportunity was taken to listen to Hindu chanting.

125. In the lessons seen, both taken by the co-ordinator, the quality of teaching and learning are generally good. No lessons were observed being taught by other members of staff but they follow a commercial scheme that is in the process of being adapted by the co-ordinator and the music curriculum is satisfactory. However, the teachers need to give the pupils more opportunities for singing and playing. For example, assemblies do not always have a hymn or a song and this is a missed opportunity. The literacy and numeracy lessons often go on too long. The school should consider utilising some of this time for shorter musical activities.
126. Satisfactory progress has taken place since the previous inspection. The co-ordinator has not monitored teaching and learning in the subject but does provide guidance to her colleagues when requested. There is a need for the teachers to monitor the pupils' progress in the subject as they move through the school.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

127. The report from the previous inspection identified standards as being in line with national expectations. In the intervening period the school has maintained this level and the pupils achieve standards appropriate for their age at the end of both key stages. It was only possible to observe two lessons during the inspection, both with Year 5 classes, and judgements made, therefore, are based on scrutiny of teachers' planning and the scheme of work and discussion with teachers.
128. In the lessons observed the pupils made good progress in their learning. In one lesson the theme was gymnastics, whilst in the other the main focus was the development of passing and catching skills for netball. In both lessons the pupils were aware that they needed to warm up before exercise in order not to put strain on their body. They followed a regular routine of stretching and twisting movements to make sure that each part of their body was ready for sustained activity. In the gymnastics lesson the teacher's planning indicated the learning objectives and these were effectively shared with the pupils before the lesson. This had a positive effect on their learning. They knew what they were about to learn and practise and the result was good levels of learning in the lesson. The pupils handle apparatus carefully and make sure that it is safe before they use it. They plan their work together and undertake sequences of movements on the apparatus individually, in pairs and in groups. The pupils use a range of swinging movements within their work as they move on and around the apparatus. The games lesson featured good quality teaching and this had a positive effect on the pupils' learning. There were good relationships between the pupils and between the pupils and the teacher. The result of this was that the pupils understood the need to behave properly and they conformed to the teacher's rules well. The pupils catch and throw netballs accurately to each other using a range of throwing movements. They use chest passes and bounce passes. They catch the balls coming at them from different angles. As the lesson progresses the pupils develop greater skills in moving to make a pass easier to catch when they play small games of two against one. This effectively reinforces their knowledge of attack and defence in games.
129. The scheme of work, based on the nationally recognised scheme, covers all elements of physical education; games, gymnastics, dance, athletics, outdoor activities and swimming. This ensures that the pupils make appropriate progress in all areas. The pupils are taken to the local swimming pool when they are in Years 3, 4 and 5. By the time they reach the age of eleven

many pupils swim the required 25 metres. The pupils are given opportunities to develop their outdoor skills when they visit the Lakeside Activities Centre. The level of extra-curricular sporting activities is appropriate for the size of the school. The pupils are given opportunities to take part in athletics, cross-country, football and netball games. The school is successful in inter-school activities.

130. The co-ordinator is a part-time teacher and has limited time to monitor standards. However, the school benefits from a group of enthusiastic teachers at the top end of Key Stage 2 who undertake the development of the subject. They ensure that the pupils have a wide range of out of school activities and that the pupils benefit from the full range of activities identified in the National Curriculum. The time available for teaching is not always used effectively. The pupils take too long to get changed for their lessons and when they put out apparatus they do not display sufficient urgency. The floor in the hall in the Key Stage 2 building is in a poor state of repair and is unsafe.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

131. Standards in religious education are below average. The co-ordinator is combining the national scheme of work with the present school scheme, which is based upon the locally agreed syllabus, to produce a much improved school scheme of work. The time given over the school year to the teaching of religious education, however, is approximately half that given by schools nationally. This is affecting the rate of the pupils' progress.
132. The pupils in Key Stage 1, including those with special educational needs and English as a second language, make satisfactory progress in learning about Christianity. They display some sound knowledge of the basic beliefs of Christians that Jesus is a unique and special person and they have some detailed factual knowledge of what happened at Christmas and Easter. They understand that people go to church to pray and that membership of the Church is through baptism. They know the importance of the symbol of the cross but not the importance of the symbol of light. The pupils in Year 2 can retell a few stories from the Old Testament but no miracle or healing stories from the New Testament other than the Christmas and Easter stories. They know the New Testament is important because 'it is about Jesus' but otherwise have little understanding of the differences between the Old and New Testaments. The pupils in Year 1 are taught about aspects of Judaism but pupils have little recall of this or any other religions by the time they reach the end of the key stage.
133. The pupils in Key Stage 2, including those with special educational needs and those with English as a second language, build on their earlier knowledge to an extent but make unsatisfactory progress. By the end of the key stage pupils have developed a greater awareness of other religions. They know some of the main features of Judaism and Hinduism but confuse the two. They know and remember a little more about Christianity than the pupils in Key Stage 1 but not a great deal more. In lessons in Key Stage 2 the pupils make satisfactory progress. In Year 6, the pupils learnt to empathise with Jesus and to understand how events came about at His crucifixion because of people's opinions and dispositions, leading to Pentecost and the beginning of the Christian Church. One pupil displayed knowledge of significant people by likening the enmity to the happenings surrounding the assassination of Martin Luther King. Lower down the key stage pupils learnt of the symbolic importance of water in their religions, to Muslims and Christians alike.
134. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. There was a very good lesson in Key Stage 2. All the lessons contain activities that interest pupils and ensure their concentration. In Key Stage 1, pupils thoroughly enjoyed their doughnuts and potato cakes when learning about the festival of Chanukah. In Year 5, pupils became very involved in examining illustrations of the environment



when beginning to try to understand philosophical questions such as who owns the environment and relevant issues. In Year 6, the teacher led the pupils on step by step and involved them very successfully, through a practical activity, to examine and think hard about the reasons and reactions of the enemies of Jesus so that the pupils clearly understood. The cliffhanger of who this story was about ensured the pupils listened very carefully to the explanation of Pentecost that followed. One pupil was sufficiently motivated to ask what the teacher meant by 'speaking in tongues'.

135. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and recognises the need for the further development of religious education in the school, to include in-service training for the staff. There are plans to introduce assessment procedures and further monitoring of teaching. The subject is well resourced with a large supply of artefacts. The pupils visit the locally associated church, a mosque and a synagogue. The subject is well supported by assemblies that focus on stories from more than one religion. Overall, however, too little time is devoted to the subject to cover all aspects of the syllabus in sufficient depth.