

# INSPECTION REPORT

**Well Lane Community Primary School**

Birkenhead

LEA area: Wirral

Unique reference number: 105050

Headteacher: Mrs C. Gutierrez

Reporting inspector: Stafford Evans  
21217

Dates of inspection: 27<sup>th</sup> - 30<sup>th</sup> November 2000

Inspection number: 225250

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 with a Nursery class

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Park Road  
Tranmere  
Birkenhead  
Wirral

Postcode: CH42 5PF

Telephone number: 0151 645 9844

Fax number: 0151 645 4863

Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr S. Blaylock

Date of previous inspection: February 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr S. G. Evans (OIN 21217)	Registered inspector	Information and communication technology Physical education Religious education	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well are pupils taught?
Mr L. Kuraishi (OIN 11450)	Lay inspector		Attendance How well does the school care for its pupils? How does the school work in partnership with parents? Staffing, accommodation and learning resources
Mrs T. Galvin (OIN 21020)	Team inspector	Under fives Music	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
Mrs S. Russam (OIN 10228)	Team inspector	Special educational needs Science Art	Assessment
Mr A. Wilson (OIN 20846)	Team inspector	Equal opportunities English Design and technology	How well is the school led and managed?
Mr G. Logan (OIN 11810)	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography History	How good are curricular and other opportunities?

The inspection contractor was:

TWA Inspections Ltd  
5 Lakeside  
Werrington  
Peterborough  
PE4 6QZ

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London WC2B 6SE

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Well Lane is a junior and infant school with a nursery class. There are 304 pupils on roll. This includes 34 part-time children in the nursery and 19 in reception. The school is bigger than other primary schools. Attainment on entry is well below average. One hundred and twenty-five pupils are identified as having special educational needs. This is well above average in relation to national figures. Five pupils have statements of special educational need - proportionately average in relation to national figures. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals is 71 per cent. This is very high compared with the national average of 20 per cent. A large number of pupils are socially and economically disadvantaged. There are no pupils who speak English as an additional language. There is a significant proportion of pupils who leave the school other than at the usual time of leaving or transfer, and who join the school other than at the usual time of first admission. Ninety-three pupils were in these categories in the last school year.

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

This is an effective and improving school that has good features. It gives satisfactory value for money. Standards by the time pupils leave the school at 11 years of age are below the national average in English, mathematics and science. Standards are in line with national expectations in all other subjects. Pupils achieve well in relation to their prior attainment by the time they leave the school. The quality of teaching ranges from excellent to unsatisfactory and is satisfactory overall. The leadership and management of the school are good.

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

- Nursery children make a good start in the school. This is because of the good quality of teaching they receive and their good attitudes to learning.
- Pupils make very good progress in information and communication technology. The good quality teaching, good resources and pupils' good attitudes to learning are the most significant contributory factors to this very good progress.
- Across the school, there is a significant amount of good, very good and better teaching - 50 per cent. This ensures pupils achieve well by the time they leave the school.
- Pupils' attitudes, behaviour, personal development and relationships with one another are good. This positively affects pupils' quality of learning.
- Provision for pupils' moral, social and cultural development is good. This has a positive impact on pupils' personal development and the relationships they form with one another.
- The headteacher provides good leadership and has built up a good team spirit in the school. There is a good shared commitment to raise standards further.

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

- Despite good progress, pupils attain below the national average in English, mathematics and science by the ages of 7 and 11.
- Most pupils have a good attendance record but, because of poor attendance by a significant number of pupils, the overall attendance rate for the school is well below the national average.

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

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

The school was last inspected in February 1997. The improvements made since the last inspection are good. The school is well placed to maintain the improvements and build upon them further. The percentage of pupils attaining the expected level in English for an 11-year-old pupil has more than doubled since the last inspection. In mathematics, the percentage is almost double. This rate of progress is significantly higher than found nationally. Attainment in science has risen broadly at the same rate as that found nationally. Standards in information and communication technology are much higher now than at the time of the previous inspection. This was a key issue for action. Another key issue was to raise standards in writing, art, music and physical education. Standards are higher in music and physical education and there are definite signs of improvement in writing and art. The role of subject co-ordinator is improved and is now good. The fact that the role of most co-ordinators was unsatisfactory at the time of the last inspection made it a key issue. Procedures for assessing pupils' work are now sound compared with unsatisfactory at the time of the last inspection.

This means a further key issue has been addressed. The amount of unsatisfactory teaching is significantly less now - 5 per cent compared with 15 per cent at the time of the last inspection. The amount of excellent and very good teaching is now 12 per cent compared with none during the last inspection. The school successfully addressed the weaknesses in the teaching of information and communication technology, art, music and physical education that were identified as key issues in the last report.

## 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	C
Science	E	E	D	B

Key	
Well above average	A
Above average	B
Average	C
Below average	D
Well below average	E

The pattern of attainment and progress across the school is complex, because of the large number of pupils who start or leave the school mid-year. For example, 27 per cent of pupils either left or started at the school during the last year. The group of pupils who sat the Year 6 national test last July differed significantly from that which was present when pupils sat the test in Year 2. Sixteen pupils left between Year 2 and Year 6 and eight pupils were admitted to the classes. The level of attainment of pupils arriving at the school is lower than those who leave. The standards attained by pupils who stayed from Year 2 and sat the tests in Year 6 in 2000 are higher than the overall standards shown above. Standards for pupils, who were in the school from Year 2 to Year 6, in English and mathematics would read below average and average in science compared to all schools nationally.

Inspection evidence indicates that standards in English and mathematics have improved to below average and continue to rise compared with those in the table above. This is because the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are now having a positive impact on pupils' progress. The English and mathematics co-ordinators provide good leadership and oversee the successful implementation of the above strategies. Also, good procedures for assessing pupils' work are in place and are used effectively to match work to pupils' varying needs. In English, there are a number of very successful initiatives to support pupils' learning in reading. These contribute significantly to raising standards. Science standards are similar to those achieved in the 2000 test.

Standards in other subjects, except art, are the same as those found in most primary schools. Standards in art are below national expectations. Children make good progress by the age of five. Pupils make good progress by the age of seven and this is built on satisfactorily by the age of 11 years. Pupils achieve well by the age of 11 in relation to their prior attainment when they entered the school. The school assembles a wide range of information on pupils' prior attainment, but accurate target setting is difficult because of pupil mobility. However, the targets set are appropriate for the various groups of pupils. The school exceeded their targets in English and mathematics for 2000.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils like school and have good attitudes to their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils' behaviour in and around the school is good.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils have good relationships with one another and their personal development is also good.
Attendance	Most pupils attend school regularly, but attendance is well below the national average.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Aged up to 5 years	Aged 5-7 years	Aged 7-11 years
78 lessons seen overall	Satisfactory	Good	Satisfactory

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

Teaching is satisfactory or better in 95 per cent of lessons. It is excellent in 2 per cent, very good in 10 per cent, good in 38 per cent and satisfactory in 45 per cent. Five per cent of teaching is unsatisfactory. The teaching of the children in the nursery class is a strength of the school. The quality of teaching is good in English and mathematics. The strengths of the teaching in the school are the teaching of basic skills for pupils aged 5 to 11, and the management of pupils' behaviour throughout the school. The weaknesses are that expectations of what pupils are to learn are not always high enough, and the use of literacy and numeracy skills should be more effective in the teaching of other subjects. In reception, the teaching of reading skills is not carried out at a quick enough rate. Also, in reception results of children's assessments are not always used effectively to plan work to meet the varying needs of the children. The quality of teaching of pupils identified as having special educational needs is satisfactory.

The quality of pupils' learning varies from very good to unsatisfactory. It is satisfactory overall. A strength of their learning is the acquisition of basic skills, knowledge and understanding. Also, pupils are interested in their lessons and concentrate well.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good planning of the curriculum for the under-fives ensures coverage of learning opportunities appropriate to children of this age. The school provides a broad range of work that is relevant to pupils aged 5 to 11. There is an appropriate statutory curriculum in place.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The school's programme of support for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. It is effectively organised to identify pupils who need additional help in class. This ensures they make similar progress to that of their classmates. The shortcoming is in the use teachers make of pupils' individual education plans when planning pupils' work. Arrangements for supporting pupils who have statements of special educational need are very effective.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision is good overall. Provision for pupils' moral, social and cultural development is good, with sound provision for their spiritual development.



How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares well for its pupils. Members of staff treat the pupils with understanding and respect. Procedures for child protection are in place. Assessment procedures are effective in identifying pupils' strengths and weaknesses and monitoring their progress. The use made of assessment to match work to pupils' varying needs is less effective. The school promotes and monitors attendance well.
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Parents have a sound regard for the school. There are satisfactory links between school and parents.

### HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher, ably supported by the deputy headteacher and subject co-ordinators, provides good leadership.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors provide sound support for the school and work closely with the staff in their efforts to improve educational provision. They have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Staff and governors monitor the school's performance closely and evaluate it effectively. The senior management team accurately identify areas that require improvement. The school takes effective action to secure improvement.
The strategic use of resources	The school manages resources well and the principles of best value are applied effectively. The school is well staffed and the quality of accommodation is satisfactory. There are adequate learning resources to support pupils' learning.

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

There were 294 questionnaires sent out and 46 were returned. Three parents made written responses. Nine parents attended the pre-inspection meeting for parents.

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children like school.</li> <li>• The school enables their children to make good progress.</li> <li>• Their children behave well.</li> <li>• Parents are happy with homework provision.</li> <li>• The teaching is good.</li> <li>• The school is easy to approach with concerns.</li> <li>• Staff have high expectations for their children.</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed.</li> <li>• The provision for their children's personal development is good.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They feel the school does not keep them well informed about their children's progress.</li> <li>• The school does not work closely with parents.</li> <li>• There are not enough extra-curricular activities.</li> </ul>

Inspectors mainly support the parents' positive views. However, expectations are not high enough in some lessons. The annual report on pupils' progress gives the parents a clear picture of what the pupils can do. The teachers meet formally with the parents twice each year so that they can discuss their children's achievements and any concerns. Parents are welcome to visit school informally to discuss any concerns they have about their children. It is the inspectors' judgement that parents are well enough informed about their children's progress. The extra-curricular provision is similar to that found in most primary schools. It is the inspectors' judgement that the school works hard to involve parents in their children's learning. A few parents make a very valuable contribution in response. The school would welcome an even greater response.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. In the 2000 national tests for pupils aged seven, standards were well below the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. In the teacher assessment for science, results were well below the national average. In comparison with similar schools, standards of attainment were average in reading and science, but well below average in writing and mathematics. Standards over the last four years have remained broadly the same.
2. Inspection evidence indicates standards attained by pupils aged seven are higher in reading and mathematics when compared to the 2000 national tests and broadly the same in writing and science, but improving. The successful introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies is the main factor for the rise in standards. The quality of teaching and learning is good. This positively affects standards. Also, the use of the family literacy strategy, the reading recovery programme and the successful reading partnership affects pupils' progress in reading positively. Pupils' speaking skills is a weakness in their English attainment.
3. In the 2000 national tests, standards of attainment for pupils aged 11 in English and mathematics were well below average and below average in science. In comparison with similar schools, standards were average in English and mathematics and above average in science. Over the last four years standards in English, mathematics and science have remained well below the national average. However, the percentage of pupils attaining the expected level in English for an 11-year-old pupil has more than doubled since the last inspection in 1997. In mathematics, the percentage is almost double. This rate of progress is significantly higher than found nationally. Attainment in science has risen broadly at the same rate as that found nationally.
4. The pattern of attainment and progress across the school is complex because of the large number of pupils who start or leave the school mid-year. For example, 27 per cent of pupils either left or started at the school during the last year. The group of pupils who sat the Year 6 national test last July differed significantly from that which was present when pupils sat the test in Year 2. Sixteen pupils left between Year 2 and Year 6 and eight pupils were admitted to the classes. The level of attainment of pupils arriving at the school is lower than those who leave. The standards attained by pupils who stayed from Year 2 and sat the tests in Year 6 in 2000 are higher than the overall standards achieved by all the pupils.
5. Inspection evidence indicates that standards in English and mathematics have improved to below average and continue to rise compared with the results in the 2000 tests. This is because the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are now having a positive impact on pupils' progress. The quality of teaching and learning is good and positively affects standards. The English and mathematics co-ordinators provide good leadership and oversee the successful implementation of the above strategies. Good procedures for assessing pupils' work are also in place and are used effectively to match work to pupils' varying needs. In English, there are a number of very successful initiatives that support pupils' learning in reading. These contribute significantly to raising standards. Science standards are similar to those achieved in the 2000 test.
6. Pupils' attainment in information and communication technology is in line with national expectations by the ages of 7 and 11 years. Standards are rising quickly

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

7. By the time pupils are aged 7 and 11, standards in religious education are in line with those recommended in the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils aged 7 and 11 attain in line with national expectations in geography, history, music and physical education and below national expectations in art. Most design and technology lessons are taught later in the year so it is not possible to make a judgement about standards of attainment in this subject. By the time pupils leave the school at 11 years of age, they achieve well in relation to their prior attainment. There is no significant difference in the attainment of girls and boys.
8. Many children begin nursery with low levels of skill in speaking and listening, reading and mathematics. Although they make good progress in the nursery, their achievements in reading and mathematics are still below the level expected for their age when they enter reception. This is confirmed by the school's initial assessments that are undertaken with these young children. By the time the reception children are ready to start in Year 1, the majority of them achieve well and attain above the Early Learning Goals<sup>1</sup> in personal, social and emotional development. This is because of the very good teaching in this area. They achieve the Early Learning Goals in knowledge and understanding of the world, creative and physical development because of the good curriculum and some effective teaching in these areas. In communication, language and literacy and mathematics, the teaching is mainly satisfactory. Children achieve below the level expected for their age because teaching in these areas requires further development.
9. The school's programme of support for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. It is effectively organised to identify pupils who need additional help in class. This ensures they make similar progress to that of their classmates. Arrangements for supporting pupils who have statements of special educational need are effective and ensure they make good progress and attain standards that are in line with their prior achievements. Some pupils who have individual education plans do not make adequate progress in meeting their targets. Therefore, their attainment in relation to these targets is unsatisfactory. Pupils who are withdrawn from class to receive additional help with literacy gain competence in basic reading, writing and spelling skills.
10. The school assembles a wide range of information on pupils' prior attainment but accurate target setting is difficult because of pupil mobility. However, the targets set are appropriate for the various groups of pupils. The school exceeded their targets in English and mathematics for 2000.

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

11. The pupils' attitudes to the school, behaviour and relationships within the school community are good and this has a positive impact on their learning. This was a

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<sup>1</sup> Early Learning Goals - these are expectations for most children to reach by the end of the Foundation Stage. They refer mainly to achievements children make in connection with the following six areas of learning: communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; personal, social and emotional development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical and creative development. There are many goals for each area of learning.

strength of the school in the previous inspection and this standard has been successfully maintained. Their personal development is good. Most parents feel that their children like school and that their behaviour is good.

12. Children's attitudes and behaviour in the Foundation Stage in the nursery and reception classes are good. They show good levels of concentration, initiative and independence for their age because the staff encourage this. Children co-operate well with each other in sharing resources and are courteous to visitors. In a mathematics lesson, in reception, a child spontaneously offered to help another who was having difficulty flicking her fingers when counting up to 25. These good attitudes continue throughout the school. Pupils are courteous and polite, for example they readily say please and thank you. Throughout the school, most pupils show respect for equipment and one another's property, for instance they use the computers with care. They listen with courtesy and respect to their teachers and to each other showing that they value what they are saying. In a religious education lesson, Year 1 pupils took turns patiently to feel the artefacts used in a wedding ceremony and listened carefully to what others had to say. In a Year 5 drama lesson, the whole class appreciated the good efforts made by a pupil who experiences difficulties with learning. Pupils listened very carefully and with respect.
13. The behaviour of most pupils is good. Most staff competently manage the behaviour of the few pupils with challenging behaviour. This means that for the majority of the time the learning of the other pupils is not disrupted. Pupils move around the school in an orderly manner, for example, when they enter the hall at lunchtimes and assembly times. Pupils play co-operatively together and are kind towards one another at playtimes; for example they readily include others in their play. Boys and girls and pupils get on well with each other. Interviews with pupils show that they know the rules for good behaviour at playtimes and what to do if they are bullied. They are confident that the teachers would deal with any incidents effectively. Two pupils have been excluded from the school for specific periods of time on eight occasions in the last year. One of these pupils is given additional support by specialist staff in order to improve his behaviour. The number of exclusions is greater than in the previous inspection when no pupils were excluded.
14. Relationships within the school are good. Staff set a good example of caring, friendly behaviour and this fosters the good relationships between pupils and teachers and has a positive effect on pupils' learning. Pupils show courtesy and respect when speaking to adults and politely open doors for visitors. Pupils of all ages willingly take responsibility in the classroom and around the school when they are given the opportunity. This promotes their personal development, sense of community and citizenship. They readily access their own resources, make decisions about their work, and evaluate their own and other's work meaningfully and present their work in a variety of ways. For example, when groups of pupils work together to create compositions in music lessons. Older junior pupils organise the seating for assemblies and sometimes care for reception pupils at breaktimes. The choir performs annually in a local home for the elderly. All pupils help to raise funds for charity. The school could improve pupils' personal development by providing a wider range of these opportunities.
15. Attendance is unsatisfactory due largely to pupils' mobility and extended holidays. Monitoring of attendance is rigorous, but measures taken to address this problem have not been effective. Unauthorised absences are above the national average and pupils do not always arrive punctually at school. The school is trying very hard to seek more co-operation from parents and the education welfare officer to improve attendance and punctuality. Attendance registers are marked twice daily and the

school meets statutory requirements for safe keeping of attendance records. This is an improvement since the last inspection.

## HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

16. The quality of teaching is satisfactory, with a significant amount of good, very good and excellent teaching having a positive effect on pupils' attainment and progress. Teaching is satisfactory or better in 95 per cent of lessons. It is excellent in 2 per cent, very good in 10 per cent, good in 38 per cent and satisfactory in 45 per cent. Five per cent of teaching is unsatisfactory. The quality of teaching is better when compared with what it was at the time of the last inspection. There was no very good or excellent teaching and 15 per cent of the teaching was judged to be unsatisfactory or worse.
17. The quality of teaching for the Foundation Stage is satisfactory and is underpinned by the good teamwork of staff and their knowledge of how young children learn through practical experiences. This is shown in the methods and resources adults use to gain children's interest and motivate them to learn. For example, the reception teacher used a variety of different fillings for bread when teaching children about similarities and differences. These gained children's interest and motivated them to join in with the discussion. This promoted the social skills of speaking aloud to a larger group. Regular teaching of handwriting has a positive impact on children's learning and many children form letters correctly.
18. In the nursery, adults have high expectations of what children should achieve, for instance in mathematics children are challenged to find how many more yellow balloons there are than blue ones. Nursery staff effectively use the assessments of children's achievements to plan the next step in children's learning. This is not the case in communication, language and literacy, and in mathematics in reception. Additionally, the rate at which initial sounds and simple words are taught is too slow. Children's books and lesson observations show that children who attend reception part-time have covered less mathematics than children who attend full-time. These factors affect children's achievements, particularly the higher-attaining children. Children with special educational needs make satisfactory progress through the good support they receive from all staff.
19. The quality of teaching is good for pupils aged 5 to 7 years. Teaching is good in English, mathematics, information and communication technology, religious education and physical education. It is satisfactory in science, art, geography and music. There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement about the quality of teaching in design and technology and history. The quality of teaching is satisfactory for pupils aged 7 to 11 years. Teaching is good in information and communication technology and satisfactory in all other subjects.
20. Lesson planning is satisfactory. It clearly shows what is to be taught and learnt. However, there is insufficient emphasis given to planning the use of literacy and numeracy skills in different subjects. An effective use of pupil assessment ensures that activities mainly match pupils' varying needs and prior attainment. The exception to this is in some lessons when higher-attaining pupils do not have sufficiently difficult work to complete. Teachers do not expect pupils to do enough work in science. The quality of the marking of pupils' work is satisfactory. The best practice places emphasis on what pupils need to do to improve their work further. This is inconsistent across the school and is weakest in science. Good homework procedures are effective in extending pupils' learning when they receive support at

home. Homework is particularly effective in Year 6 pupils' preparation for the end of year national tests.

21. Teachers use a range of appropriate teaching methods. These include whole-class teaching, group and individual work. The exception is when teachers combine classes to make a large teaching group of nearly 50 pupils. The pace slows at which pupils learn because too few pupils are actively involved in the lesson.
22. Teachers mainly have secure subject knowledge. There is some insecurity in teaching art. They manage pupils' behaviour effectively. Across the school, support staff make a good contribution to pupils' learning and progress. The most significant difference between the teaching of pupils aged 5 to 7 and those aged 7 to 11 is the pace at which pupils are expected to learn. It is much brisker for the younger pupils. This results in pupils completing more work and extending their learning further.
23. Support in whole-class lessons for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. It is effective in enabling pupils to participate fully and with confidence in all learning tasks. Learning support staff are particularly effective and make a valuable contribution to the quality of teaching and learning especially for pupils with statements of special educational needs. Teachers do not make satisfactory use of individual education plans to inform their planning or match the work they provide to the pupils' individual needs.
24. The following are examples of how good-quality teaching in the school positively affects pupils' learning:
  - In a nursery class music and movement lesson, the teaching and learning were excellent. The teacher by a quiet, calm, caring and pleasant approach created a lovely atmosphere for learning. Pupils responded by behaving impeccably. The teacher chose the music astutely so the children were inspired to move like a floating balloon. The teacher and nursery nurse participated fully and acted as great role models. The children took their lead from them before performing original movements. The teacher maintained the children's attention throughout by relating the story to accompany the music. The children worked continuously and at a brisk pace. By the end of the lesson, they moved with confidence and imagination.
  - A Year 2 numeracy lesson was a lively, briskly paced session that promoted pupils' learning well. The teacher was clear what was to be taught and learnt. This ensured pupils were clearly focused on what was to be achieved by the end of the lesson. The introduction drew on their knowledge of number bonds to 10 and doubles of single-digit numbers. The teacher had a good knowledge of pupils' previous learning and devised activities that built effectively on this learning. Pupils' behaviour was good because of good classroom management and no-nonsense approach by the teacher. This meant no time was wasted and the pupils produced a lot of good work. Pupils used the computer well to practise their numeracy skills.
  - In a very good Year 4 information and communication technology lesson, pupils extended their learning very well. The lesson planning was of very good quality. It ensured the work was based on pupils' previous learning and the skills they were to learn were taught in an appropriate order. The teacher had secure subject knowledge and her interventions in the pupils' learning meant she solved technical problems and developed pupils' thinking with skilled questioning. The choice of topic interested the pupils and they maintained concentration throughout the lesson. They learnt the basic skills of highlighting text, cutting and pasting, putting text in columns and importing a picture into the text. This represented very good progress in that lesson.

- In a Year 6 poetry lesson, the teacher taught very well and extended pupils' learning very significantly. There were clearly established routines and good relationships within the class. Pupils were keen and ready to work right from the start of the lesson. The teacher had high expectations for what she wanted pupils to learn. She insisted on the correct vocabulary, for example the use of the word 'alliteration'. Skilled questioning developed pupils understanding of the poem. It also ensured all pupils were involved in the class discussions. The work was matched appropriately to the pupils' varying needs. This meant pupils worked with concentration and without interruption during the independent work. Pupils completed a lot of good quality work by the end of the lesson.

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

25. The school provides a broad, well-balanced and relevant curriculum for its pupils. The curriculum planned for children under five in the Foundation Stage is good, is securely based on all the areas of learning recommended for young children and prepares them satisfactorily for the National Curriculum and the next stage of learning. Within the provision there are some strengths, particularly in knowledge and understanding of the world. The school provides a satisfactory curriculum that meets National Curriculum requirements for pupils aged 5 to 11 years. Relative weaknesses in the provision for design and technology and art are balanced by strengths in religious education, music and information and communication technology. Religious education is taught in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus. Appropriate provision is made for pupils' personal, social and health education including sex education, drug awareness and citizenship. The school prepares pupils for the next stage of their education successfully.
26. The quality of the curriculum has improved since the previous inspection, particularly in the provision for music and information and communication technology. Provision for art remains, relatively, less secure. The strengths previously identified in science are no longer evident, as the curriculum in science has been weakened by the restricted amount of time allocated to teaching it. The school successfully adopts appropriate strategies for teaching the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. The National Literacy Strategy is securely established with good practice evident at both key stages, supported well by initiatives such as 'Family Literacy' and 'Reading Recovery'. The National Numeracy Strategy was introduced at the beginning of the last school year and has been implemented effectively. This has a very positive effect upon standards.
27. There are good-quality policy documents in place for all statutory subjects other than art, and most are up to date. There is no formal written policy for personal and social education, although all the elements of a strong programme are delivered. The school has adopted the national documentation directly, or modified it where necessary, to provide a structure to support pupils' learning. There is a whole-school plan that provides an overview of what is to be taught to each year group. This planning is satisfactory and provides a secure framework for the teaching.
28. The amount of teaching time allocated to subjects is mainly appropriate with a significant proportion of the time available being spent on English and mathematics. This is a deliberate decision by the school, with the intention of raising standards in the critical core subjects. It is a successful strategy. However, this creates some pressure on the remaining subjects, particularly science.

29. Pupils have equality of access and opportunity to the curriculum. The school takes appropriate account of pupils' ages, attainment, gender, ethnicity and needs. Secure arrangements are in place to ensure that pupils with special educational needs have full access to all activities. The provision made for these pupils is satisfactory and the school implements the Code of Practice<sup>2</sup> fully. Pupils on the register of special educational needs are set appropriate targets in their individual education plans. However, these targets are not sufficiently taken into account by teachers when they plan lessons. The in-school support for pupils with statements of special educational need is good.
30. The programme for extra-curricular activities is satisfactory. The range of activities during school time is not extensive, but is enhanced considerably by the good provision for residential opportunities, the programme of visits outside school and the range of visitors to the school. The school has satisfactory links with the community, with neighbouring schools and with partner institutions. Procedures for welcoming new children to the school are well established and there is effective sharing of information with parents.
31. The provision for pupils' personal, moral and cultural development is one of the things the school does successfully. This was the case in the previous inspection. Pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. The school helps and encourages pupils to develop a spiritual awareness through subjects such as religious education and English. For example, in the nursery the expressive telling of the story of a magical blue balloon inspired children with wonder. In all classes the provision of a discussion period called 'Circle Time' provides a good opportunity for pupils to talk over issues that face them as part of everyday life. Collective worship meets statutory requirements and makes a satisfactory contribution to spiritual development. Time is provided for prayer and singing contributes to the feeling of spirituality.
32. The school promotes moral development strongly through the good example that staff give of care and respect for others, for instance they listen carefully to pupils' contributions and value what they say. Staff consistently implement the clear behaviour policy, such as not interrupting others when they are speaking. Classroom rules are clearly displayed and teachers refer to these when reinforcing the behaviour they want to promote. Clear guidelines about what pupils should do if they are bullied are displayed in Year 6. In 'Circle Time' pupils have opportunity to discuss issues, such as their relationships with others, to reflect upon their actions and to take responsibility for them. Staff use badges, stickers and certificates frequently to reward good behaviour and effort, and this raises pupils' self-esteem and confidence.
33. These systems lead to pupils' good behaviour in lessons and around the school, and very good behaviour in assemblies. This demonstrates that they have a clear sense of the difference between right and wrong. There are appropriate sanctions for unacceptable behaviour. Teachers supervise pupils competently at short playtimes and when they move around the school. They encourage them to be courteous to other adults, for instance by standing back to allow adults to pass through a doorway. Discussions with pupils show that they know the rules regarding acceptable behaviour at lunchtime and playtimes.
34. The good relationships between all members of the school community underpin the good provision for pupils' social development. Teachers encourage pupils to work

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<sup>2</sup> Code of Practice - this gives practical advice to schools and local education authorities about their responsibilities and tasks to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs receive the most appropriate help to further their learning and personal development. This is a statutory duty under the 1993 Education Act.



together in pairs or groups in some lessons, such as music. Each class takes it in turn to contribute to assemblies and this promotes pupils' personal development well. During the inspection, pupils in Year 6 produced a mathematics assembly for the whole school and several parents attended it. The pupils presented it in an enjoyable way and actively involved the audience. Residential visits for junior age pupils make a very good contribution to social and cultural development, for example to Colomendy and Oaklands. Older junior age pupils are given specific responsibilities around the school, such as helping reception pupils at playtimes and collecting registers, but these occasions are not widespread. Pupils' sense of citizenship and care for others is fostered through raising funds for charity.

35. Pupils' own cultural traditions and the diversity and richness of other cultures are promoted effectively through subjects, such as music and literacy. Pupils listen to the work of a variety of composers in music lessons, such as Smetana, and study music from their own and other countries, such as Tudor or Caribbean music. In a Year 6 poetry lesson, the teacher successfully developed the powerful effect of poetry. Christianity and other faiths are studied in religious education, for example Hinduism and Islam, and older junior age pupils have visited a synagogue. There are attractive displays around the school on the significant celebrations of different religions, such as Divali and Ramadan. Theatre and orchestral groups visit the school regularly. Visitors from the community also enhance the provision; for example they contribute to the history work of the older junior pupils.

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

36. The school is a very calm and caring establishment, which has well-organised procedures for ensuring the well-being and safety of its pupils. As a result, pupils are very happy to come to school. Child protection procedures are in place and the school pays close attention to health and safety issues. Provision for welfare of the pupils is good.
37. Parents responding to the questionnaire strongly agree that their children like to come to school and that they are happy or very happy at the school. All staff make it a priority to settle children well, with an established and successful pre-school meeting between teachers and carers. The school pays good attention to pupils' educational and emotional needs. Support and advice received from agencies outside the school make a good contribution to the welfare of the pupils with behaviour difficulties.
38. The teachers and learning support assistants know the children well and are sensitive to their needs and provide suitable opportunities for them to discuss any concerns or problems. The learning support staff, in a strategically located medical room, sensitively supervise sick and vulnerable children. The school administrator makes good safety arrangements prior to the educational visits out of school.
39. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good attendance are sufficiently rigorous but are not having a significant effect on attendance rates, which are well below the national average. Regular contacts with the education welfare officer and the parents are maintained.
40. The school promotes good behaviour through a system of mutually agreed simple classroom rules, which are incorporated in the whole-school policy and strategically displayed around the school. All pupils know that good behaviour is required for the children to work and play harmoniously. A system of incentives to reward good behaviour is effective and the majority of parents and their children understand the

hierarchy for incentives and sanctions for appropriate and inappropriate behaviour. The anti-bullying policy provides guidance on dealing with incidents of inappropriate behaviour. Mid-day staff have recently received appropriate training for dealing with difficult children. Pupils are aware that unkindness and harassment will not be tolerated and children from different social backgrounds are taught to respect one another. No incidents of bullying were observed during the inspection

41. The staff informally but adequately monitor the personal and social development of pupils. Pupils who behave well are awarded certificates and recognition is given in the whole-school assemblies. Parents are invited to these assemblies and they are well attended.
42. A satisfactory health and safety policy is in place. There are good routines for dealing with sickness and for more serious injuries, regular safety checks and good attention to safe practices in lessons. Staff promote hygiene effectively as part of the curriculum. There are good arrangements for first aid and staff are aware of the procedures in case of an emergency. There are sufficient qualified first aiders, however some need to renew their certificates. The headteacher regularly undertakes risk assessments and the building is kept clean and free from obstructions. Most parents feel that their children are safe and secure in the school. If a child is ill in the school, parents are confident that the school will take appropriate action, including contacting them at home. There were no health and safety issues at the time of the inspection.
43. The school complies with the local education authority's child-protection policy. This provides clear instructions about action to be taken and inter-agency procedures. All staff are alert to the issues and there is a nominated and qualified child protection person.
44. Throughout the school, assessment procedures are satisfactory. The use teachers make of them to inform the next step in pupils' learning are underdeveloped in some subjects and at present are unsatisfactory. Since the time of the last inspection the school has made good progress in developing this aspect of its work, which was identified as a key issue for action. The new procedures have been introduced sensitively and systematically. The school places an emphasis on developing methods of monitoring and tracking pupils' achievements in literacy and numeracy. Evidence from the inspection confirms teachers' predictions about the positive impact this is having upon raising standards in the National Curriculum tests. For pupils aged 7 to 11, standards in English and mathematics have improved faster than the national trend. Assessment procedures in science are less well developed. The school has identified a need to develop these further to replicate the better quality of literacy and numeracy assessments. Co-ordinators responsible for the Foundation Stage have begun to initiate and implement procedures for monitoring pupils' progress and achievements. Portfolios of samples of pupils' work have yet to be established in order to provide teachers with information about the quality of pupils' work throughout the school. The school is aware of the need to match the work to National Curriculum levels in order to more closely evaluate how standards within the school reflect those found in other schools.
45. In the nursery, good use is made of information about what the children know, understand and are able to do. Their successes are recorded well so that the next activity they are given is suitably challenging, stimulating and enjoyable. In the reception classes, too little use is made of assessment information to ensure the work provided for the children is at the correct level. As a result, children do not build quickly enough on the good progress they make in the nursery.

46. Teachers of pupils aged 7 to 11 make effective use of information from tests in English and mathematics to group pupils in order to provide them with work that is at an appropriate level for their varying needs.
47. The school is beginning to use the results of a range of assessment information to analyse and evaluate areas of weakness within teaching and learning. The achievements of the higher-attaining pupils are monitored and the school is aware of the importance of reviewing this strategy to ensure any gifted and talented pupils are suitably challenged by the work they are given. Targets for pupils with special educational needs are reviewed and amended regularly to monitor the progress they are making. However, the targets are not prominently featured in teachers' lesson plans. This results in pupils making too little progress in meeting their targets. For pupils with statements of special educational need the progress they make is well assessed and teachers use the information to inform future teaching and learning. As a result, pupils with statements of special educational need make good progress.

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

48. The quality of the school's partnership with parents is sound. Most parents are satisfied with the education provided and the standards achieved by their children. They strongly agree that the teaching and behaviour are good, which enables their children to develop positive attitudes to school and make good progress. The majority of parents feel that the school keeps them well informed about their children's progress and that the school works closely with parents. A large number, just under one-third, who responded to the questionnaire feel that they are not well informed about how their child is progressing in the school. A fifth of the parents indicated that the school does not provide an interesting range of activities outside the school hours and a similar number feels that the school does not work closely with parents. Evidence gathered during the inspection through meetings with parents and talking to parent helpers does not support parents' views. The inspectors noted that the school provides a variety of sporting activities outside the school hours and pupils support these well.
49. The school encourages parents to take part in their children's learning and a number of them attend school functions such as assemblies and religious celebrations. Some parents help their children with homework and make positive comments in their children's homework diaries. Parents of children with special educational needs are properly involved in their children's education plans and the school provides them with the opportunity for participating in the annual review.
50. There are open evenings as well as opportunities for informal meetings between parents and teachers. Class teachers invite parents to a year group meeting to discuss the curriculum and targets for their children. The school sends regular newsletters to the parents/carers informing them of the school events. The majority of parents are satisfied that they can approach the school at any time and their suggestions and complaints are dealt with effectively. The school operates an open-door policy and this enables parents to express their views and make enquiries about their children's well-being and progress. The headteacher was observed talking to parents on many occasions during the inspection week.
51. Most parents interviewed are happy about the information received from the school and they feel comfortable to approach the school about their children's welfare. Inspection evidence suggests that the majority parents are very supportive of the

school and the staff appreciates their help with reading and various other activities in the school.

52. There are effective and flexible induction procedures for new pupils. The school encourages parents of children in the early years to come into the school and stay with their children for a settling-in period. The school provides satisfactory information for Year 6 pupils for their next stage of learning and where appropriate arranges meetings with Year 7 teachers from the neighbouring schools. This is much appreciated by the parents and the pupils. The school prospectus and governors annual report are thorough and contain statutory information. Most parents feel that the annual reports are satisfactory. It is the inspectors' judgement that they are of good quality and contain statutory information.
53. Satisfactory relationships with parents have been sustained since the last inspection. The majority of parents have signed the home-school agreement and there exists an effective working relationship between the majority of parents, carers and the staff. This enables them to share information about children's attitudes to learning and the progress made. Whilst some parents are keen to be actively involved in the school life, attend events and celebrations, and accompany children on school outings, not all parents make sufficient contribution to their children's learning in the school or at home. There are few helpers in the classrooms and parents' involvement with improving attendance and punctuality is unsatisfactory.

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

54. The headteacher provides good leadership and clear educational direction for the school. She established a strong and supportive senior management team and carefully appointed staff to fill posts of responsibility. The deputy headteacher sets a good example to others through her teaching and takes responsibility in a number of key areas such as the 'Family Literacy Project'. There is a shared commitment within the school and the governing body to bring about further improvements in standards. There is a good team spirit and the school is well placed to build upon the good improvement made since the last inspection.
55. The school monitors, evaluates and supports teaching and curriculum development effectively. It has made a positive response to national initiatives. The co-ordinators for English, mathematics and information and communication technology provide good leadership in implementing the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and the recent innovations in information and communication technology. The headteacher and relevant co-ordinators monitor teaching and learning to ensure that these new strategies are in place. These procedures are useful, but the monitoring of teaching overall is not sufficiently rigorous. The current strategy could be further developed as a means of identifying the best features of teaching in all subjects and sharing these with colleagues. The headteacher recently introduced performance management and identified members of staff as team leaders to administer the process.
56. The governing body meets regularly and fulfils its statutory requirements. There is a sound understanding of their roles and governors are willing to take on new responsibilities. They are kept informed by the headteacher about the life of the school and the standards and quality of education pupils receive. Governors visit school regularly and have first-hand experience of how the school runs. The chair of governors works closely and effectively with the school and there are good, positive relationship between the staff and governors. Consequently, governors have a good

understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They have identified priorities and set clear targets for the headteacher to attain in the years ahead.

57. School development planning is sound and has improved since the last inspection. It is a more useful tool for building for the future and makes the raising of standards the cornerstone of all developments. The school takes effective action to meet its targets. Long-term strategic financial planning is effective. Development plans now include accurate details of spending on the curriculum, but not on other aspects of the school. There is no system to enable governors and senior managers to gauge whole-school spending needs over a number of years that are linked to potential budgets. The headteacher and governors have a sound grasp of the principles of best value. They regularly compare the performance of Well Lane School with that of other local schools in order to measure its effectiveness. Governors are committed to keeping class sizes low in order to raise standards. Consequently, the school's expenditure per pupil is higher than normal. The day-to-day administration and management of the school is good and allows teachers and pupils to get on with their work with minimum disruption. The school bursar and secretary are efficient and ably support the headteacher. The very few minor recommendations in the latest auditor's report have been implemented. The headteacher has good control over the various grants available to the school and uses these to directly support pupils' learning.
58. The school has a sufficient number of well-qualified teaching and non-teaching staff to ensure that the whole curriculum is taught effectively. A strength of the school is the quality and number of support staff who work very well with the teaching staff and have a real impact on learning. A particularly strong example of this is the way the nursery staff supports the teaching, which has a very good impact on children's learning. The school has a clear system of staff development based on regular professional reviews with the teachers and the headteacher. Staff development is closely based on the whole-school priorities identified in the school development plan. The school is well advanced in dealing with performance management.
59. The school has adequate accommodation including a strategically placed medical room for sick children. The library is located conveniently in the main hall for easy access but space does not allow for sufficient comfortable tables and chairs or the computers for independent research work by older pupils.
60. The school is well resourced in all subjects and all the resources are easily accessible except physical education equipment where dinner tables prevent quick and safe access.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

61. Standards of attainment are rising across the school. In order to continue this upward trend the headteacher and staff, in conjunction with the governing body, should:

- **raise attainment in English for pupils aged 5 to 11 by building on the good practice in the school and:**
  - further develop the teaching of literacy skills and the use of extended writing across the curriculum;
  - ensure work for all pupils is hard enough for them in all lessons;
  - increase the use of the library to support pupils' learning;
  - ensure class teachers use effectively the individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs to plan work that is based on the targets identified within these plans;
  - improve the quality of the teaching of reading in the reception classes by making better use of the results of pupils' assessment to match work accurately to their varying needs and by increasing the pace at which pupils learn;
  - build on the good teaching of drama as a means of developing pupils' speaking and listening skills;

(paragraphs 2, 5, 20, 23, 27, and 73-84)

- **raise attainment in mathematics by the ages of 7 and 11 by:**
  - continuing with the successful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy;
  - developing the teaching of numeracy skills across the curriculum;
  - ensuring work for all pupils is hard enough in all lessons;

(paragraphs 2, 5, 20, 23, 27 and 85-91)

- **raise attainment in science for pupils aged 5 to 11 by:**
  - ensuring work is matched accurately to the varying needs of pupils;
  - making sure pupils complete sufficient work in lessons;
  - increasing the time allocated to the teaching of science;

(paragraphs 2, 5, 20, 21, 28 and 92-98)

- **build on the current good practice to improve pupils' attendance.**

(paragraphs 15 and 39)

62. In addition to the key issues above, the following less important area for development should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- raise attainment in art across the school.

(paragraphs 7 and 99-104)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	78
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	30

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
2	10	38	45	5	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	17	260
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	N/A	184

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	5
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	3	122

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	41
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	52

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.1
National comparative data	5.2

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1.9
National comparative data	0.5

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	20	15	35

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	14	11	13
	Girls	14	13	13
	Total	28	24	26
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	80 (67)	69 (56)	74 (86)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	12	14	14
	Girls	13	14	12
	Total	25	28	26
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	71 (77)	80 (70)	74 (79)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	21	24	45

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	12	14	19
	Girls	18	14	20
	Total	30	28	39
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	67 (60)	62 (47)	87 (60)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	10	13	16
	Girls	14	12	13
	Total	24	25	29
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	53 (46)	56 (46)	66 (60)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	80 (75)

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



### **Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	249
Any other minority ethnic group	1

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

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

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	8	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

### **Teachers and classes**

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	14.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	16.5
Average class size	20

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

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	211

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	31

Number of pupils per FTE adult	9
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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Financial information**

Financial year	1999-00
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	£
Total income	571,795
Total expenditure	578,473
Expenditure per pupil	1,791
Balance brought forward from previous year	13,805
Balance carried forward to next year	7,127

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate 15.6%

Number of questionnaires sent out	294
Number of questionnaires returned	46

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	52	44	2	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	43	42	11	0	4
Behaviour in the school is good.	48	35	13	2	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	28	58	12	0	2
The teaching is good.	52	39	7	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	41	28	20	11	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	70	22	4	4	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	59	30	9	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	31	40	18	7	4
The school is well led and managed.	48	33	11	4	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	51	36	9	4	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	38	23	13	13	13

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

## AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

63. There has been satisfactory improvement in the provision for children in the Foundation Stage. The school now has a suitable secure outside play area for nursery children and plans to extend this provision to reception as soon as funds permit. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. In the nursery, it has improved from satisfactory to good, and in a dance lesson it was excellent. The nursery teacher has high expectations of what children can achieve and this has a positive impact on children's learning. The nursery and reception staff have spent considerable time recently discussing and planning children's work based upon the new curriculum for children of this age. They have a good understanding of how young children learn and the work in classrooms reflects this and is mainly of a practical nature. This enables children to make good progress in most areas of their learning.
64. Many children begin nursery with low levels of skill in speaking and listening, reading and mathematics. Although they make good progress in the nursery, their achievements in these areas are still below the level expected for their age when they enter reception. This is confirmed by the school's initial assessments that are undertaken with these young children. By the time the reception children are ready to start in Year 1, the majority of them achieve well and attain above the Early Learning Goals in personal, social and emotional development. This is because of the very good teaching in this area. They achieve the Early Learning Goals in knowledge and understanding of the world, creative and physical development because of the good curriculum and some effective teaching in these areas.
65. In communication, language and literacy and mathematics, the teaching is mainly satisfactory and children continue to achieve below the level expected for their age. This is because the reception teachers do not use the assessments of children's achievements to plan work matched to their differing abilities. Additionally, in reading the rate at which letter sounds and simple words are taught is too slow. Children's books and lesson observations show that part-time reception children spend less time on mathematics than full-time children do. These factors affect children's achievements, particularly the more-able children.
66. Many children enter the nursery class with immature skills in personal and social development. By the time they leave the reception classes they are achieving above the Early Learning Goals. This shows very good achievement and reflects the skilful teaching in this area in both year groups. Teaching and support staff work effectively together as a team and are caring, supportive and encouraging. For example, they constantly reward children for their efforts and encourage them to feel confident about what they can achieve. Adults set a good example for children to follow, always treating each other and the children with courtesy and respect. This leads to trusting relationships and helps the children to understand one another's points of view. In both year groups, children are enthusiastic about their learning and they play and work together as friends. Adults also promote children's personal development effectively by ensuring that the equipment and resources that the children use are easily accessible to them. They allow children to make choices about some of the activities they undertake, for example, reception children decide which activity to undertake and place their name against it on the task board. Children settle quickly and happily into daily routines, such as registration or milk time, and are developing a good awareness that some actions are right and some are wrong.

67. In both year groups the children enjoy listening to stories and readily share books with each other and with adults. All the adults encourage children to talk and are good active listeners. They show children that they value their efforts at communicating. By the time the children leave reception, many are achieving the Early Learning Goals but others lack the range of vocabulary to express themselves clearly and a few have immature speech. Children in the nursery listened intently and were filled with wonder when the teacher told the story of *The Blue Balloon*. They predicted what would happen to it, for example one child said, "It might float away and get stuck in a tree". They treat books with care, look closely at the pictures and are beginning to tell a story from them.
68. Reception teachers successfully use elements of the literacy framework to promote children's learning. For example, children listen carefully to the rhyme *Humpty Dumpty* and later place it in the correct order. However, children have little knowledge of letter sounds and simple words. Children make better progress in writing where they confidently have a go at writing for a relevant purpose or about their experiences, such as writing messages to members of their family in the writing corner. Regular teaching of handwriting has a positive impact on children's learning and many children form letters correctly.
69. The achievement of most children in mathematical development is mainly satisfactory. The teacher's expectations of what children can achieve are higher in the nursery than in reception. This means that the nursery children are given more challenging work and make better progress than reception children. Nursery children sort objects and they are beginning to count to 10. For example, they sorted a set of balloons into four green and five yellow ones. Through skilful teacher questioning they discovered that there was one more yellow balloon. Many reception children count to 10 and beyond, such as to 25. They place the numbers to 10 in order and are beginning to use the terms 'full' and 'empty' when using containers in the water tray.
70. Many children enter the nursery class with a low basic general knowledge. Children's knowledge is developed effectively in both year groups. Adults in the nursery support children competently in their work on the computer. This work is extended successfully in reception. Children use the mouse confidently to work a variety of programmes and use a digital camera with developing skill. Reception children discuss change and time when talking about themselves as babies, toddlers and school children. They are beginning to learn about the environment and simple routes through walks around school and to the local shops. They talk about how different types of bread are alike or different, such as white, ciabatta and pitta bread. Some of them have difficulty in expressing their ideas and opinions. In both year groups, children use tools safely to construct and build.
71. Children in both year groups make good progress in physical development, although the outdoor play area is underused in the nursery and is not used in the reception classes. This is because of the effective teaching that takes place in lessons in the school hall. In an excellent dance lesson in the nursery, the very good story telling and choice of music motivated the children and promoted their very good learning and excellent behaviour. This high level of behaviour was evident in the reception lesson. The teacher acted as a good model for the movements. This motivated the children so that they acted out the rhyme of *Humpty Dumpty* imaginatively and with a good awareness of space. Teachers also teach the skills to help children gain safe control of finer movements, such as cutting with scissors.

72. Children start from a fairly low level of skill in creative development when they enter the nursery class. They make good progress throughout the nursery and reception years. The nursery children are particularly able at imaginative play because of the way adults support and extend these opportunities for them. For instance, during the inspection the imaginative play area was set up like the television programme *Changing Rooms*. Adults encouraged children to talk about the different colours of paint and to sort and count the wallpaper. The good teaching of music in reception has a positive impact on children's learning. Children identify loud and soft sounds and the names of some percussion instruments. They are beginning to create simple musical patterns and they join in enthusiastically with familiar songs, such as *I am the music man*.

## ENGLISH

73. Standards in English for 11 year olds have risen at a faster rate than the national trend since the last inspection. Results in the national tests for 2000 showed that achievement was still well below average even though standards were rising. However, pupils achieved satisfactorily in comparison with similar schools. The evidence collected during the inspection suggests that this steady rate of improvement is being maintained. Standards are now below average compared with schools nationally. They are below average in reading and writing and well below average in speaking and listening. The national tests for 2000 showed that seven-year-olds achieved well below average standards in both reading and writing. However, their achievement was comparable with those in similar schools in reading but well below average in writing. Inspection evidence shows that standards in reading have risen faster than in writing and are now below average compared with schools nationally. This is because the school has successfully devoted a great deal of time and effort into raising standards in reading. Achievement in speaking and listening remains a weakness and is an area requiring further development.
74. In most lessons, pupils answer questions keenly and make a contribution during the whole-class discussion at the beginning of the literacy hour. Most teaching is effective and relationships between teachers and pupils are good, and this increases pupils' self-confidence. Only a few pupils are reluctant to speak and nearly all listen politely when others are speaking. However, there is considerable variation in pupils' ability to listen intently to what others are saying and to give clear, detailed and accurate replies to questions. Above average seven-year-olds listen carefully and have a range of vocabulary typical for their age. A Year 2 pupil, for instance, replied to a question about the *Big Book* by suggesting, "Lars the Polar Bear's dad is kind because he helps anyone who is in trouble". Average-attaining pupils offer shorter responses such as, "Lars' dad is big and strong". A significant number of lower ability pupils limit their replies to one word. Speaking and listening skills develop at a similar rate up to the age of 11 years. Pupils are expected to use the correct expressions for parts of speech such as 'simile' and 'metaphor'. Teaching in other subjects gives them opportunities to become involved in debate. In religious education, for example, the teacher invites pupils to share their thoughts about places that are special to them. A few higher-attaining pupils supply articulate, extended answers to questions and achieve satisfactorily for their age. Average and lower-attaining pupils limit their replies to short phrases or single words. Their progress should be quicker.
75. Pupils make significant improvement in their reading skills in Years 1 and 2. They receive a great deal of extra support through initiatives such as 'Reading Recovery' and 'Successful Reading' and this is having a positive impact on standards. All pupils become more confident because they regularly enjoy opportunities to sit and

read to adults on a one-to-one basis. The support staff, teachers and parents who help them are well informed and effective. Consequently, pupils develop a range of methods for reading new words that they come across. Higher-attaining readers become more independent and achieve as well as expected for their age. They talk enthusiastically about their books and read aloud fluently and with expression in their voices. Average-attaining readers are confident when reading stories and books; they are familiar with and remember an increasing number of commonly used words. They are less secure when reading aloud, but are getting better at correcting their own mistakes and using the text or the pictures to help them. A significant minority of less-able pupils recognise individual letters and some frequently used words. They achieve well over time, but rely heavily on adult support.

76. From Year 3 onwards, pupils continue to achieve at a steady rate. They all become increasingly independent due to daily silent reading sessions at the start of each afternoon. Additionally, they are regularly asked to write a review of the books they read and say why they like or dislike a story. This sharpens their understanding of what they read and often provides further incentive to read more books by the same author. Guided-reading sessions in the literacy hour also assist progress. Often, skilful guidance from teachers helps pupils to appreciate the devices used by authors for creating tension or bringing characters to life. A few more-able pupils know an increasing number of authors and discuss their favourite style of writing. Most pupils in the middle ability range confidently read and enjoy the books that teachers give them to read in lessons, but do not read widely outside school. There are too few opportunities for them to extend their interest in reading for pleasure through use of the school library. This also limits the development of their independent reading and research skills. A few 11-year-olds still rely on regular adult support to improve their reading.
77. Teachers in Years 1 and 2 place particular emphasis on the teaching of letter sounds. This is an effective strategy. Most pupils recognise simple phonemes and this improves their ability to write and spell words correctly. Progress in writing sentences is slower. More-able pupils successfully organise events into sequence and write them as coherent prose. They use capital letters, commas and full stops accurately. Handwriting is well formed and most words are spelled correctly. Average pupils write sentences in the right order but less accurately, often with inconsistent use of punctuation or spacing between words. A significant minority of lower-ability pupils have difficulty in writing independently. They write a few simple words correctly but have difficulty in producing legible sentences. Pupils up to age seven do not write often enough and this limits the development of their writing skills. More-able and average pupils have too few opportunities to record stories and experiences of their own. Below average pupils spend too much time organising events by cutting out printed sentences and pasting them into workbooks instead of practising writing skills. Consequently, their pencil control does not develop as quickly as it should. Additionally, all pupils in Years 1 and 2 use large, unlined workbooks for their writing. This makes it difficult for them to develop a uniform and neat handwriting style. This situation improves gradually as pupils move through the school. There are more opportunities for them to write longer pieces of work both in additional English lessons and other subjects across the curriculum. They use draft books to plan and edit their work and this improves the quality of the final piece of writing. Teachers provide a good range of activities to develop their ability to write for a variety of audiences. Higher-attaining 11-year-olds produce well-constructed, imaginative descriptions and stories reflecting standards typical for their age. A Year 6 pupil, for example, after listening to some music writes, "The romantic pieces of music were the most graceful and lively because they had a good pitch and rhythm to them". Average-attaining pupils develop an understanding of how to use paragraphs

to organise their ideas. They sometimes use speech marks correctly and much of their basic spelling and punctuation is correct. Below average-attaining pupils write strings of sentences, which are in the correct order and clearly convey meaning. The majority have a clear, neat handwriting style by age 11 and the work in their books reflects pride in what they achieve.

78. Support for pupils who have special educational needs is effective. Many pupils lack confidence in reading, writing and speaking and listening and are slow in acquiring new skills and knowledge. However, the help that they receive from parents, support staff and teachers is clearly focused and well matched to their individual needs. Consequently, they achieve as well as other pupils in relation to their prior attainment.
79. Teaching is good throughout the school. Over a half is good or better and a fifth is very good. There were two unsatisfactory lessons. In the majority of lessons, teachers show a clear understanding of the National Literacy Strategy and use it effectively. The timing of the various sections of the lesson is good and ensures that activities are well-balanced. Relationships and the management of pupils are good. This is clearly reflected in most pupils' attitudes to the subject. They look forward to and enjoy lessons and they behave well. Teachers use the correct language to describe what is being taught and expect pupils to do the same. They also use imaginative games to reinforce or develop learning. A Year 4 class, for example, really enjoyed a short but sharply focused and effective game called 'follow me'. In the course of the game they talked knowledgeably about the past tense and used it accurately.
80. Support staff make a valuable contribution to learning. They are clear about their role and provide work that is appropriate to the needs of the groups they support. Teachers also work hard to involve parents in their children's learning. Three successful initiatives are in place and these are having a significant impact on the development of pupils' self-esteem and confidence in reading and writing. As part of the 'Family Literacy Project', for example, parents visited a local aquarium with their children and then helped them to write a letter of thanks to the curator. The Year 2 teacher, who is the project co-ordinator, successfully managed this. The 'Reading Recovery' teacher has helped to train dedicated and effective parents and support staff to run a 'Successful Reading' programme and this is having a similar impact on the achievement of pupils who find reading difficult.
81. Teachers have good subject knowledge and use this to promote all areas of literacy. Year 6 teachers, for example, introduced a long and difficult narrative poem about a highwayman. They had high expectations of pupils' appreciation of the poem's meaning and the conventions of story writing. They skilfully drew suggestions from the class through questions such as, "Why did Bess sacrifice herself for the highwayman?" Pupils responded in a very mature fashion. They used correct vocabulary such as alliteration when discussing the features of the poem and were keen to discuss abstract notions such as betrayal and jealousy.
82. Teaching is also good when teachers develop speaking and listening by emphasising to pupils the need to articulate their answers clearly. This was clearly illustrated in a Year 5 lesson when pupils enacted the story of their whole-class reading book. There was marked improvement in performance as the lesson progressed because the teachers insisted on clarity of speech,
83. In a small minority of lessons, teachers' management of pupils' behaviour is inconsistent. This sometimes leads to restlessness or disruptive behaviour and

slows the rate of progress. Restlessness also occurs when the organisation of the timetable causes English lessons to go on for too long. Sometimes 30 minutes of phonic work is immediately followed by an hour of literacy teaching and many pupils have difficulty in concentrating. Teaching is also occasionally less effective when expectations of pupils' performance are too low. This happens when the written tasks provided for pupils of all abilities are not sufficiently challenging and leads to underachievement. The marking of work is variable in quality. Many teachers add constructive or encouraging comments at the end of pieces of work but there is inconsistency in the use of the marking code to denote errors in spelling, punctuation or meaning. The planning of work throughout the school is thorough, although there is insufficient emphasis on the development of speaking and listening skills. There are not enough specifically planned activities such as drama to help pupils to develop confidence in this area. Additionally, teachers do not consistently expect clear responses from pupils during the course of the school day. Most teachers make effective use of computers to promote literacy. Pupils are making good progress at using word-processors to adapt their writing for a variety of purposes, such as producing newspaper articles. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection.

84. The co-ordinator's management of the subject is good. She has ensured that teachers and support staff are trained in the planning and implementation of the National Literacy Strategy. Monitoring of lessons has taken place to ensure that this strategy is in place. This process could be further developed to enable the school to measure the effectiveness of teaching in relation to the standards achieved. The school library has too few reference books and is underused as a resource for independent learning. A member of staff has recently taken responsibility for the library and has clear plans for its development. The co-ordinator has overseen the introduction of a number of strategies to promote literacy and receives good support from colleagues. There is a positive ethos for learning and standards are improving steadily.

## **MATHEMATICS**

85. Satisfactory progress has been made since the last inspection. At that time standards were described as satisfactory overall. However, in the national tests later that year, standards proved to be well below average for pupils aged 7 and 11 years. In the intervening period, standards have remained well below average for 7-year-olds, both in relation to what pupils are achieving nationally and what is being achieved in similar schools. The picture for pupils aged 7 to 11 is more positive. Standards have been rising steadily over a four-year period. Although still well below average in relation to all schools in 2000, standards were average when compared to similar schools. The school exceeded the target set for attainment of pupils aged 11 years. Standards are currently below average for the 7 and 11 year olds in both numeracy and other aspects of mathematics. Overall, however, standards are improving, given the very limited experience of mathematics which children have when they enter the school. Across the school, there are no significant variations in the attainment of boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well and they make satisfactory progress.
86. By the age of seven, the more-able pupils understand place value to hundreds, tens and units and add and subtract two-digit numbers. They estimate length in appropriate units and measure accurately in centimetres. They recognise and sort by name and properties a range of two-dimensional shapes. They sequence numbers to 100, read simple clock faces and recognise odd and even numbers. At present, however, younger pupils produce a very limited amount of recorded



mathematics. This does not sufficiently prepare the more-able pupils in particular for the written components of the national test for seven-year-olds. This is a constraint on the standards that they can achieve in test conditions. In addition, it is evident that the effective input to mathematics in the nursery is not built upon with sufficient urgency in either reception or Year 1 classes.

87. By the age of 11, pupils have an increasingly confident approach to mental calculations and perform these briskly and accurately. They have a growing understanding of fractions, decimals and percentages, although some weaknesses in the understanding of decimal place values are evident in Year 6 lessons. They represent correctly information in bar charts, line graphs and conversion graphs. The most able pupils undertake long multiplication, identify mean, mode, median and range from a data set and understand the basic principles of probability. They increasingly apply accurately their knowledge to practical problems and they use opportunities to apply their mathematical skills in curriculum areas such as science, geography and history.
88. The quality of teaching and learning are good for pupils aged 5 to 7 and satisfactory for pupils aged 7 to 11 years. Across the school, the quality of teaching ranges between satisfactory and good. Pupils aged 10 and 11 make the best progress and this shows through the improvement in standards achieved. The pace of learning accelerates as pupils become older. The school feels that the relative consistency of teaching performance across the school is due to the positive effect of the structure provided by the numeracy strategy. This has been effectively implemented and provides a very clear framework within which staff plan their work.
89. In a good lesson, in Year 2, pupils developed their awareness of the 2, 5 and 10 times tables and which multiples produced odd or even products. They then ordered numbers and worked out which coins would be needed for given amounts of money, converting backwards and forwards between pennies and pounds. They were enthusiastic and responded well to the quick-fire questions from the teacher. This promoted good learning for all of the pupils, reinforced later by carefully structured tasks that were matched well to the areas of work in which pupils needed reinforcement.
90. Teachers use the National Numeracy Strategy confidently. Lesson planning is generally clear and effective and follows a consistent pattern throughout the school. Teachers use the closing few minutes of the lesson well. Groups of pupils and individuals have clear targets in mathematics. Teachers reinforce the use of correct mathematical vocabulary effectively. This helps to extend pupils' learning in literacy. Oral sessions are good and support the development of improved mental skills and agility. Within the main activities, teachers plan for a number of group activities and in almost all lessons they match work well to individual needs. This promotes good progress. Teachers make some use of information and communication technology to promote learning, including data handling, modelling, the use of spreadsheets and directional work.
91. There has been considerable improvement to mathematics provision and the co-ordinator provides strong leadership for the subject. The school has well-developed structures for assessment in mathematics. As a result of effective record keeping, teachers have an increasingly clear view of the strengths and weaknesses of individual pupils. There is detailed analysis of national and optional test information to track pupils' progress and to identify areas of weakness across the school. The effective use of this information is a key factor in pushing up standards.

## SCIENCE

92. In 2000, teachers assessed standards for pupils in Year 2 as well below that expected for their age. Pupils in Year 6 achieved standards below those expected for their age in the national test. The standards were above those achieved by pupils in similar schools. However, evidence from the inspection reveals pupils do not currently produce work at this standard. For pupils throughout the school standards in lessons are low. Nevertheless, the use made of homework for pupils in Year 6 last year had a significant impact upon the rate of progress they made. As the school has adopted the same strategy this year it is expected that pupils will again make good progress in time for the national tests.
93. Standards in the current Year 2 are well below average, although in lessons where the quality of teaching is good pupils make better progress and achieve higher standards of work. An example of this during the inspection was in a lesson about living things. Pupils recalled several characteristics common to plants and animals and why all things, which are alive, need food to grow and keep healthy. However, the work provided by teachers is not hard enough. Pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to learn through first hand investigations or by writing their own accounts of what they have discovered. Pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are not developed sufficiently in science.
94. Work produced by the pupils in Years 1 and 2 shows that they make inconsistent progress. In Year 1, for example, some pupils record their work in topic books whilst others have a separate science book. Pupils who record their science work separately have a clearer knowledge and understanding of the subject. They talk about what they have recorded, including about some differences between day and night. All pupils enjoy investigative work. It is especially beneficial for pupils who have special educational needs, who receive effective support from classroom assistants and their classmates.
95. Standards in the current Year 6 are also well below average. The progress pupils make in lessons is also unsatisfactory due to the way in which the lessons are planned and taught by putting both classes together. Lesson introductions are too long, which results in insufficient time being given for pupils to investigate aspects of the subject, such as forces. Pupils know that gravity, friction, upthrust and air resistance exert a force, but are not given adequate time to investigate how a force can be affected by altering a feature of their original test.
96. Pupils in a Year 3 lesson showed a level of knowledge and understanding about sound that is very poor. Much of the work they have done about living things is at a level expected for pupils 12 months younger. Pupils in Year 4 develop a sound understanding of the difference between conductors and insulators through testing a range of objects to find out which create a complete circuit. In Year 5, pupils make sensible predictions about which mixture of sand and cement will be the strongest. They test their predictions and record their results with reasonable accuracy. Other elements of their work include a study of the human life cycle, habitats and food chains. They have a limited understanding of this work. Pupils make the best progress in the lessons that are based upon investigative work and where they devise and perform their own experiments.
97. Teaching is satisfactory. The most consistent strength is the way in which teachers manage pupils. As a result, pupils like their teachers and show them respect. In Year 6, pupils make very good use of homework, which results in very good progress in gaining subject knowledge and understanding. This has a very positive impact

upon the standards achieved in the end of key stage tests. However, throughout the school there are weaknesses in the quality of teaching. The subject is not taught in adequate detail so pupils' knowledge of some basic science skills is weak. Teachers do not have high enough expectations about what pupils should achieve and do not expect them to make adequate records of their work. The work pupils do produce is not well marked and rarely do teachers include comments that would help pupils improve their work. Introductions to lessons are overlong and this means pupils do not have sufficient time to produce adequate work. Nevertheless, pupils enjoy their lessons and even in those, which are not particularly well taught or interesting, they behave well. The behaviour of the oldest pupils is excellent.

98. Teachers make better use of information gained from assessing pupils' work compared with the last inspection, but it is still underdeveloped. Some records are kept and this helps teachers plan what to do next, but teachers do not keep adequate information about the development of pupils' investigative skills. As a result, lessons are not planned well enough to extend work in this area and pupils do not make sufficient progress. Pupils who are capable of achieving better than average standards of work are not being given tasks that are hard enough. The co-ordinator monitors how effectively teachers use the local authority's scheme of work to inform their planning. However, more time needs to be devoted to monitoring the effectiveness with which the plans are implemented in the classroom and how they affect the quality of teaching.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

99. The attainment of both 7 and 11 year olds is below that expected for their age. When compared to the satisfactory and sometimes good standards achieved by the children in the Foundation Stage this shows that there is underachievement throughout the school. There has been insufficient progress in raising standards since the time of the last inspection. The recently appointed co-ordinator is aware of aspects from the previous key issues for the school that still need to be addressed. With her clear view of the further developments required, the school is now well placed to improve the quality of teaching and assessment procedures in order to improve standards.
100. Relative strengths are in pupils' development of drawing skills. A weakness in art is in the development of a wider range of skills because of limitations in the school's curriculum. Teachers mainly plan only a very narrow range of simple drawing activities with occasional painting and work in other media. However, teachers miss many opportunities to interest and inspire the pupils in a more imaginative range of activities. There is too little use of printmaking, ceramics or textiles or in techniques such as batik, tie and dye or working in three dimensions with clay or other modelling materials. When opportunities do occur these are in isolation and are not built upon in a continuous and progressive manner.
101. Pupils aged 5 to 7 use art to satisfactorily illustrate their work in a range of other subjects. Pupils in Year 1 effectively mixed primary colours to create the colours of the rainbow as part of their work in science. They have successfully explored elements of colour, texture and shape when producing self-portraits. Year 2 pupils build upon these skills satisfactorily and use collage and textiles imaginatively to create interesting pictures. Teachers' lesson planning indicates pupils study the work of William Morris to develop their knowledge and understanding of using lines as part of pattern making. However, some work lacks quality as too little attention is paid to the careful and progressive development of drawing and painting skills.

102. Pupils aged 7 to 11 have recently started using sketchbooks, but there is too little work currently recorded in them to make any judgement about their effectiveness. There is little artwork displayed in classrooms, except to illustrate work in other subjects. In Year 3, pupils illustrated their 'Spooky Stories' and the class rules. Year 4 pupils satisfactorily develop their skills in paint application when working on self-portraits and in Year 5, pupils use illustrations to enhance the appearance of their science work about food and healthy diets. The best quality work produced by pupils is prominently displayed in the school hall. Year 6 produced a very impressive collage using various types of paper and fabric to illustrate a visit to Woodside Ferry Terminal. Work of similarly high quality was produced again as a collage following pupils' participation in a geography action week. Good use was made of chicken wire and fabric weaving to replicate local coastal and landscape features.
103. The quality of pupils' work and the progress that they make is limited because of the insufficient teaching of specific skills to improve the quality of drawing and painting and of other techniques. The sample of pupils' recent work indicates that teaching is broadly satisfactory. However, some teachers have barely adequate subject knowledge and understanding of how to develop pupils' skills. There is a need for further in-service training and the development of the role of the subject co-ordinator. Occasionally, teachers praise the quality of work that would benefit from more critical evaluation of skills and of the effort made. Discussions with pupils indicate they enjoy art activities, but do not always take a lot of care over the quality of their work. Some colouring and drawing is poor and indicates the pupils have not been interested in the tasks and have simply produced low quality work very quickly. Pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are not developed through art.
104. The co-ordinator has little opportunity to monitor the quality of planning, teaching and learning. This allows pockets of underachievement to occur and inconsistent progress. The co-ordinator has no opportunity to assess standards of pupils' work or to observe teaching to any given criteria. There are also insufficient opportunities to work alongside colleagues or conduct model lessons to develop teachers' subject knowledge. The co-ordinator envisages the recent introduction of the national guidance for the teaching of art will help teachers plan their lessons more effectively and become more confident in their own ability to teach the subject. Resources are currently satisfactory, but when art is taught more comprehensively the current level of materials, books and pictures of well-known works of art will be inadequate.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

105. It was not possible to make a judgement about standards of attainment in design and technology. Only one lesson was seen due to the arrangement of the timetable during the week of the inspection. There was very little photographic evidence and there were very few examples of previous work on which to base a secure judgement.
106. One lesson was seen in Year 6 in which most pupils achieved standards typical for their age. This was a good lesson during which pupils began to make a pair of slippers they had designed during the previous week. The class teacher had a clear understanding of what was required to teach the subject effectively. In earlier lessons she had given the class the opportunity to closely examine a range of styles of slippers before designing their own. At the start of the lesson she led a good discussion about the techniques pupils would need to use and the pitfalls they might encounter. These strategies were all effective and ensured that the whole class made good progress towards finishing the product. Most pupils showed reasonable skills for their age and used templates, scissors and glue with care and accuracy. A

few less-able pupils managed the task with the help of a member of the support staff. The whole class had a good attitude to the subject and behaved sensibly when choosing materials and handling scissors.

107. Since the last inspection, the school has devoted less time to the teaching of design and technology. This is because it was decided to place greater emphasis on literacy and numeracy in order to raise standards in those areas. Currently, teachers receive insufficient guidance on how to teach the subject effectively and planning consequently lacks depth. It contains insufficient information about the skills to be taught and the expected learning outcomes. Following recent changes in the National Curriculum, the co-ordinator has produced a development plan based on the national guidance for the subject. Teachers now plan three projects a year based on the national guidance and these cover an appropriately broad range of activities. These include opportunities for pupils to explore food technology, design storybooks and make controllable vehicles. There is insufficient thought given as to how pupils' literacy and numeracy skills can be developed in design and technology lessons.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

108. Pupils aged 5 to 11 make sound progress and achieve the standards expected for their age groups. The satisfactory standards identified at the last inspection have been maintained. The new geography co-ordinator has been working hard to raise the status of the subject and to provide enhanced material, additional to the national documentation, to assist teachers in their planning. These initiatives have a positive effect on the status of the subject and the standards pupils achieve.
109. Only limited written work was available as evidence. However, by the age of seven, pupils have a secure knowledge of local places. They learn about the school layout, the grounds and then explore the area around the school. They observe geographical features. Pupils in Year 2 learn the difference between maps and plans and produce an accurate plan of their classroom. They add keys to their maps correctly. They learn about the countries that make up the United Kingdom and see how their own area fits into the map of England.
110. The sound standards and effective teaching for pupils in Years 1 and 2 are continued for pupils in Years 3 to 6. From Year 3, pupils begin river studies, including the River Nile and the River Mersey. This element of the curriculum is spread over three years and includes, eventually, field study activities on one of the residential trips. Year 6 extends the work to a study of the coastline of the local area by using aerial photographs and maps. The extent to which the school develops pupils' awareness of the rich environment of their local area is a significant strength of geography. Atlas skills are progressively developed through the key stage and pupils examine communities, such as the Caribbean, which contrast with their own. Understanding of the formation and characteristics of the physical features of landscape is effectively developed through the study of their own environment, other countries, and the use of the good resource material available in the school.
111. A fundamental strength of the subject is the range of opportunities for pupils to acquire practical experience. The whole school have been involved in an intensive 'Geography Action Week' recently, which looked at the Wirral coastline. There is annual 'Environment Week', which promotes awareness of environmental issues and also supports aspects of citizenship. This included in 2000 beach visits and environmental sculpture. Much of the geography curriculum is taught through the comprehensive programme of residential visits for pupils aged 7 to 11 years. Day visits enable pupils to undertake local studies in the park in Year 3, to visit a nature

reserve and river valley in Year 5 and to study coastlines in Year 6. Teachers develop links with other subjects, such as science and literacy, in the work that follows these visits. However, there is not clear planning for the teaching of literacy and numeracy skills in geography.

112. The co-ordinator manages the subject effectively and this has a beneficial effect on the standards achieved. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in both key stages, although in the lesson observed in Year 6 pupils' progress was inhibited by the excessively large size of the group being taught. This had a negative effect on the quality of pupils' learning, with too little opportunity to focus on the needs of individual pupils or for them actively to participate in the session. There are satisfactory systems in place to record teachers' assessment of pupils' progress. Resources are satisfactory overall.

## **HISTORY**

113. The satisfactory standards of attainment in history identified at the last inspection have been maintained for pupils aged 7 to 11 years. No lessons were observed and there was insufficient written evidence to judge the standards achieved by pupils aged 5 to 7 years. By the age of 11, pupils achieve standards that are consistent with those normally seen in most primary schools. Pupils make steady progress with their learning. Guidelines for history, which are based on the national guidance published recently, help teachers to plan clearly for specific periods in time. The school ensures that some history is taught in each term and this enables pupils to sustain a steady pace of learning through the school. Their skills of asking historical questions and communicating their findings are effectively developed, particularly in Year 6. There is an appropriate focus on the use of historical sources that require pupils to undertake research and develop a critical awareness of which information is relevant to their research.
114. Younger pupils learn satisfactorily about the passing of time. They sequence correctly old toys in order of age and make comparisons with modern ones. They begin to use historical vocabulary accurately and relate their learning to shared experiences at home and school. They learn about famous people from the past, such as Guy Fawkes. They begin to learn about the history of the local area – a strong feature of the history curriculum across the school, which draws effectively on the rich industrial and social history of Wirral.
115. Older pupils accurately conduct research by using historical data, including in Year 5 census information. Here they undertake a minor unit of study on the Plague, based upon a story by Berlie Doherty. They consider the effect of the plague on an isolated population. Their work is further extended by the effective use of drama to increase their understanding of how people might respond to traumatic events. They learn to sift fact from fiction. There is good coverage of key periods of British and local history and, by 11, pupils have a sound understanding of key events and dates. They make some use of the computer for research purposes, usually to draw information from CD-ROMs.
116. Pupils are interested in history and motivated in lessons by the effective use of resources and artefacts. Teachers provided good documentary evidence for Year 6 pupils to research information so as to extend their knowledge of the development of seaside holidays in Victorian times. Very good use is made of the local area and of museums to extend pupils' learning.

117. Teaching is satisfactory. Teachers have a secure grasp of the subject and they use questioning well to encourage deeper investigation of source material. This was a positive feature of the Year 5 lesson and, potentially, of the Year 6 lesson observed. However, the effectiveness of the teacher's questioning in Year 6 was diminished by the very large size of the class, which slowed the pace of learning and inhibited the level of interaction with individual pupils. A very positive feature of teaching, particularly in Year 6, is the way in which teachers use history as the basis for much of the longer pieces of writing undertaken in literacy work. This is successful in raising standards in both subjects.

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

118. Pupils' attainment in information and communication technology is in line with national expectations by the ages of 7 and 11 years. Pupils of all abilities make very good progress. Standards are rising quickly throughout the school and are very significantly better than at the time of the last inspection. This is due to a number of reasons. A considerable investment in time and money has included staff training, and the school plans even more for the near future. Lesson planning is good and ensures pupils' work becomes harder as they move through the school and that the skills they learn develop in an appropriate order. The co-ordinator leads the subject well and has clear plans for the subject's continued development, together with the ability, support and commitment to implement them successfully.
119. By the age of seven, pupils access word-processing programs well to type work. They correctly save and print this work. Year 2 pupils word-process their name and address accurately. They use speech bubbles correctly to illustrate pictures. Pupils write messages for Christmas cards by using a word-processing program correctly. They use appropriately a computer program to draw pictures of hedgehogs. They construct attractive 'on-screen' flowers by dragging its various parts to the correct position. They then label correctly the flower. Pupils in Year 1 program properly a floor robot to move forwards, backwards and sideways. They use accurately a program to draw self-portraits. Year 2 pupils accurately construct a graph to represent car colours by using their skills in information and communication technology.
120. Pupils aged 7 to 11 gain in confidence and competence working with computers. Year 3 pupils use a mathematics program to sort two- and three-dimensional shapes. They use correctly a database to learn about the habitat of birds and food types. Year 4 pupils produce a newspaper front page. They include a distinctive headline, import an appropriate picture and add a caption, and set the print out into columns. Year 5 pupils very confidently and with accuracy use a database to solve problems. They devise questions to be used in conjunction with a database. They also use their word-processing skills adeptly to produce books entitled *Snowy*.
121. Year 6 pupils compose music based on the story *Alice in Wonderland*. Their compositions include emphasis on mood, tempo and pitch. They produce work of good quality. Pupils use information and communication technology skills to research information about ancient Greece. They use a program to draw accurately symmetrical pictures. They have a good knowledge of how to use spreadsheets and very capably answer questions by using a database.
122. Pupils are very enthusiastic and interested when they use computers. They really enjoy the subject and quickly settle to the work in hand. During their work in pairs they co-operate well, sharing out activities fairly. Pupils persevere when they encounter difficulties. They handle equipment with care and respect.

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

## MUSIC

124. Pupils throughout the school attain the expected standards for their age and enjoy their music-making activities. The quality of the subject co-ordinator's teaching enables pupils throughout the school to achieve well. This is enhanced for some junior age pupils by tuition from a visiting specialist in violin. All pupils benefit from listening to the performance of professional musicians who visit the school, such as the string group. These events are often used to promote pupils' literacy as well as their music skills. A Year 6 pupil wrote about, "The romantic pieces of music were the most graceful and lively because they had a high pitch and a good rhythm to them". The school enhances the learning of Year 6 pupils through the work they do with the Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra. For example, pupils wrote impressive poems about Scott's exploration to the South Pole, set these to music and the orchestra performed them.
125. Throughout the school, pupils' singing shows good control of pitch and rhythm. There is sound progression in skills from Year 1 to Year 6 and teachers regularly provide opportunities for pupils to compose and evaluate music. Pupils in Year 2 create picture scores and use them to compose and perform simple pieces using unpitched percussion instruments, for example when creating sound patterns about snowflakes. They develop the ability to explain why they like the music of others. Teachers extend pupils' work effectively in the junior age classes. In a Year 5 lesson, pupils used pitched and unpitched instruments to successfully represent the flow of a river, linked to their work in geography. They listened very carefully to the music of others, explained why they liked it and showed their appreciation of it, for example, by spontaneously applauding their performances. The teacher used correct musical terms throughout and the pupils quickly adopted these in their discussions. Occasionally, pupils record their efforts in order to listen to, assess and improve what they have done.
126. The quality of teaching and learning throughout the school is satisfactory. Both are good in Year 5. Music is taught by the co-ordinator who is a specialist and by class teachers. In the junior age classes, the class teacher is sometimes assisted by the co-ordinator in lessons. This enables the teacher to benefit from the co-ordinator's expertise and the teacher to support the co-ordinator in the management of the class. In a Year 2 lesson that was mainly satisfactory, pupils' learning slowed in the group work. This was because the teacher had not established the important discipline of pupils only playing an instrument when it was their turn. Pupils produced little work and the teacher brought them together again into a larger group in order to reinforce appropriate behaviour and reinforce pupils' learning. Good use is made of



information and communication technology to support pupils' learning; for example Year 6 pupils compose music using a software programme.

127. Good improvement has taken place since the previous inspection. The standards and progress of older pupils in the juniors have improved from unsatisfactory to satisfactory. There is detailed guidance to help teachers plan their lessons and good resources to support teaching and learning. There is a competent system for assessing and recording pupils' progress in music from one year to the next. This means that work is not repeated without good reason. The co-ordinator has monitored teaching and curriculum planning and her role as a curriculum leader has focused effectively on improving teaching and learning and raising standards.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

128. By the end of Year 6, pupils attain standards that are broadly in line with those achieved in most primary schools. Standards are higher than they were at the time of the last inspection. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. During the inspection lessons were observed in gymnastics in Years 3 and 4, dance in Year 6 and games in Year 1. The teachers' planning for the subject ensures there is adequate attention to all areas of the subject throughout the year. There is good provision for outdoor adventurous activities. Most pupils swim at least 25 metres by the time they leave the school.
129. Pupils by the age of seven throw a small accurately over a short distance and catch it cleanly. Most strike a small ball accurately with a bat and some control the pace effectively with which it is hit. Pupils show a developing understanding of the importance of teamwork when they work in pairs.
130. By the age of 11 years, in gymnastics, pupils show co-ordination and control of movements. Pupils link a series of movements to produce a sequence of increasing control and fluency. They show sound use of changes of speed and direction in their movements. In dance, pupils perform a dance using a set range of steps. They use the steps of a waltz and dance with increasing correctness and control. Older pupils in the school enhance their games skills by attending the football and netball clubs. The school provides a swimming club to extend the competent swimmers further.
131. Pupils enjoy their physical education lessons. They focus well and listen carefully to directions. Pupils of all abilities collaborate well in pairs and groups. For example, Year 4 pupils work co-operatively and collaboratively when producing 'mirrored' movements in which they had to copy exactly their partner's sequence of movements. Pupils sustain effort and concentrate well. They are keen to do their best and appreciate each other's achievements as when they spontaneously applauded a good demonstration by pupils in a Year 6 dance lesson. Their good attitudes and behaviour ensure pupils work and little time is wasted. This makes a significant contribution to the improvement in the rate of their progress recently.
132. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. It has improved since the last inspection. Careful planning and timing keep pupils working throughout the session. There are planned gains in skills during the lesson but insufficient emphasis on vigorous activity. Teachers and pupils dress appropriately for physical education lessons. There is due regard for safety. Teachers begin lessons with an appropriate warm-up session and end them with a cooling-down activity. They use praise effectively, are quick to recognise good performers and use demonstration by these pupils to set high standards for others to follow. The recently appointed co-ordinator provides good leadership and a clear vision for the development of the subject.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

133. By the ages of 7 and 11 pupils' knowledge and understanding of religious education is in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils aged 5 to 7 make good progress in relation to their prior attainment. Teachers of pupils aged 7 to 11 build satisfactorily on this good progress and by the time pupils leave the school they achieve well. Pupils identified as having special educational needs make similar progress as their classmates. Lessons, teachers' plans, the attractive displays and pupils' work in books show that teachers provide a balanced religious education programme. These also show that teachers take account of pupils' knowledge and experiences. As a consequence, pupils have a sound knowledge of Bible stories and of the world's leading faiths. Pupils' achievement is better than at the time of the last inspection when it was satisfactory compared with good now.
134. The quality of teaching is good for pupils aged 5 to 7 and satisfactory for pupils aged 7 to 11 years. In a good lesson, for Year 4 pupils, they gained a good understanding that in Bible stories angels bring messages from God. This theme was effectively developed through the retelling of the story of the Nativity. By the age of seven, pupils have a sound understanding of the main features of the Divali celebrations. In a lesson about the importance of light in Divali celebrations, pupils retold the story of Ramu and Sita accurately. They knew how a light guided Ramu back home. Year 2 teachers make good use of pupils' information and communication technology skills to produce Rangoli patterns and pictures on the computer to show the importance and effect of light at Divali. In Year 1, the teacher made good use of her wedding video and artefacts to teach well the significance of Christian celebrations.
135. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 continue to develop well their knowledge of world faiths. Year 3 pupils put together an attractive display relating to Hinduism. Year 5 pupils wrote good accounts about Islam. They showed good knowledge of important facts about Muhammad. In the Year 6 work, pupils demonstrate a secure knowledge of famous people and how they exhibited Christian values. Pupils wrote extended pieces of work about the lives of Lord Shaftsbury and Florence Nightingale. Religious education is used well to support pupils' development of their literacy skills.
136. Subject co-ordination is good. The co-ordinator ensures the school's planning corresponds to the locally agreed syllabus. She has established very good links with information and communication technology to support pupils' learning in the subject and as a resource for teachers. Teachers' planning is monitored closely and advice and ideas provided to improve the quality of the planning. The co-ordinator led whole-school discussions on the new locally agreed syllabus. There is a very clear vision for the further development of the subject.