

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **HOLY FAMILY CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Halewood, Liverpool

LEA area: Knowsley

Unique reference number: 104468

Headteacher: Mrs C M Hamilton

Reporting inspector: Mr P Edwards  
21069

Dates of inspection: 23<sup>rd</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> June 2003

Inspection number: 246376

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant, junior and nursery school

School category: Voluntary aided

Age range of pupils: 3 – 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Arncliffe Road  
Halewood  
Liverpool

Postcode: L25 9PA

Telephone number: 0151 4282922

Fax number: 0151 4210417

Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Father P Glover

Date of previous inspection: 11<sup>th</sup> June 2001

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Team members |                  |                      | Subject responsibilities   | Aspect responsibilities  |
|--------------|------------------|----------------------|--|--|
| 21069        | Mr P Edwards     | Registered inspector | Science<br>Information and communication technology<br>Physical education<br>English as an additional language | The school's results and pupils' achievements.<br>How well are the pupils taught?<br>What should the school do to improve further?                                 |
| 9593         | Mrs B Sinclair   | Lay inspector        |  | Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development.<br>How well does the school care for its pupils?<br>How well does the school work in partnership with parents? |
| 18027        | Mrs S Mawer      | Team inspector       | The Foundation Stage<br>History<br>Music   | How well is the school led and managed?  |
| 10228        | Ms S Russam      | Team inspector       | English<br>Art and design  | How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?   |
| 25352        | Mrs G Taujanskas | Team inspector       | Mathematics<br>Design and technology<br>Geography<br>Educational inclusion<br>Special educational needs        |  |

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Holy Family is a Catholic school with a total of 207 pupils on roll aged from 4 to 11. There are also 50 children in the nursery class who attend either mornings or afternoon. The school is of average size. Attainment on entry to the nursery is similar to that expected for children of this age. Nineteen per cent of the pupils in the school are identified as having special educational needs. This is broadly average. One pupil has a statement of special educational need, proportionately less than in most primary schools in the country. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals (25.3 per cent) is above the national average. A small proportion of pupils are from ethnic minority backgrounds but no pupils are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language.

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

This is a good school. By the time the pupils leave school at the age of eleven, they attain standards that are above the national average in English. Inspection evidence shows standards of the current Year 6 pupils are broadly average in mathematics and science. The quality of teaching is good, enabling the pupils to make good progress overall. The leadership and management provided by the headteacher are very good and she is well supported by senior staff and the knowledgeable governing body. The school provides good value for money.

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

- The pupils make good progress in English, mathematics and science as a result of the consistently good teaching.
- The curriculum for children in the Foundation stage is very good, as is the quality of teaching, providing them with a very good start to their education.
- The pupils' behaviour and attitudes towards school and work are excellent.
- The provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.
- The parents' views of the school and the links between parents and the school are very good.
- The school is very well led and managed.

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

- Standards in history, geography, art and design and design and technology are not high enough.

*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 June 2001. Since that time it has made very good progress. The leadership and management of the school are now very good and this has ensured there has been effective progress in addressing the issues arising from the last inspection. National Curriculum test results in English have improved and inspection evidence shows standards in mathematics and information and communication technology have risen. A greater proportion of the teaching is now very good or better. The financial management is

good and, whilst there are still some shortfalls in the quality and range of resources, there are sufficient for most subjects to be taught effectively.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

| Performance in: | compared with |      |      |                 | Key   |
|-----------------|---------------|------|------|-----------------|---|
|                 | all schools   |      |      | similar schools |   |
|                 | 2000          | 2001 | 2002 | 2002            |   |
| English         | D             | D    | B    | A               | well above average A<br>above average B<br>average C<br>below average D<br>well below average E |
| mathematics     | D             | E    | D    | B               |   |
| science         | D             | D    | E    | D               |   |

The results of 2002 national tests at the end of Year 6 are above average in English, below average in mathematics and well below average in science. When compared with similar schools, attainment is well above average in English, above average in mathematics and below average in science. Standards have improved significantly in English over the past four years and are getting better in mathematics and science. The literacy and numeracy targets for the current Year 6 pupils are challenging and the school is likely to achieve them. The inspection findings show that pupils, including those with special educational needs, make very good progress overall in their English and attain standards that are well above average. This is due to the high quality of teaching in most classes, strong leadership and management and the good range of activities that are covered in the subject. In mathematics and science, inspection findings are that the pupils attain standards that are in line with national expectations. They are making good progress however, with previous gaps in their learning being remedied by the improved teaching and leadership and management.

The 2002 end of Year 2 national test results show that pupils' attainment is in line with the national average in reading, below average in writing and well above average in mathematics. When compared with similar schools, pupils' attainment is well above average in reading, average in writing and very high in mathematics. Apart from a dip in 2001, the results have been steady over the past four years. The teacher assessments in science indicate that attainment is very high. Inspection findings show that attainment in reading and mathematics is above average and average in writing and science. Improvements in the quality of teaching have resulted in improved standards in English. Differences between test results in mathematics and science and the inspection findings are due to differences in the ability of the groups of pupils. Overall, pupils make good progress in English, mathematics and science in Years 1 and 2.

By the end of Year 2, standards are in line with national expectations in history, information and communication technology, music, physical education and design and technology but below average in geography and art and design. At the end of Year 6, standards are in line with national expectations in history and physical education, above average in information and communication technology but below average in art and design, design and technology and

geography. Insufficient music was observed to make a judgement. Overall, the pupils make insufficient progress and do not attain the standards of which they are capable in history, geography, art and design and design and technology in both key stages due to too little time being devoted to subjects and the way the subject is taught in blocks.

The children start full time education in the Reception class with average attainment levels. Very effective teaching ensures that the children make very good progress in all areas of learning. By the time they leave the Reception class, nearly all children this year are in line to achieve the Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning with about a half exceeding the standards. This represents good achievement in relation to the abilities of the children when they start school.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

| Aspect                                 | Comment  |
|--|--|
| Attitudes to the school                | Excellent. The pupils are very enthusiastic towards school and work.   |
| Behaviour, in and out of classrooms    | Excellent. The pupils are very polite and keen to help. They behave very well in lessons and in the playground.  |
| Personal development and relationships | Very good. The pupils take on jobs around the school and work co-operatively with their classmates. Relationships amongst pupils and between staff and pupils are excellent. |
| Attendance                             | Satisfactory.  |

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

| Teaching of pupils in: | Nursery and Reception | Years 1 – 2 | Years 3 – 6 |
|------------------------|-----------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Quality of teaching    | Very good             | Good        | Good        |

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

Teaching is very good in the Foundation Stage and good throughout the rest of the school. There has been an increase in the proportion of very good and excellent teaching since the previous inspection, particularly in English and mathematics.

The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is very good. A significant strength is the very good understanding of how young children learn and the way in which challenging activities are planned and taught to enable them to make very good gains in their learning. A good balance is achieved between teacher led tasks and opportunities for children to initiate their own activities and choose for themselves. The teaching is particularly effective in promoting and extending children's early literacy and numeracy skills.

The teaching and learning of literacy throughout the school are very good. The significant focus on this aspect of the curriculum and very good teaching and provision, enable the pupils to make very good gains in their learning and achieve well. The teachers have high



expectations of what the pupils can do, mark their work well and set clear targets for improvement. The teaching of mathematics, science and information and communication technology are good throughout the school. Pupils are making good progress in these subjects throughout the school and they achieve well. Teaching and learning in physical education are satisfactory overall. The pupils do not make sufficient progress in history, geography, art and design and design and technology. This is generally because these subjects have not been given the same emphasis as other subjects and the curriculum is not planned sufficiently well to ensure the pupils build on the skills they have been taught.

Relationships between the staff and pupils are excellent and this helps to provide a very happy learning environment where the pupils are encouraged to try their best and are not afraid of failure. The teachers question the pupils very well and use their responses effectively to plan future work in English and mathematics. In the best lessons, the teachers' enthusiasm and subject knowledge helps to create an environment where pupils see learning as fun, resulting in rapid gains in their learning. Pupils with special educational needs are provided with very good support and make progress in line with their classmates. Occasionally, there is an overuse of mundane worksheets that do nothing that the teachers could not do better by other methods. The quality of marking and the presentation of work in some classes is not as high as it should be and the teachers need to ensure standards in these areas match the quality that is seen in many literacy lessons.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

| Aspect  | Comment   |
|---|---|
| The quality and range of the curriculum   | The curriculum for the children in the Foundation Stage is very good. All subjects of the National Curriculum are taught. Following recommendations, the school has worked hard to improve the curriculum for the core subjects. The school offers a good curriculum for English, mathematics, science, religious education and information and communication technology, but this has been to the detriment of some of the other subjects which receive insufficient time and focus. |
| Provision for pupils with special educational needs   | Very good. The needs of these pupils are identified early and they are provided with a good level of support, enabling them to make progress in line with their peers.  |
| Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | Very good. The provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, and social development is very good and there is good provision for their cultural development.  |
| How well the school cares for its pupils  | Very good procedures are in place to ensure the health and well-being of the pupils. Procedures for assessing the pupils' progress are good overall but they need to be developed further in some subjects.   |
| How well the school works in partnership with the parents.                                  | Very good. The parents are very supportive of the school and keen to help their children. They think very highly of the school.   |



## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

| Aspect   | Comment   |
|--|---|
| Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff | Very good. The headteacher provides very effective leadership and management. She is very well supported by the senior management team. Co-ordinators of English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology manage their subjects very effectively. Other subject co-ordinators now need the opportunity to take a greater lead in the management of their subjects.  |
| How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities             | Very good. The governing body is very well informed and provides effective support for the school. It fully meets its statutory duties.   |
| The school's evaluation of its performance                       | Very good. The school has monitored its performance very effectively, resulting in improvements in the pupils' progress in the key subjects of English, mathematics and science.  |
| The strategic use of resources                                   | Very good. The school makes very effective use of its limited resources. It spends wisely and has improved the level of resources and the interior of some rooms. It makes very effective use of the expertise of staff and visitors to improve the learning opportunities for the pupils. Administrative, caretaking and support staff play a key role in the smooth running of the school. The accommodation is satisfactory and there is an appropriate number of teaching and support staff. Resources are adequate for most areas of the curriculum. The governing body and headteacher ensure best value by the processes of comparison, consultation, challenge and competition. |

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

| What pleases parents most  | What parents would like to see improved   |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children make good progress because of the good teaching.</li> <li>• They are kept well informed about how well their children are progressing.</li> <li>• Behaviour is very good.</li> <li>• The staff are approachable and there is a good family atmosphere at the school.</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed.</li> <li>• There is a good range of out of school activities.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The amount and range of homework.</li> </ul> |

The inspection team agrees with the parents' positive views of the school. The amount and range of homework is similar to that seen in most primary schools and is satisfactory.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Attainment varies from year to year but generally the children start full time education with average attainment levels. Very effective teaching ensures that the children make very good progress in all areas of learning and attain standards that are above average overall. By the time they leave the Reception class, nearly all children this year are in line to achieve the Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning with about a half exceeding the standards. This represents good levels of achievement in relation to the abilities of the children when they start school.
2. The 2002 end of Year 2 national test results show that pupils' attainment is in line with the national average in reading, below average in writing and well above average in mathematics. When compared with similar schools, pupils' attainment in reading is well above average, average in writing and very high in mathematics. On the basis of the test results, standards have been reasonably steady over the last four years although standards in reading and mathematics were better than those attained in 2001.
3. Inspection findings indicate that by the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment is above national expectations in English and mathematics and in line with national expectations in science. A concerted effort has been made to raise the pupils' ability in reading through the adoption of a range of approaches to the teaching of reading which build on the effectiveness of strategies used for teaching younger pupils letter sounds and sound blends. The pupils make good progress and by the end of Year 2, read fluently and confidently. Less able pupils make good progress in their reading due to the clear identification of their needs and the good support which provides them with clear guidance and targets for improvement. The standard of writing has improved steadily and, by the end of Year 2, most pupils are producing writing of a standard expected for their age. Speaking and listening skills are satisfactory by the end of Year 2 although progress is inconsistent, because teachers have only recently begun to provide the pupils with opportunities to develop these skills.
4. Improvements in the quality of teaching, and the effective use of assessment procedures have resulted in improved standards in mathematics. By the end of Year 2, the pupils have a good grasp of number and they measure accurately. They have a good knowledge of two and three-dimensional shapes and successfully develop their understanding of symmetry through the effective use of mirrors. Whilst overall standards of the current Year 2 are not quite as high as the previous year, this is due to differences in the natural abilities of the different groups of children and these pupils achieve well. In science, the pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of a range of scientific concepts and carry out a good range of activities. Recording skills are satisfactory but they could be better if the pupils were not provided with mundane worksheets on occasions.
5. The 2002 National Curriculum test results at the end of Year 6 show the pupils' attainment is above average in English, below average in mathematics and well below average in science. When compared with similar schools, the pupils' attainment is well above average in English, above average in mathematics and below average in science. Results have been fairly constant over the last four years although there was a big improvement in English in 2002. The better standards in English are as a result of

the high quality of teaching seen in many classes in Year 3 to Year 6 and the strong leadership of the subject which has identified areas for improvement that have been effectively addressed. By the end of Year 6, the pupils read confidently, fluently and with considerable expression. They read widely and use the library facilities to extend their knowledge. Writing skills are good, the pupils writing in a wide range of styles, drafting and redrafting their work. They produce good poetry, play scripts and pieces of creative writing. The good skills that the pupils develop are not used as effectively as they could be in subjects such as history and geography and the school recognises this is an area for development.

6. By the end of Year 6 the pupils have a good knowledge of number, a satisfactory understanding of shape and measure and they construct angles and measure them accurately. They record data in a variety of ways and understand the basic facts of probability. The pupils make effective use of computers to solve mathematical problems, for example using formulae to calculate the cost of party items. Work is challenging and well matched to the needs of all groups of pupils and all make good progress. They make good progress in science also, and by the end of Year 6, most pupils demonstrate a secure knowledge of electrical circuits and have a good understanding of solids, liquids and gases. Most pupils have a secure understanding of materials and their properties although the more able need to develop their knowledge further through design and technology. The majority of pupils have a secure knowledge of life processes and living things although a small number have gaps in their understanding of the functions of some of the major organs of the body.
7. Standards are in line with national expectations in information and communication technology at the end of Year 2 and above average by the end of Year 6 and good improvements have been made since the previous inspection. Some aspects of the pupils' knowledge are well above expectations, for example their use of spreadsheets in Key Stage 2. This is due in part to the improved teaching but also to the better leadership that gives a clear direction to what should be taught. Standards in physical education, history and music are in line with national expectations by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Standards are below national expectations in geography and art and design at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6 and in design and technology at the end of Year 6. As a result of issues raised in the previous inspection, the school has focused heavily on the core subjects of English, mathematics and science and this has been successful in raising standards. However, this has resulted in too little attention being devoted to some other subjects, resulting in unsatisfactory progress. The school now needs to raise standards in these subjects whilst maintaining the impetus made in the core subjects.
8. The school makes effective use of literacy and numeracy skills in some subjects, for example, science, physical education and information and communication technology. However, the pupils need more opportunities to use and develop these skills in subjects such as history and geography.
9. There is very good provision for pupils with special educational needs and this enables them to make progress in line with their peers. This progress is more evident in subjects such as English and mathematics where additional support is usually targeted. Pupils with individual education plans make good progress towards their targets. More able pupils are provided with more challenging work. In some instances, for example in mathematics, this involved younger pupils working with older pupils but these arrangements are managed efficiently.

10. The pupils are achieving well in most classes throughout the school. This is due to improvements in the quality of teaching, higher expectations and improved planning and leadership. There has been insufficient time for these improvements to have made a significant impact on standards by the end of Year 6.

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

11. Pupils' attitudes to school are excellent and are an outstanding strength of the school. Since the last inspection the school has continued to promote and sustain an environment in which pupils can confidently develop and establish appropriate patterns of learning, creative initiative and purposeful study. Throughout the school, pupils show high levels of concentration, interest and pride in their work, combined with sustained self-discipline in a desire to improve and achieve. All lessons are entered into with high levels of enthusiasm and pupils enjoy asking and answering questions to support and reinforce their learning. These combined factors make a strong, powerful and significant contribution to the quality of learning and to the standards the pupils achieve.
12. Behaviour in lessons, during play and around all areas of the school is consistently excellent. Pupils demonstrate consistently high levels of attention, interest and concentration on their work and work co-operatively and supportively with other pupils. They are proud of each other's achievements and do everything within their power to support and assist each other to higher achievement. Discussions with pupils show that they are very confident that should any rare incidents of bullying occur, they will be dealt with promptly, fairly and appropriately. There have been no exclusions during the last twelve months. Throughout the school there is a consistent level of maturity being demonstrated by the pupils in the way in which they settle to work, take on responsibility and play. These are carried out in an orderly and dedicated manner and, when at play during breaktimes, ensure that games are played in a fair and sensible manner and that no child is left out of a group. It is a point of pride with pupils that they ensure everyone is befriended and cared for.
13. Relationships are very good in all year groups. Pupils show high levels of respect in a natural and secure manner to their peer groups, teachers and other adults. Personal development is very good with the majority of pupils showing sensitivity and maturity at all times. A School Council has recently been formed and pupils have welcomed this as an additional forum in which to express their ideas and suggestions for improvements within the school. The school accepts that this is at an early stage and, whilst it is difficult to assess its effectiveness, it is confident that this will grow and develop well over the next year.
14. The attendance rates have improved since the time of the last inspection and are now satisfactory overall. Many pupils arrive not only punctually, but also early and settle calmly to a range of activities such as quiet reading or assisting their teachers to prepare the room for lessons.

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

15. During the inspection, 39 lessons were seen. In these lessons, the quality of teaching was excellent in 10 per cent of lessons, very good in 39 per cent, good in 23 per cent and satisfactory in 28 per cent. There was no unsatisfactory teaching. Overall, the quality of teaching is good which is what was found at the time of the last inspection. However, more teaching was observed during the latest inspection that was very good or excellent.

16. The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is very good. A significant strength is the very good understanding of how young children learn and the way in which challenging activities are planned and taught to enable them to make very good gains in their learning. A good balance is achieved between teacher led tasks and opportunities for children to initiate their own activities and choose for themselves. The teaching is particularly effective in promoting and extending children's early literacy and numeracy skills. Because of outstanding relationships in the Foundation Stage, the children really enjoy coming to school and have very positive attitudes to their learning. Very effective planning and assessment also enhance the teaching considerably. The teaching in the Foundation Stage is providing the children with a very positive start to their learning and is a strength of the school.
17. The teaching and learning of literacy are very good overall. It is good in Year 1 to Year 2 and very good in Year 3 to Year 6. Methods for teaching the literacy strategy are well established throughout the school and this has resulted in improved standards. The school has focused on improving the quality of teaching. The teachers are planning greater opportunities to develop literacy skills beyond the literacy lessons although they need to develop them even further in subjects such as history and geography. The teachers have very good subject knowledge, enabling them to carefully explain tasks to the pupils and they assess the work of the pupils very carefully and accurately. This information is used well when teachers plan lessons. The teaching of numeracy is good throughout the school. The teachers make very good use of information and communication technology to promote the pupils' learning and work is well matched to the pupils' levels of ability. This results in all groups of pupils making good progress. In an excellent Year 6 lesson, the pupils made very good progress in their understanding of decimals as a result of the teacher's very good planning, enthusiastic approach and skilful use of questioning.
18. The quality of teaching and learning in science is good in Year 3 to Year 6 and satisfactory in Year 1 to Year 2, with pupils generally being given work that is well matched to their prior attainment. In Year 3 to Year 6 teachers give the pupils challenging work that is exciting and interesting. As a result the pupils are keen to learn and make good gains in their learning. There are some gaps in the pupils' knowledge as a result of ineffective teaching in the past but all teachers are working hard to ensure these shortcomings are addressed. Occasionally, there is an overuse of mundane worksheets that inhibits the pupils' progress and also limit the opportunities for the pupils to practise their writing skills.
19. The teaching of information and communication technology is good throughout the school and the confidence of teachers has improved as a result of training. This enables the staff to teach the subject well and to answer questions from pupils well. They teach all aspects of the subject and are making good use of information and communication technology in some other subjects. For example, in a good Year 1 lesson, the teacher made effective use of a laptop and digital noise meter as part of a science lesson on sound. The pupils also used computers and technology very effectively in English and mathematics lessons during the inspection. However, the teachers are not yet making sufficient use of computers in subjects such as history and geography and the school has identified this as an area for improvement.
20. The quality of teaching and learning in history, geography, physical education and design and technology is satisfactory overall. However, the pupils do not attain the standards of which they are capable in all of these subjects because too little time is devoted to them and the school is not yet using literacy activities sufficiently well to

promote learning in these subjects. The quality of learning in history is improving with more time being allocated to the subject and improvements in the quality of resources. However, in the past some teachers have made ineffective use of worksheets, which required pupils to complete simple tasks which did not challenge them sufficiently. In geography and design and technology, there are gaps in the pupils' knowledge which need to be addressed, through regular teaching of the subject. The teaching of art and design is unsatisfactory overall, with inconsistent coverage of the subject and too few opportunities for the pupils to build on skills they have previously learned. However, work on display around the school shows the pupils are capable of producing good work.

21. The quality of the teachers' marking in literacy is very good and clearly identifies what the pupils are doing well and how they might improve. As a result, the pupils almost always produce work of a good standard. However, it is not as good in other subjects and the teachers need to raise the level of marking to that of the best to ensure the pupils' work is well presented, neat and tidy.
22. Relationships between the teachers and the pupils are excellent and this helps to create an environment where the pupils are confident to respond to the teachers' questions and to 'have a go' at unfamiliar tasks without fear of failure. The teachers question the pupils very well and this ensures they have a good understanding of what the pupils know and can do. There is a good balance between whole class, group and individual activities. Pupils are encouraged to develop independent learning skills, they co-operate very well on group activities and, overall they learn well. The teachers have very high expectations of behaviour and the pupils respond well. There is very good support for those pupils with special educational needs and this support is used very effectively, ensuring that the pupils make progress in line with their classmates.

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

23. For children in the Nursery class and the Reception class learning opportunities are very good. They are clearly based upon the recommended areas of learning for children of this age. The curriculum is planned well to systematically develop the children's skills, knowledge and understanding in all aspects of their learning. Lessons are very effective in promoting early literacy and numeracy skills, both of which are generally of an average standard when the children start school. Staff have very good systems in place to assess how well each child is learning and they use this information very well to plan the next activity so that each child makes good progress and is well prepared for starting the National Curriculum.
24. The school places a high priority on English, mathematics and science, religious education and information and communication technology. The time available for teaching other subjects is inflexible and needs to be used more imaginatively. In history, geography, art and design and design and technology, the range of learning opportunities offered to pupils is curtailed because the subjects are not taught often enough. The strategies for numeracy are good. These are having a significant impact upon raising standards achieved by pupils. There are satisfactory policy documents and schemes of work to guide teachers' planning for what they are going to teach in each lesson. The quality of half-termly planning is satisfactory. There are subject co-ordinators for all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education, some of whom are beginning to evaluate the effectiveness of the curriculum in relation to its contribution to standards pupils attain. All subjects are included on class timetables



throughout the year, but in spite of this, they have not been taught regularly in every class because of the desire to improve standards in the core subjects.

25. The school makes very good provision for pupils' personal, social and health education. Opportunities for sex education, drugs awareness and substance misuse are sensitively included to acknowledge and respect the views and opinions of everyone whilst clearly placing an emphasis on developing pupils' awareness of the associated dangers. Contributions from other professionals, including the nurse and the police, are valued and pupils learn a great deal from these visitors about how to keep themselves safe. Aspects of the policy and programme of study for this part of the curriculum are being reviewed and amended. Because of the good links with the Local Education Authority and parents there is a good understanding of the value of this aspect of the curriculum and the need for pupils to be well informed so that they can become good citizens and responsible members of society. Pupils have a very good knowledge and understanding of taking care of themselves, following a healthy exercise routine and eating a balanced diet. This is promoted well through the 'Healthy Schools' initiative.
26. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. The school provides a flexible range of support to meet the various needs of individual pupils. A particular strength is the very effective support from learning support assistants. Teachers have copies of pupils' individual education plans and they are well used to effectively plan suitable work to meet the needs of individuals. The school ensures that the provision outlined in pupils' statements is in place and is reviewed annually in line with Code of Practice guidance. The arrangements for the occasional withdrawal of individual pupils for additional help is well planned and does not preclude the inclusion of all pupils to provide them with equality of access to the full National Curriculum.
27. The contribution of extra-curricular activities to enrich pupils' learning opportunities is very good. Teachers, specialist tutors and other visitors provide pupils with opportunities to learn Morris dancing, take up instrumental music tuition, sing in the choir and play football, basketball and rounders. The range of activities provided by the school has improved considerably since the last inspection. Pupils' wider personal development is also promoted through participating in The School Council. However, the school is aware that currently the impact this group could have within the school is under-utilised. Opportunities are provided for pupils to benefit from field trips that utilise a range of environments to provide an additional source of knowledge and information. In Year 6, a residential field trip is eagerly awaited by pupils as the highlight and culmination of their primary school experiences.
28. The contribution the local and wider community makes to pupils' learning is very good. Involvement in the immediate locality includes local church initiatives and contributing to local care and preservation work. Pupils enjoyed participating in football coaching through links with Everton Football Club. Links with local industry such as the Ford Motor Company and Eli Lilly have benefited the school. Sponsorship has enabled the school to establish the information and communication technology suite and purchase other valuable equipment, such as video and digital cameras.
29. Relationships with partner institutions are good. Systems are firmly in place which ensure pupils' transfer to the next phase of their education is smooth and free from unnecessary trauma and stress. Pupils enjoy sharing experiences with other schools and benefit from opportunities to meet older past pupils of the school when they visit the secondary school. Very good opportunities have been created for new pupils to experience school life when they attend short introduction sessions with parents or carers.

30. The provision the school makes for pupils' personal development is very good. Since the time of the last inspection the school has maintained the very good provision it makes for the pupils' moral and spiritual development. Opportunities to promote pupils' social development are now also very good and the school has also maintained its good provision for the development of pupils' cultural development.
31. Pupils' spiritual development is very good. Stories are sensitively chosen to illustrate themes in lessons, assembly and collective worship. Pupils talk about how they are cared for and how they also care for people who are an important part of their lives. Visitors to the school contribute meaningfully to developing pupils' wider understanding of caring within society. As part of this they collect money for good causes such as Cafod, The Good Shepherd and as part of events such as Red Nose Day. During periods of formal prayer, pupils are able to demonstrate a very good knowledge and understanding of reverence and respect. They sit quietly to reflect on what they have learned. Some meaningful opportunities for quiet thought are effectively organised by teachers within their class lessons, as well as during assembly time. A particularly poignant example of this was observed during the inspection when pupils in Year 2 took time to reflect upon what they wanted to achieve that day and why.
32. The school is very good at cultivating the pupils' personal development through the opportunities it provides for raising their awareness of social and moral issues. In particular their moral development is very good because staff who work within the school provide good role models for pupils and are also consistent in their approach to reinforcing the difference between right and wrong. Discussions in class are particularly effective in prompting pupils to reflect upon how their actions may affect others and understanding that they have choices about how to behave. Pupils in Year 6 talk with maturity about how the actions of world leaders affect the day-to-day lives of us all. Inspection evidence confirms the value of these initiatives in developing pupils' social competence and their skills in initiating and sustaining interesting dialogue with adults. Through their participation in sports events and games pupils learn the value of developing a team identity and the need for interdependence upon their teammates in order to be successful. Pupils who belong to the school choir develop not only their confidence to perform in public, but also to interact with church and community members. A residential field trip for the oldest pupils provides an invaluable opportunity to experience the ups and downs of living together as a community within an unfamiliar environment.
33. Pupils' cultural development is good. The school enhances pupils' awareness of their own culture very well through several areas of the curriculum, especially English, history, religious education and, to a lesser extent, art and music, together with a range of visits and field trips. However, opportunities are not planned well enough in art and music for pupils to find out about the work of internationally reputed artists and musicians. Visits to the theatre, museums, galleries and classical music concerts to help pupils appreciate effects created by a particular piece of music or art take place from time to time and opportunities are provided for pupils to develop an understanding of living in a multicultural society. However, the school is not located in a culturally diverse neighbourhood and it is difficult to access firsthand experiences such as visiting a temple, mosque or synagogue. Within school there is an absence of racism and oppressive behaviour and pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of the damage caused to society through people's intolerance of other cultures and beliefs.
34. The school is aware of its predominantly mono-cultural white ethnic, single faith intake within a wider multicultural society and endeavours to promote a wider knowledge and

understanding of living in a multi-ethnic society. There is not yet a policy in place which provides teachers with any guidance on systematically developing this aspect of their work through consciously including it in subject planning. A notable exception to this was the excellent range of activities provided during the 'Arts Week', including African dance, Chinese art and a gospel choir.

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

35. The school provides very good levels of care and support for all its pupils and this is given a high level of priority by all involved in the work of the school. Staff ensure that pupils are supported through a wide range of strategies which ensure that they feel secure and highly valued as individuals. Throughout the inspection many examples of this care and understanding were observed in both academic and social situations. All staff have an in depth awareness of the varying needs and concerns of pupils in their care and they use this knowledge wisely and effectively.
36. Very good procedures are in place for child protection. The named teacher responsible undertakes this role in a dedicated and sensitive manner and has ensured that up to date training has been undertaken. All members of staff fully understand the procedures that are to be adopted if required. Regular health, safety and risk assessments are carried out throughout the year. There are currently two members of staff who hold up to date first aid certificates. There are appropriate, up to date and well documented systems of contacting parents and carers in the event of accidents or pupils becoming ill whilst at school. An example of this was observed during the inspection when all concerned handled an incident requiring attention calmly, professionally and sensitively.
37. Pupils' personal development is monitored satisfactorily on an informal basis and all members of staff show an interest in pupils' achievements both in and out of school. Very good procedures are in place for monitoring and promoting good behaviour, and all teachers make very good use of praise, awarding of house points and, when necessary, sanctions. Pupils respond well to these systems and have high levels of pride and loyalty towards their particular house, but equally rejoice in the success of others. Points are awarded for working hard, kindness to others, taking responsibility and achievement.
38. The procedures for promoting good attendance are good. The school has worked hard to improve the levels of attendance and has now reached the stage where attendance is more regular and levels of regular, prompt attendance are steadily increasing. Successful strategies include presentations of awards for good attendance, both individually and in year groups, and a particularly effective 'First Day Response' system which is carried out efficiently, and good liaison and working relationships with external organisations.
39. Assessment procedures and practices in the Foundation Stage are very good and have had a significant impact on the very good progress that is being made. Regular on-going assessments are carried out and individual targets are set for literacy and mathematics. The progress of the targets are regularly monitored and used successfully to guide the future planning and teaching.
40. The school has introduced rigorous monitoring systems for English and mathematics. This is a significant improvement on the unsatisfactory situation at the time of the last inspection. The assessment co-ordinator is very knowledgeable and determined and this has been a significant factor in the recent improvements. The regular half termly testing of pupils is now clearly tracked and is used effectively to monitor pupils'

achievements throughout the year. Groups of pupils are targeted for support based on the testing and currently pupils of average ability receive support for this reason in some classes which is improving progress. This enables the school to make effective use of support staff. Classes are now grouped in ability sets for English and mathematics. This gives class teachers better chances to match work to pupils' needs and to monitor it more effectively during the lessons. There are class and group targets for both subjects, clearly displayed on tables in classrooms. This helps pupils to have a better understanding of their own learning by showing them what the next step is. A clear planned cycle of monitoring and evaluation has been set up, including pupil interviews, which helps the school to identify areas for improvement more effectively. However, assessment systems for subjects other than English and mathematics are at an early stage, and have only recently been introduced in some subjects. This means it is more difficult to follow pupils' progress in these subjects and weaknesses in some subjects such as geography have not been picked up.

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

41. The school has a very good partnership with parents. Parents, both at the pre-inspection meeting and during the course of the inspection, were highly complimentary and supportive of the staff and value their work and dedication.
42. Parents' involvement in their children's education is good and contributes strongly to their levels of attainment and learning. A good number of parents are actively involved in many aspects of the school and work dedicatedly to support the staff in every possible manner. The links with parents are very good in the Foundation Stage, with some strengthening of the positive and welcoming approach since the last inspection by more of an 'open door' policy of access for parents before and after school. Regular meetings take place to discuss children's progress. Home-school diaries are used well to share important information about the progress being made in reading. These are supplemented with good information on how reading and writing is taught in school and how it can be developed at home. The teachers value the excellent support parents give to their children's reading at home and the benefits this brings to their progress.
43. The level of information supplied to parents is very good and is sent out on at least a weekly basis. This greatly assists in the co-operation and involvement of parents in the life of the school and ensures topical interest in the work of their children. This is only one of the many strong links between school and home which exist. Parents were particularly enthusiastic about the end of year reports which they feel reflect and show an in depth knowledge of their own particular child. Most parents take time and effort to respond to these reports by either visiting the school or in writing, and many comments show the high levels of respect and value they feel for the staff.

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

44. The quality of leadership and management in the school is very good. Since the last inspection the new headteacher has used her considerable skills, vision and determination to effectively lead the school's developments forward and take the action needed to bring about significant improvements. The school owes much to the qualities of her leadership and the way in which she has, in a short period of time, earned the full respect of parents, governors, staff and pupils. All of the weaknesses that were identified in the last inspection have been fully addressed and there is now a real sense of purpose and direction in the school. Standards and progress especially in English

and mathematics have risen considerably from the last inspection and the school is continuing to build on the effective teaching and learning that is now in place. The headteacher is very well supported in the management of the school by the deputy headteacher. Together with the senior management team they meet regularly to review and evaluate the effectiveness of the school. They have a very good awareness of the school's strengths and weaknesses and a clear understanding of how to set realistic and measurable targets for improvement. Through effective management techniques they ensure that these targets are achieved. While clearly focused on raising standards, they are also very successfully promoting an environment of considerable care and respect for every pupil and adult who works in the school. Now that the school has successfully addressed the pupils' attainment and progress in English, mathematics and science it recognises the need to address weaknesses in some of the foundation subjects. The school development plan is an effective and realistic working document that ensures current and future priorities are met and provides an effective working tool for planning and development.

45. The procedures to monitor and evaluate the teaching and learning in most subjects are very good. Teachers thoroughly evaluate their lessons, their comments are read by the headteacher and co-ordinators and where appropriate are used to form part of the focus for lesson observations. Observations are also often linked closely to the priorities of the school's development plan. The headteacher, senior management team and co-ordinators observe lessons regularly. Written feedback is given to the teachers and targets are set for further development. In addition, the headteacher and co-ordinators draw together the most important aspects from their observations and use this information to monitor the progress of the school's development plan and the next steps for improvement. Half term plans are monitored by co-ordinators to inform their action plans and the school development plan. This process is monitored by the curriculum co-ordinator manager. The school's development plan is a very effective document for improvement and is drawn up only after a process of consultation with everyone connected to the school. It outlines clearly the priorities and actions to take, the allocation of finances, who is responsible for managing the improvements, and how success can be measured. Further improvements are currently being made to the format of the new development plan to make it easier for the co-ordinators to monitor and review their areas of responsibility.
46. All staff have played their part in improving the school. There is an excellent team spirit and a very strong determination to succeed. In most subjects, the co-ordinators perform their duties very well, and in the best cases have been instrumental in making significant improvements in their subject areas. Lesson observations take place on a regular basis, as well as the monitoring of teachers' plans and the examination of pupils' work. In particular the co-ordinators in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology have been the most successful in their roles and this has led to the greatest improvements in standards and provision since the last inspection. These were the subjects that were particularly weak at the last inspection and where insufficient progress had been made. Other co-ordinators play an important role in monitoring and evaluating their subject areas but now need to be given more opportunities to ensure improvements continue to happen.
47. The Governing Body takes a very effective part in leading the school forward. Its roles and responsibilities have now been clearly defined and there is a well-run committee structure in place. It fulfils its statutory duties very well and supports the staff in their commitment to further improvements. Recent training has improved the governors' capacity to take a more critical and questioning approach when evaluating the school's performance and checking on the effectiveness of agreed actions. Because of this they

are now in a much stronger position to influence the school's decision making. Governors play an active part in monitoring the school's development plan and deciding on the priorities for further developments. They also examine closely the standards and progress being made in the school with senior members of staff by analysing test and assessment information and setting targets for literacy and numeracy. This process is used very effectively to monitor the progress being made by year groups and different groups of pupils through the school and to compare the results with the quality of teaching and learning in the school. Most of the governors are very well informed about what is going on in school through their informal visits to classrooms and the regular meetings they have with co-ordinators. At these meetings the progress of the co-ordinator's development plans in their subjects are always discussed and reviewed and this information is reported back to meetings of the governing body. This ensures that the governors know what is happening in school and by having a very good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses they contribute substantially to its effectiveness and take responsibility for the challenges it faces.

48. The management of special educational needs is very good, building on the positive report from the last inspection. Very effective systems are in place to ensure that pupils are identified at an early stage and their progress is tracked throughout the school. Both parents and pupils are involved in the review meetings and in the setting of targets. This enables staff and families to work together to improve progress for the pupils. The special educational needs co-ordinator has established very good relationships with other agencies involved with pupils in school. This means all staff gain a better understanding of the needs of the pupil. The administration is very good, with an extensive range of records meticulously kept, which means information can be accessed quickly when needed.
49. Since the time of the last inspection the senior management team and the governing body have tackled a very difficult task of reducing a severe deficit in the budget and establishing a well-ordered and appropriate system of control. This task has been undertaken effectively and has now resulted in the school successfully achieving a small surplus. The finance committee maintains a very effective overview of the budget with realistic plans for expenditure both in short and long term. The school has an excellent administrator who effectively and consistently controls day-to-day financial matters and has a very positive impact upon the smooth running of the school. The principles of best value are fully implemented.
50. The school has an appropriate number of experienced and suitably qualified staff. The learning support staff are used very effectively throughout the school and make a strong contribution to the progress made by the pupils. Administrative and caretaking staff work hard to ensure the school runs smoothly and efficiently.
51. The accommodation is satisfactory overall and is used effectively. The hall is used for a wide variety of purposes including assemblies, physical education, dining and extra curricular activities. The playground is effectively used for both physical education and breaktimes. The information and communication technology suite and library, which are well used, are combined. This has the advantage of providing a choice of research materials to support pupils' learning. There are too few books to support the pupils' learning. However, the school is spending wisely and purchasing books within its limited budget and supplementing these effectively through the Local Education Authority's book loan service.

52. Although in most subjects resources are adequate there are some weaknesses, particularly in geography, where there is a severe lack of appropriate maps to support the study of this subject.

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

53. The headteacher, staff and governors should now;
- raise standards in history, geography, art and design and design and technology by;
    - ensuring work is planned to build effectively on what the pupils have already learned;
    - ensuring sufficient time is available to cover the curriculum effectively;
    - providing the pupils with opportunities to develop literacy skills through these subjects;
    - providing the subject co-ordinators with the opportunities to develop their management of these subjects;
    - improving the range of resources.

*(paragraphs 5, 7, 8, 19, 20, 24, 96 – 119)*

### **In addition, the school should consider including the following in their action plan;**

- reducing the number of mundane worksheets;  
*(paragraphs 4, 18, 20, 94, 11, 118)*
- improving the quality of teachers' marking to that of the best, for example, that seen in literacy lessons;  
*(paragraphs 21, 11, 119)*
- improve the presentation of pupils' work in some lessons;  
*(paragraph 21)*

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Number of lessons observed   | 39 |
| Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils | 31 |

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

|            | Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|------------|-----------|-----------|------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| Number     | 4         | 15        | 9    | 11           | 0              | 0    | 0         |
| Percentage | 10        | 39        | 23   | 28           | 0              | 0    | 0         |

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than two percentage points.

### 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)      | 25      | 207     |
| Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals | 0       | 44      |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

| Special educational needs   | Nursery | YR– Y6 |
|---|---------|--------|
| Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs       | 0       | 1      |
| Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register | 0       | 38     |

| 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 | 1            |
| Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving           | 2            |

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

|             | %   |
|-------------|-----|
| School data | 6.4 |

#### Unauthorised absence

|             | %   |
|-------------|-----|
| School data | 0.3 |



|                           |     |
|---------------------------|-----|
| National comparative data | 5.4 |
|---------------------------|-----|

|                           |     |
|---------------------------|-----|
| 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 (Year 2)

| Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year | Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
|--|------|------|-------|-------|
|  |      | 2002 | 16    | 9     |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results       |          | Reading | Writing | Mathematics |
|---|----------|---------|---------|-------------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above   | Boys     |         |         |             |
|   | Girls    |         |         |             |
|   | Total    | 24      | 22      | 25          |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School   | 96 (85) | 88 (88) | 100 (96)    |
|   | National | 84 (84) | 86 (86) | 90 (91)     |

| Teachers' Assessments                       |          | English | Mathematics | Science   |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|-----------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above   | Boys     |         |             |           |
|   | Girls    |         |             |           |
|   | Total    | 23      | 25          | 25        |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School   | 92 (88) | 100 (96)    | 100 (100) |
|   | National | 85 (85) | 89 (89)     | 89 (89)   |

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year. Figures given are school totals only where the number of boys and/or girls in the cohort is fewer than ten.

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

| Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year | Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
|--|------|------|-------|-------|
|  |      | 2002 | 14    | 19    |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results       |          | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above   | Boys     | 10      | 10          | 12      |
|   | Girls    | 15      | 14          | 14      |
|   | Total    | 25      | 24          | 26      |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above | School   | 76 (69) | 73 (53)     | 79 (97) |
|   | National | 75 (75) | 73 (71)     | 86 (87) |

| Teachers' Assessments                       |          | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above   | Boys     | 10      | 10          | 10      |
|   | Girls    | 14      | 13          | 14      |
|   | Total    | 24      | 23          | 24      |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above | School   | 73 (69) | 70 (61)     | 73 (94) |
|   | National | 73 (72) | 74 (74)     | 82 (82) |

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

**Ethnic background of pupils****Exclusions in the last school year**

| Categories used in the Annual School Census         | No of pupils on roll | Number of fixed period exclusions | Number of permanent exclusions |
|---|----------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| White – British                                     | 174                  | 0                                 | 0                              |
| White – Irish                                       | 0                    | 0                                 | 0                              |
| White – any other White background                  | 0                    | 0                                 | 0                              |
| Mixed – White and Black Caribbean                   | 0                    | 0                                 | 0                              |
| Mixed – White and Black African                     | 0                    | 0                                 | 0                              |
| Mixed – White and Asian                             | 0                    | 0                                 | 0                              |
| Mixed – any other mixed background                  | 0                    | 0                                 | 0                              |
| Asian or Asian British - Indian                     | 0                    | 0                                 | 0                              |
| Asian or Asian British - Pakistani                  | 0                    | 0                                 | 0                              |
| Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi                | 0                    | 0                                 | 0                              |
| Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background | 0                    | 0                                 | 0                              |
| Black or Black British – Caribbean                  | 0                    | 0                                 | 0                              |
| Black or Black British – African                    | 0                    | 0                                 | 0                              |
| Black or Black British – any other Black background | 1                    | 0                                 | 0                              |
| Chinese   | 6                    | 0                                 | 0                              |
| Any other ethnic group                              | 0                    | 0                                 | 0                              |
| No ethnic group recorded                            | 1                    | 0                                 | 0                              |

*The table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only. It gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.*

### **Teachers and classes**

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

|  |      |
|--|------|
| Total number of qualified teachers (FTE) | 8    |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher   | 22.1 |
| Average class size                       | 25   |

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

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Total number of education support staff | 4  |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week   | 90 |

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

|  |      |
|--|------|
| Total number of qualified teachers (FTE) | 1    |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher   | 25   |
| Total number of education support staff  | 1    |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week    | 30   |
| Number of pupils per FTE adult           | 12.5 |

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Recruitment of teachers**

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years     | 3 |
| Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years | 3 |

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)  | 0 |
| Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)                           | 0 |
| Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE) | 0 |

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Financial information**

|                |           |
|----------------|-----------|
| Financial year | 2002/2003 |
|----------------|-----------|

|  | £       |
|--|---------|
| Total income                               | 570 115 |
| Total expenditure                          | 536 632 |
| Expenditure per pupil                      | 2 531   |
| Balance brought forward from previous year | (9 510) |
| Balance carried forward to next year       | 23 973  |

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

### **Questionnaire return rate**

|                                   |     |
|-----------------------------------|-----|
| Number of questionnaires sent out | 257 |
| Number of questionnaires returned | 99  |

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

|  | Strongly agree | Tend to agree | Tend to disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know |
|--|----------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|------------|
| My child likes school.   | 70             | 26            | 2                | 1                 | 1          |
| My child is making good progress in school.  | 62             | 36            | 1                | 1                 | 0          |
| Behaviour in the school is good.   | 63             | 34            | 3                | 0                 | 0          |
| My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.                              | 28             | 52            | 12               | 3                 | 5          |
| The teaching is good.  | 55             | 42            | 2                | 0                 | 1          |
| I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.                          | 45             | 49            | 5                | 0                 | 1          |
| I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem. | 66             | 31            | 3                | 0                 | 0          |
| The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.              | 60             | 38            | 1                | 0                 | 1          |
| The school works closely with parents.   | 31             | 61            | 7                | 0                 | 1          |
| The school is well led and managed.  | 45             | 48            | 4                | 0                 | 3          |
| The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.                      | 53             | 42            | 5                | 0                 | 0          |
| The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.            | 45             | 31            | 3                | 6                 | 15         |

## **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**

54. Very good provision has been maintained for children in the Foundation Stage since the last inspection. Further improvements have been made to resources and the teaching is even better. The Foundation Stage is now a significant strength of the school. It is very well led and managed and, through very good planning and assessment, a rich and effective curriculum is in place. Because provision is very closely matched to the needs of the children, it is having a very positive impact on their learning.
55. Children start part-time in the Nursery class after their third birthday and are admitted to the Reception class full-time at the beginning of the year in which they have their fifth birthday. The evidence from assessments and the inspection shows that children's attainment when they start school covers the full ability range and is at an average level overall. It varies from year to year and at the last inspection was below average. The children make very good progress in their learning and achieve well. By the end of this Reception year almost all will attain the Early Learning Goals and about half will exceed them in all areas of learning.
56. The teaching is very good with some excellent features. This is better than the last inspection when about half were very good and the rest were good. The teaching has been enhanced with improved resources. A significant strength of the teaching is the teachers' very good understanding of how young children learn and the challenging activities they plan and teach to enable the children to make very good gains in their learning. Because assessment information about the children is used successfully to guide the teaching and learning, the activities build effectively on what the children already know, enabling them to make very good progress. A good balance is achieved between teacher led tasks and opportunities for children to initiate and choose their own activities. The teaching is particularly effective in promoting and extending early literacy and numeracy skills and helping children to acquire very positive attitudes to their learning. This is because the teachers and nursery nurses have very high expectations of what children can achieve both academically, and in terms of their behaviour and social awareness. The outstanding relationships between adults and children and the special environment that has been created of respect, trust and care are a particular strength. Because of this the children love coming to school and have a real joy for learning, while the teachers, nursery nurses and other adults show a pride and pleasure in helping them to learn so successfully.

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

57. The children make very good progress in this area of learning due to the high emphasis placed on the development of these skills in the planning and the very good teaching. The children are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning and feel confident about what they can achieve. By the time they enter Year 1 the children's attainment exceeds the Early Learning Goals. The children are very secure in the classroom routines. They are given many opportunities to plan their own activities and work unsupervised, and so gain high levels of self-confidence and independence. In the Reception class they show considerable interest in the literacy and numeracy lessons. They confidently tell the rest of the class how they work out their answers to the counting on of numbers and proudly read out sentences they have written themselves during literacy sessions. Numerous examples were seen during the inspection of children initiating their own ideas. For example, in the Nursery class, when writing out

their invitations to the 'Teddy Bears Picnic', one of them suggested that a reminder to bring sunglasses should be added to the invitations if it was sunny. Another child eagerly showed the class the play dough cake with candles she had made and spontaneously sang 'Happy birthday' to everyone.

58. Adults provide an outstanding level of care and concern and are excellent role models and this results in the children behaving in an exemplary way and working together harmoniously. They show confidence and consideration for others, helping one another to play a dice game in the Reception class and sharing resources willingly in the Nursery class 'café.' Stories are frequently chosen by adults to reinforce social issues and prayers and music at the beginning of the day give the children many opportunities to show empathy and care for others. They are already very mature and thoughtful in their concern for others and this is demonstrated in the outstanding relationships that they have with each other. Special festivals and customs are celebrated from around the world and these activities successfully extend the children's beliefs and understanding of the wider world.

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

59. Very good provision and teaching enable the children to make very good progress. By the time they enter Year 1, the children's attainment exceeds the Early Learning Goals. Children have many exciting opportunities to develop their language skills effectively across all areas of learning. In both classes speaking and listening skills are very well developed. The children are particularly good at listening to others, asking questions and initiating their own ideas. They speak confidently to adults and one another. As well as providing many opportunities for speaking and listening activities in the 'café' and 'travel agents' the children re-tell and make up stories. Adults are skilled at joining in activities at the right time and their interventions successfully guide and extend the ideas of the children. For example, when the Reception class were looking at non-fiction texts of animals, the teacher helped them to extend the vocabulary they used to describe the animals so their spoken language became more interesting and informative.
60. A very good emphasis is placed on the development of early reading skills through the Literacy Framework. Because of this many children in the Reception class are already reading simple stories fluently and have built up a wide vocabulary of familiar words. Children from both classes are encouraged to take books home to share with parents. They need little reminding as they have a keen interest in books and enjoy the pleasure of reading to others and showing how well they are doing. In the Reception class books are regularly sent home along with a home-school diary, in which the teacher and the parents record progress. The school values highly the very good support that parents give with reading at home and the significant contribution that this makes to the progress made by the children. In both classes lessons include the regular reinforcement of sounds and words and the sharing of a wide range of stories. Stories often form the basis of work in other areas of learning. For example, through the story of 'Honey biscuits' mathematical skills were practised when measuring the ingredients and design and technology skills were learnt in the making of the biscuits. During these associated activities the children's language skills receive further reinforcement. In the Nursery class the children particularly enjoy sharing and reading the books that adults have made for them from photographs of visits or special events in the school. These books are all very well read and provide very good levels of motivation for one or two children who are not as keen to read. Everywhere in the two classes there are well presented displays of words and sentences for children to read and frequent opportunities in role-play to practise and reinforce their reading.

61. All children have very good opportunities to become confident writers. In the Nursery class they use a good range of writing materials for mark making and emergent writing. Nearly all children can write their own names and more able children are using some recognisable letters, which are formed correctly in their shopping lists and menus for the 'café'. The opportunities to write for a wide range of purposes are continued in the Reception class. There is a good balance achieved between providing time for children to write freely and a planned and regular input of very good teacher support. Because of this most of the children in the Reception class are forming their letters correctly and the higher attaining children are writing confidently in sentences. In their work on animals from hot and cold countries one child wrote independently, 'Giraffes can reach the top of trees and eat the leaves'. Most words were spelt correctly and punctuation was in place. Many children are beginning to use simple dictionaries and word banks to find their own words.

### **Mathematical development**

62. There is a very good practical focus to all activities which not only increases the children's knowledge and understanding, but also helps them to use the language of mathematics confidently. Teaching is very good, enabling all children to make very good progress. By the time they enter Year 1, the children's attainment exceeds the Early Learning Goals. Assessment information is used very effectively, with teachers checking on levels of understanding before moving on to a new aspect of learning. The Reception class teacher is very skilled in adapting her questions and planning to suit the different levels of ability in the class. This means that the more able children are being challenged to add 4 more on to 16, explain how they work it out and record their answers formally. The lower attaining children count practically in two's to 10. In the Nursery class, games and role-play are used to help children to match and sort into sets and to use money and give change in the café. These children also use numbers confidently to 5 when adding ice cream cones together. They also know how many are left when one or more is taken away. In both classes the children regularly sing and recite counting rhymes to reinforce their knowledge of numbers and simple problem solving. There is a very good focus on children helping children to learn how to form their numbers correctly and because of this many of the children in the Reception class are recording their work confidently.
63. There are many good opportunities for the children to learn about measuring, direction, pattern and shape from a good range of resources. In the Nursery class they learn about the properties of shapes with jigsaws and choose shapes to make pattern collages and models. Valuable sessions take place in the sand and water to introduce work on capacity and measurement. These structured play activities are often supported by effective levels of adult intervention and extend the children's learning well. The computer has recently been used to help children in the Reception class to learn more about the language of direction. Because some children found it difficult at first to understand the language associated with position, the teacher reinforced their understanding very successfully during a games lesson, by getting them to practise moving in different directions and to use the correct vocabulary.



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

64. Teaching and progress is very good and by the time they enter Year 1, the children's attainment exceeds the Early Learning Goals. Activities are very well planned and provide wide opportunities for children to learn about the world. As far as possible the children learn through investigations or through visitors and visits. In the Nursery class they have learnt about 'People who help us' and this has included a visit to the post box to send letters, and a talk from the local postman who visited the school. The current topic on food has given children a very good understanding about healthy eating and extended their interest into different kinds of food. Not only have they tasted foods from around the world, visited the school kitchens, made their own cakes and biscuits, but they are also growing and caring for different vegetables in the outdoor area and observing their growth and development very closely. In the Reception class the children are investigating different animals from cold countries. In order to bring the subject alive the children practically experienced the coldness of large pieces of ice and examined a wide range of materials that would provide some insulation for animals against the cold. Because of the very effective teaching and practical opportunities to experiment, the children soon made the link between the fur fabric and the coat of a polar bear. Many higher attaining children are already at a very good stage in making meaningful observations and predictions in their investigations, such as the recent work on sinking and floating.
65. Children use computers regularly and guide the mouse skilfully to make patterns and pictures as well as labels of teacher's names for the classroom doors. In the Reception class children use the keyboard to write their own names and the more able children print their own work. Because computers are used regularly it gives children a very good foundation on which to develop their information and communication technology skills as they move through the school.

## **Physical development**

66. By the time they enter Year 1 the children's attainment exceeds the Early Learning Goals. The teaching and progress are very good and enhanced by the recent purchase of additional resources for outdoor play. The area is now not only used effectively to support physical development, but also incorporates other areas of learning such as marked games for mathematics and a home corner for role-play. In the Nursery class the children climb, balance, run and jump confidently and safely and with good levels of energy and control. Their co-ordination skills are good as is their awareness of space and the people around them. In the Reception class the children are now having more opportunities to use the outdoor area. Although they miss out on the daily opportunities to move freely and imaginatively on various parts of the body, they make good use of the hall and field for their physical development. In the games lesson observed, the children in the Reception class changed quickly for the session. Through very good teaching and demonstrations, their ball skills improved significantly. This is because they watched the movements of the teacher very carefully and this enabled them to have stronger and more accurate skills in throwing, catching and kicking the ball. They show good levels of confidence, control and co-ordination and when asked to work together they co-operate well together and show high levels of interest, energy and enthusiasm. Nearly all children handle pencils, scissors, brushes and other tools with good control and confidence.

## **Creative development**

67. The quality of teaching in this area of learning is very good and the children make very good progress. By the time they enter Year 1, the children's attainment exceeds the Early Learning Goals. More musical instruments have been purchased since the last inspection. Although used often in the teaching, they are not always freely accessible to the children for role-play activities and this has been recognised as an area for further development in both classes. Children regularly take part in planned music making sessions with adults. They have already built up a good repertoire of songs and rhymes and enjoy naming and using the percussions instruments correctly to accompany the singing and keep to the beat of the music.
68. In the Nursery class there is a wide range of activities for art and craft, which allows children to use their imagination, acquire skills and make choices and decisions about their own learning. They experiment with mixing their own colours to make handprints and explore what happens when they add washing up liquid to paint and blow their own bubble patterns onto paper. There is plenty of choice of materials for painting and collage and the children show good levels of imagination and skills in arranging different materials in their flower and animal collage designs. The children in the Reception class have looked very carefully at daffodils and produced some good observational drawings. Whilst regular opportunities are found for them to choose and initiate their own ideas in free-choice activities, they sometimes need more opportunities in the teacher led tasks to have a say in the kinds of materials they use. For example, in their drawings of the daffodils, the paper and chalks used were nearly all the same colours and had been chosen beforehand by the teacher.
69. The children are particularly able in role-play and the teachers, nursery nurses and other adults take full advantage of using the 'café' and 'travel agents' to extend the opportunities and experiences for the children across the different areas of learning. Because these areas are well resourced the children use the equipment with good imaginative skills and their learning is significantly enhanced.

## **ENGLISH**

70. The results of the national tests for 2002 showed that by the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment in English was above the national average and well above the average for similar schools. Inspection evidence shows the standards of attainment are still above the national average by the end of Year 2 and well above average by the end of Year 6. The results for the national tests in 2002 for pupils in Year 2 showed that attainment in reading was similar to the national average but below the national average in writing. When compared with similar schools, reading was well above average and writing was average. There has been erratic performance in test results over time but standards overall are better than at the time of the previous inspection. In the past, inconsistent teaching has hampered progress in a minority of classes. Throughout the school pupils are now making very good progress and are improving because teachers have much higher expectations of what the pupils can achieve. Pupils with special educational needs make progress in line with their peers and which reflects their prior achievements.
71. Sustained improvement is evident this year in the standards of reading attained by pupils by the end of Year 2. Standards are above the national average, because of good efforts to accelerate their progress. The school uses a range of approaches to the teaching of reading. Books go home regularly and the school provides good guidance

for parents to support their children's development of reading at home. The school has a regular programme of teaching sounds and sound blends as part of the literacy strategy and this has had a positive impact upon raising the standard of pupils' attainment. As a result, the progress made by pupils in learning the mechanics of reading in the infant classes is good and the progress they make in developing skills which enable them to read for pleasure is also good.

72. By the end of Year 2 pupils use a good range of information from books, such as the illustration on the cover, to predict the story. They read fluently and confidently and can appreciate aspects such as humour and sadness. Pupils have well developed strategies for dealing with unfamiliar words, and so there is a good understanding of what is being read.
73. Pupils in Year 3 to Year 6 continue a programme of reading development and most make rapid progress. They have good opportunities to cultivate their own love of reading through regular time spent exploring the work of a good range of authors, poets and dramatists. More able pupils engage in useful discussions about literature, although some need prompting before they will commit themselves, for example, to an idea of a possible outcome to the story. By the end of Year 6, standards in reading are good. Pupils read with confidence, accuracy and increasing elements of flair. The more able pupils use a wide range of expression to add interest to their reading. These pupils express more interest in reading for pleasure and, in school time, there are well-planned opportunities when pupils can develop their higher order reading skills through following their own interests and extending their personal knowledge through independent work.
74. There has been a steady improvement in writing by the end of Year 2. This is evident in the quality of work pupils have produced in their books since the beginning of the academic year, which, for most, is of a standard expected for their age. The more able pupils demonstrate good skills in sequencing their ideas and most pupils use capital letters and basic punctuation correctly. They write at length and choose vocabulary imaginatively with some good examples of instructional writing and poems. Most write in sentences and spelling of common monosyllabic words is accurate.
75. By the end of Year 6 pupils' basic writing skills such as punctuation and spelling are of a good standard. However, opportunities for pupils to demonstrate competence in writing in other subjects is not sufficiently well developed. Writing is not well promoted in other areas of the curriculum because teachers do not provide enough time or opportunities for pupils to record their work using a range of written formats. Nevertheless, in literacy lessons, teachers provide very good opportunities for pupils to write imaginatively, and this develops their writing skills, including opportunities to draft and redraft their work. In literacy lessons, opportunities include written instructions, narrative poetry, biography and autobiography book reviews and reports, as well as play scripts and pieces of creative writing. The school provides very good opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their own work and to extend their experiences through additional independent work or extended writing for an even greater range of audiences and purposes. For example, pupils have written some very emotive poems which are tastefully framed and sensitively displayed in the main school corridor. Particularly memorable pieces include 'The Twin Towers' and 'What is the Sun?'
76. In both key stages, a small number of teachers do not always have high enough expectations of what pupils can do in their writing. They ensure the work is usually technically correct, but it lacks excitement, interest and flair. Presentation of this written work is untidy because pupils are not encouraged to include the title or date or to write

in pen or use cursive script. In formal handwriting lessons they develop a clear handwriting style, but these teachers do not insist on the same high quality of penmanship and presentation in all of the pupils' recording in other subjects.

77. Pupils in Year 3 to Year 6 make good progress in developing their speaking skills, and overall the standard of speaking and listening is above average by the end of Year 6. By the end of Year 2, standards in speaking and listening are satisfactory. Pupils make satisfactory, but inconsistent, progress in developing these skills in Year 1 and Year 2 because, until recently, not all teachers gave sufficient encouragement to pupils to voice their feelings and opinions. As pupils move through Year 3 to Year 6, there are well-planned opportunities for extending these skills through debate, discussion and role-play, and most teachers are very skilled at implementing such activities. During the inspection pupils in Year 6 were given excellent encouragement by their teacher to develop expression and animation when discussing the merits of a range of publicity materials for adventure holidays. This culminated in the excellent use of drama to enact features such as rhetorical questioning. A similar example of outstanding practice was observed in the Year 5 class. The standards these pupils are achieving are well above average because of consistently high quality teaching.
78. Pupils' attitudes towards learning are excellent and behaviour in lessons is exemplary. When given the opportunity to work collaboratively, in pairs or small groups, the pupils do so sensibly and productively. For example, in a Year 4 lesson pupils worked together in groups examining the effectiveness of persuasive language in advertising. Through discussion they identified examples of alliteration, the use of exaggerated language and could suggest alternative ways to enhance slogans and jingles. They listened attentively to instructions from the teacher and were kind and helpful towards classmates who found the task challenging. The lesson provided excellent links with work pupils were undertaking in design and technology and the use made of information and communication technology greatly enhanced learning opportunities. However, some teachers do not make enough of these opportunities for pupils to learn from each other and to join together to extend their own knowledge beyond the planned learning outcomes for the lessons. In a Year 3 lesson, for example, pupils could have produced more work, and of a higher standard, if the teacher had not dwelt on what the pupils already knew about how to construct a formal letter.
79. The overall quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 is good and very good in Key Stage 2 with some excellent teaching. The literacy strategy is very well established and provides a secure structure for teachers' planning for the development of basic skills. Teachers implement all aspects of the National Literacy Strategy in their lessons, and are planning greater opportunities for work to develop English skills beyond the literacy lesson. However, not all teachers are planning enough opportunities to link literacy with other subjects so that the development of English can continue through purposeful extended writing in subjects such as history and geography, or for writing for different purposes such as descriptions in geography or art. Planning does however take good account of opportunities for drama and role-play. Most teachers offer an appropriate range of opportunities for developing pupils' pronunciation and enunciation and in developing clear explanations. Teachers explain tasks clearly and establish excellent relationships in the classroom which give pupils the confidence they need to contribute willingly during lessons. Opportunities for pupils to draft and edit their work are well organised and the marking of pupils' work is of a particularly high standard in most classes. Planning includes a clear focus for marking and ensures that the information gained from the process is used effectively to help with the planning of the next stage of learning. Assessment of pupils' ability is very accurate. Classroom management and organisation are very good and teachers manage the behaviour of the pupils very well.

Throughout the school good use is made of homework to consolidate and reinforce learning.

80. Where teaching is of the highest standard, the teachers' planning ensures that pupils' learning builds on previous knowledge and shows imagination in the way the tasks are introduced. Resources are very well prepared and are designed specifically for the pupils being taught. There are clear explanations, and discussions are managed sensitively and with appropriate humour. The lessons move at a very brisk pace and pupils are excited and regularly involved through the teachers' skilful use of open questions. The pupils waste no time and respond well to the challenges, which both tax and motivate them to make more effort. Well-planned use of computers is made in lessons, and teachers are confident in using information and communication technology to support their teaching of English. Where teaching is not as good, pupils are not encouraged to produce their best work and there is a lack of challenge in the lessons.
81. Since the time of the last inspection the management of the subject has been very good. The co-ordinator has been instrumental in bringing about rapid improvements in the standards of work pupils achieve. As a result, the key issue from 2001 has been fully addressed and the school continues to demonstrate an excellent commitment to maintaining improvements. The school is aware of the continued need to expand the range of books in its library. The co-ordinator is supporting colleagues very well and they have identified ways in which literacy can be promoted more imaginatively through other subjects.

## **MATHEMATICS**

82. The results of the 2002 national tests show that by the end of Year 6 standards are below the national average but above the average for similar schools. By the end of Year 2, standards are well above the national average and very high when compared with similar schools. Inspection findings are that pupils achieve standards above those expected nationally by the end of Year 2 in all aspects of mathematics. Standards are above national expectations in number and in line in other aspects of mathematics by the end of Year 6. This represents a good improvement in the standards found in the last inspection, for pupils aged eleven, where standards have been much lower in the past. Improvements have been made, through the dedicated efforts of staff, in the quality of teaching and learning, the breadth of the curriculum and in systems of assessment, all of which have contributed to improved standards. These improvements enable all pupils, including those with special educational needs, to achieve well and make good progress. Standards at the end of Year 2 are not quite as high as in the past, but this is due to differences in the relative abilities of pupils in different year groups. However, pupils in this cohort achieve well, from average levels of attainment at the start of Year 1.
83. There are strengths in the pupils' understanding and use of number. Throughout the school, pupils gain confidence in mental calculations and problem solving. This is clearly evident in the oldest pupils, who positively thrive on the challenging tasks set in one lesson, to 'make' a particular number, such as 17, by using any of the decimal numbers on the board and any of the 'four rules.' Similarly in Year 2 pupils are keen to show how they work out  $15 \times 3$  and confidently give a range of explanations. This is a strong feature as pupils gain the skills they need for other aspects of mathematics from these successful number lessons. Pupils also develop a good range of strategies for

solving problems, and most pupils are eager to give their ideas of how to solve the problems the teacher sets.

84. By the end of Year 6, pupils have a satisfactory understanding of shape and measure. Pupils have investigated perimeters and areas; they count squares and also successfully multiply length and breadth in centimetres. They construct angles and measure them successfully. The pupils investigate two and three-dimensional shapes, and can identify properties of a number of shapes. Year 2 pupils know the names and properties and understand the vocabulary of a range of two and three-dimensional shapes. They correctly identify right angles and measure length, weight and capacity using standard and non-standard measures.
85. Pupils in Year 6 have a secure knowledge of how to record data in various ways, such as making tally charts and bar graphs. They know the basic facts of probability and demonstrate this in simple statements. Pupils learn how to use the computer to manage data, such as planning a party and using a formula to determine costs. Pupils in Year 2 record their work in various ways, using lists and simple tables.
86. Pupils are very attentive and interested. They enjoy mathematics and are keen to participate in lessons. Consequently behaviour is generally very good and often excellent. The pupils co-operate with each other well and are positive in their attitudes to lessons. They show good levels of respect to each other, for example, when pupils are trying to explain their number strategy to the class, others wait patiently and quietly.
87. Teaching is good in the infants and very good in the juniors. The best teaching occurs in Year 6, where challenging activities and excellent control and management of the class, coupled with the teacher's very good knowledge and enthusiasm, ensure that pupils learn at a very good pace. Other good features of successful teaching include very good use of technology, as in a Year 5 class where the class teacher's very confident use of the interactive white board ensured pupils participated well, that the lesson moved at a smart pace and that the pupils remained interested over a long period. In all lessons work is prepared well to suit the needs of the pupils' different abilities. This helps pupils to make the best possible progress in the lesson. Relationships are very good in all classes, setting a positive working environment. The classrooms are colourful and interesting, including lots of mathematical vocabulary in many instances. This helps pupils to consolidate their learning effectively.
88. The presentation of pupils' work is a weaker feature. Overall, this needs improving so that pupils understand how to set work out neatly and to encourage them to value their work more highly by taking more care in the recording. Teachers do not generally mark pupils' work as effectively as they might. Comments are often limited, such as 'Fill this space,' which pupils sometimes ignore. There are few clear indicators for improvement, which limits pupils' chances to reflect on their work and to improve it. The quality of the teachers' handwriting in some classes is also not good enough to ensure that the pupils have good examples to copy.
89. The management of this subject is very good. Extremely knowledgeable and enthusiastic, the co-ordinator has provided very good leadership in this subject. She has made a highly positive contribution to the improvements in mathematics since the time of the last inspection. Assessment procedures are very good. The introduction of a rigorous tracking and monitoring system has helped the co-ordinator to check on pupils' progress and to implement actions if problems occur. For example, classes now group pupils by ability for mathematics, enabling teachers to provide challenging work for differing attainments more easily. Class support is currently targeted at the

middle attaining groups as their progress was not as good as it might be. This use of data to improve standards is very effective.

## SCIENCE

90. The 2002 National Curriculum test results show the pupils' attainment is well below average by the end of Year 6. When compared with similar schools, attainment is below average. The 2002 National Curriculum teacher assessments for Year 2 pupils show attainment is broadly average. Inspection evidence supports the findings of the teacher assessments and by the end of Year 2, most pupils are achieving standards in line with national expectations in all aspects of the subject. However, inspection findings show the pupils' attainment in the current Year 6 is broadly average and better than the previous year in all areas of science. The reasons for the difference in the standards seen during the inspection and the test results is due in part to the improved quality of teaching in the subject. More significantly, subject co-ordinators had identified the pupils' lack of understanding of some scientific vocabulary and a concerted effort by all staff has greatly improved this aspect of the pupils' work. All groups of pupils, including the more able and those with special educational needs, make good progress overall. Progress since the previous inspection has been good, the result of much improved leadership and management of the subject.
91. By the end of Year 2 pupils have had good opportunities to cover a range of scientific topics. Their knowledge of materials is satisfactory. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, name a range of materials and sort them accurately according to specific criteria. They understand that bending, stretching, squashing and twisting can change some materials. Most pupils compile lists of food that they know should be part of a healthy diet. Whilst most identify that some materials change when heated or cooled it is only the more able that can explain the difference between reversible and irreversible changes although most explain in their own words the meaning of dissolved. The pupils correctly identify the names of some of the major parts of plants such as stem, leaf, petal and root and know what is needed for them to grow. They have a satisfactory knowledge of the major parts of the body and have a basic knowledge of what happens during exercise. When prompted, the pupils show a secure understanding of how to make an electrical circuit.
92. By the end of Year 6, most pupils have covered an appropriate amount of work and make good progress overall. The pupils demonstrate a secure knowledge of electrical circuits and how they may be interrupted using switches. The more able pupils need opportunities to develop these skills further, for example, seeing what happens when the current is altered. Most pupils have a good understanding of solids, liquids and gases and use appropriate vocabulary such as evaporation and condensation, to indicate how some change states. They know which changes are reversible and which are not. The pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of materials and their properties but the more able need opportunities to develop these skills further, particularly through design and technology. For their age, the pupils demonstrate a secure knowledge of life processes and living things. They name accurately the major organs of the human body although they are not clear what functions the liver and kidneys perform. The pupils understand the impact that drugs, alcohol and tobacco have on health and through their work in physical education understand the benefits of exercise. They have a satisfactory understanding of the effects caused by the movement of the Earth.
93. Across the school, the pupils make good progress in developing their investigative skills due to the regular opportunities they are given. They develop appropriate skills in

determining how to carry out an investigation and have a good understanding of how to make investigations fair and valid. The pupils use their numeracy skills effectively in science, timing and measuring during investigative activities and producing graphs and charts from the data they collate.

94. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2. In Year 1 to Year 2, teaching is satisfactory and the pupils are given work that is generally well matched to their ability and builds effectively on what they have previously learned. The teachers make the lessons interesting with a good range of practical activities and good links with other subjects. For example, in a good Year 1 lesson, the pupils maintained good concentration and interest when measuring the noise level made by musical instruments using a sensor and computer. The teachers question the pupils effectively, assessing how well the pupils have understood before moving on. As a result, the pupils make good gains in their learning. In Year 3 to Year 6, most pupils make good gains in their learning as a result of the good teaching. There are some gaps in the pupils' learning due to ineffective leadership in the past and weaknesses in the curriculum. However, all pupils are now generally doing well and catching up, with the teachers working hard to cover all aspects of the subject effectively. Lessons are planned well with clear learning objectives, ensuring the pupils know what it is they are expected to achieve by the end of the lesson. In the best lessons, work is exciting and generates good levels of enthusiasm. Whilst the pupils' work is marked regularly, the teachers rarely identify to the pupils how they might improve further. In a small number of classes, there is an overuse of mundane worksheets that do little to enhance the pupils' scientific understanding and limit the opportunity for them to improve their writing skills. All teachers are beginning to make effective use of computers in science, with some making very effective use, producing graphs, digital photographs and using sensors.
95. The leadership and management of the subject are good. As a result, there have been improvements in the quality of teaching and learning in some classes, with areas for improvement being identified in others. Assessment procedures are good and information has been analysed carefully, identifying specific areas that have been acted upon as whole school issues and have already impacted on the standards achieved by the pupils. The school has made effective use of the LEA's advisory service to identify strengths and weaknesses.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

96. Pupils' attainment is below national expectations at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6 and has deteriorated since the previous inspection. Pupils of all ages and abilities, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make too little progress because the subject is not taught sufficiently often. Also, whilst there are just sufficient basic resources for the subject, such as paints, brushes, paper and pastels, the range is too narrow in terms of equipment for more unusual work. This means that although pupils carry out routine art and design activities they are unable to be more adventurous in their choice of materials. Art was not taught during the inspection, therefore judgements are based on a range of evidence including teachers' plans and records, discussions with staff and pupils and an evaluation of work previously completed by pupils.
97. By the end of Year 2, few pupils have developed the ability to confidently mix colours to achieve various shades and tones of both primary and secondary colours. In their observational drawing work, pupils are beginning to show attention to detail, and use



different grades of pencil and crayon to achieve different effects. Pupils have had limited opportunities of studying the work of well-known artists, and their knowledge and recall of the work of famous artists are weak. Pupils have some recall of the artists Monet and Van Gogh, but have difficulty in explaining their distinctive styles or choice of subject matter. As they move through Key Stage 1, pupils have too little experience of working in three-dimensions. Work is on a small scale and does not adequately challenge pupils' imaginations. Use is beginning to be made of sketchbooks for the pupils to make preparatory sketches and to record some of their design ideas.

98. By the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment is still below the expected level overall, although, some individual pieces of their work are of a good standard. Pupils' observational skills develop at a satisfactory rate, and they produce a range of observational drawings of still-life arrangements, including books, glass, plants, jars and bottles, using pencils and pencil crayons. The pupils' drawings vary in terms of the overall quality, but most pupils show satisfactory skills of observation in their work and they make an effort to convey the idea of perspective. Pupils make inconsistent use of sketchbooks to practise their skills, and for recording their initial ideas. Most pupils have only a limited appreciation of colour as they rarely create colour palettes or examine the use of colour in modern art. Pupils have little opportunity to examine the work of various artists or to adapt the styles for use in their own work. For example, pupils in Year 4 recall the names of Leonardo da Vinci and Michelangelo, but are unfamiliar with their work. Pupils' experience of working with textiles and natural objects is limited, and there are too few opportunities for them to create sculptures.
99. Overall, the quality of teaching is unsatisfactory because coverage of the National Curriculum programmes of study is inconsistent and the limited time allocated to teaching new skills, knowledge and understanding constrains the range of opportunities that can be offered, and this places a ceiling on the standards pupils can attain. For example, more imaginative activities such as batik and silk-screen printing work using textiles or sculpture are rarely undertaken. Teachers provide some opportunities for pupils to evaluate their own work and that of others, but this practice is not consistent through the school. The work of well-known artists is occasionally shared with pupils, but opportunities for this learning to be reinforced through research on computers or visits to galleries and museums are rare. Sketchbooks are starting to be used for pupils to carry out preparatory work and to practise skills such as mark making. However, the usefulness of the sketchbooks as a learning resource is limited because work is not annotated properly and teachers themselves have a limited understanding of their purpose. During the 'Arts Week', pupils had very good opportunities to develop their awareness of different styles of art from a range of non-European cultures, including Africa and China. However, teachers do not capitalise on opportunities within art and design to promote the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, they miss opportunities to encourage pupils to reflect on the feelings a picture conjures up. In discussion with Year 6 pupils they were delighted to show their work, which was on display around the school. All were very clearly proud of their achievements. This work was of a particularly good standard, very well displayed and gave an indication of the pupils' potential for producing work of a high quality.
100. The leadership and management of the subject have lacked consistency because of the prolonged absence of the previous co-ordinator. The new co-ordinator is a subject specialist and has a very good knowledge and understanding of how the subject can be taught effectively. However, because the subject has not been a recent priority for development, and she is very new to the role, she has had few opportunities to share her expertise or influence standards of teaching and learning. In this context, only recently has there been any plan to implement rigorous monitoring of teaching and

learning to identify the relative areas of strength and weakness. The school has not yet developed a manageable and practical method of assessing the pupils' progress and attainment as they move through the school. Not enough attention is given to developing the pupils' artistic skills, knowledge and understanding and this is especially evident for pupils who are potentially talented artists. The long-term curriculum plan lacks sufficient detail to adequately promote all elements of the National Curriculum. However, the school is aware of the need to raise standards pupils achieve in the subject. The co-ordinator has devised a development plan that addresses the weaknesses. Her own very high expectations of what pupils can achieve and her aspiration to rapidly raise standards indicate the school is well placed to make the required improvements.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

101. By the end of Year 2, pupils attain standards in line with those expected nationally and are similar to those seen at the time of the last inspection. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, experience an appropriate range of activities which enables them to make satisfactory progress and to achieve satisfactorily overall. By the end of Year 6 standards are below average and pupils' achievements are unsatisfactory. This is a weaker picture than found at the time of the last inspection. Design and technology is taught in every class in the school. However, this is inconsistent and in some classes the planned curriculum is not taught in all its components in both key stages. Overall, the whole design and technology curriculum is not implemented effectively. This means that pupils have too few opportunities to improve their skills and this results in inconsistent progress. Understandably, the school has recently concentrated on improving standards in core subjects, but time for design and technology has been squeezed in the process.
102. Younger pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 experience a satisfactory range of activities during the year, which result in satisfactory designing and making skills by the end of Year 2. For example, pupils make puppets, sewing material together and choosing decorations from a range available. They attempt to cut materials themselves, although poor quality of scissors limits development of this skill, and slows progress in the lesson. Food technology is included, with pupils trying out fruit salad recipes. However, there are few opportunities for pupils to reflect on their designs and the finished products and to suggest improvements.
103. Older pupils in Year 3 to Year 6 have access to a more limited curriculum. What is taught is generally satisfactory. For example, sandwiches have been designed in Year 3. The pupils in Year 4 enjoy making a burglar alarm for toy houses and castles, incorporating scientific skills and knowledge with design and technology effectively. Pupils experiment with tin foil for their alarms, and demonstrate inventiveness in trying to fix it together. They have designed and made models of chairs, which have a good variety of functions. One incorporates a 'light saver' while another, has a CD machine and speakers in the arms, and a third, obviously intended for a more relaxing time, has a space for candy floss, pop corn, make up and ice cream. Year 6 pupils complete designs for slippers, showing a good range of individual styles and ideas.
104. Pupils' designs show good levels of thought and individuality. A small number of pupils have listed possible materials, but no evaluations of the design, model, or of how it could be improved are recorded. Thus, valuable opportunities are missed to improve future work. Time limitations as the curriculum is currently organised mean that designs remain on paper, are not made up, or that not all pupils make up their designs.

This misses a valuable part of the process. Given opportunities, such as in a discussion during the inspection with Year 5 about their 'wish boxes,' pupils readily voice their opinions on their designs and making the models of them. Pupils thoughtfully comment that you should have all the materials ready, keep your design simple, and change it if it is too complicated.

105. Pupils clearly enjoy their lessons. They behave very well, settling to work quickly and concentrating well for good lengths of time. Even the youngest pupils in Year 1, are keen to learn sewing techniques in order to make their puppets, and concentrate well.
106. Teaching is satisfactory overall, with some good teaching observed during the inspection. In the lessons observed there were a number of strengths. Teachers prepared well, with good classroom organisation, and sufficient resources to enable all pupils to make suitable progress. Adult support was used effectively. Parents in the Year 1 and Year 2 classes made a valuable contribution to pupils' progress along with teaching assistants. This ensured all pupils were given good access to the activities throughout the lesson and little time was spent waiting, for example, for needles to be threaded and knots undone. Monitoring of pupils' progress was good, for example, in the Year 4 lesson, where the teacher moved around the class, offering support and using questions to help pupils think themselves about the next thing to do. However, too little reference was made to pupils' designs in lessons and too little opportunity for reflection and chances for pupils' to offer improvements were given.
107. The very newly appointed co-ordinator has had very little time to make an impact on the standards in design and technology. While some work has been started on monitoring planning, there has as yet been no opportunity to monitor the quality of teaching and learning. Currently, there are no clear records of the progress pupils make although some digital photographic records have been usefully kept on computer by one member of staff which form a good starting point. The co-ordinator has limited opportunities to improve professional knowledge herself, and for other staff, as the school has other priorities presently. The co-ordinator's role is limited by the organization of the curriculum, with half-termly blocks of design and technology alternating with art. Unfortunately this meant a four-week block after Easter which limits the amount and depth of study possible.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

108. Standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are below national expectations overall. This is a weaker picture than that found in the last inspection, and a number of factors contribute to this situation. Geography is taught in all classes but some planned topics have not been taught in some classes, and in others, topics have not been taught to the required depth. The school has focused on raising standards in core subjects as required by the last inspection. Unfortunately, this has meant too little time for geography, which has suffered as a consequence. Although pupils generally further their learning to some extent in all classes, overall they do not achieve sufficiently well to reach standards expected by the end of Year 6 and progress is unsatisfactory in both key stages.
109. Pupils have not yet developed an appropriate geographical vocabulary. In Year 2 pupils talk about the fictional 'Katie Morag' story set on an island, but they have little understanding of the features of the island, such as 'harbour,' when discussing the story. They find difficulty describing the local environment, and have little geographical vocabulary overall, although a few pupils talk with enthusiasm about their own

experiences visiting Southport and West Kirby beaches. Overall, pupils know little about maps and plans. Pupils' books show that little has been recorded individually. What is available is generally on folded paper stuck into exercise books. This does not give much value to the work and it is difficult to use the book to enhance and consolidate learning or revise a topic.

110. Pupils in the junior classes have studied a variety of topics. For example, Year 3 pupils have looked at local issues affecting the environment. They have completed a route planner to school and written a description of their route, involving literacy skills nicely. Pupils in Year 4 have clear and neatly copied descriptions of pollution although there is little evidence of any work involving research or challenges for pupils who work more quickly. The best work occurred in Year 5 where pupils visited Llandudno, and could talk confidently about the map of the coastline and the differences between Llandudno and Halewood. However, overall too little work involves looking at primary and secondary sources and this significantly limits pupils' experiences. Work is often copied from the board and not well-matched to pupils' abilities. Too few opportunities occur for pupils to build effectively on previous skills. For example, map reading using globes, maps and plans, is not taught consistently. Information and communication technology is not used sufficiently well to enhance pupils' learning.
111. Although satisfactory in the topics taught, teaching is unsatisfactory overall. There are strengths in some classes in planning interesting activities to stimulate and excite pupils, such as the visit to Llandudno in Year 5. This is not always the case and some opportunities for visits lack forward planning and so do not take place, and other chances are missed through the constraints of the timetable. Interesting classroom displays also enable pupils to consolidate their learning effectively, such as the human and physical features of the seaside in Year 2, colourfully displayed. However, worksheets are used too frequently and this gives pupils too few chances to develop both independent thinking and their literacy skills. Teachers allow work to be presented scruffily, and give too few pointers in marking to help pupils to improve the quality of presentation and the content of their work. There are few planned challenges for pupils who work more quickly, thus limiting their chances of achieving more highly.
112. Other contributory factors to weaker standards include the current organization of the timetable, which has seen geography taught on a half termly basis. Which in some half terms is insufficient to cover planned topics successfully. Teachers are restricted in the planned use of secondary sources of information, such as maps, because resources are limited. These factors have a detrimental effect on pupils' progress. Assessment systems have only very recently been put in place and are not yet effective in analysing pupils' achievement and in helping to raise standards in classes.
113. The geography co-ordinator is newly appointed and has had few chances to influence standards and progress in the subject. Geography has had a low priority in the current year and no time has been allocated to monitoring the quality of teaching and learning and the impact of the curriculum. Chances to participate in training are limited and funding for resources is low. These are factors adding to the below average standards in geography presently in school. There have been many opportunities to participate in local environmental issues, which the school has eagerly taken up in the past. This continues through the effective links made by the deputy headteacher, and offers good chances for pupils to learn about local issues at first hand.

## **HISTORY**

114. Pupils' attainment in history is in line with national expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils have gained a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the past, and progress and achievement for all pupils is satisfactory. Standards are similar to the last inspection but the school has improved its resources since then to support the scheme of work and there are more opportunities for pupils to use research. A recent improvement has been the increase in the time allocated to the subject. These developments since the last inspection have improved provision and are beginning to pay dividends.
115. By the end of Year 2, pupils have made a good start in developing their knowledge and understanding of the events and lives of people in the past. For example in comparing seaside holidays in Victorian times and now, pupils in Year 2 are beginning to recognise a few reasons why people acted as they did then and now. Some of the more able pupils can take their work further and, in the topic on the 'Great fire of London', they know that the fire spread quickly because so many houses were built of wood and the wind was strong. They are also beginning to recognise some of the improvements made to the buildings to prevent the fire happening again. Time lines are used effectively to help pupils gain more awareness of how the past can be divided into different periods. In studying famous people, pupils have gained a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the period in which Florence Nightingale lived. They describe her life in the format of a diary and provide some details about conditions in the hospitals then. Most pupils know where to find information about the past and there is a good focus on recording work, which extends pupils' literacy skills well.
116. By the end of Year 6, pupils have built up a satisfactory knowledge of features of some past societies but the depth of their understanding is rather patchy. This is because until recently the subject was not covered in enough detail due to a lack of time. Therefore pupils in Year 6 have some gaps in understanding about the everyday lives of people and how they lived in the past. Although they know where to find out about the past from different sources of information, they have more difficulties in making links between past societies and giving reasons for the changes made. This became clear when they looked at different artefacts from the 1940's and 1950's and tried to describe how and why the changes were made. Because of past weaknesses in coverage few pupils have reached the higher attainment of which they are capable.
117. In Year 3 to Year 5, pupils have covered a greater range of work because they have benefited more from improved resources and a greater allocation of time. In Year 5, pupils use their enquiry skills well to study the life and times of Queen Victoria. In Year 3 and Year 4, although past work relied too much on pupils completing undemanding work sheets, more research has been carried out recently and good opportunities made to carry out role-play activities such as being evacuees during the Second World War and Roman soldiers stationed on Hadrian's Wall. This has led to a greater awareness and understanding of these periods of history and to a considerable heightening of interest in the subject.
118. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall, with examples of good and very good teaching seen during the inspection. The teaching was satisfactory at the last inspection. Teacher's knowledge and understanding are at least satisfactory and good use is made of the resources available to them, including information and control technology for research purposes. The teaching is at its best when pupils are asked to carry out research and find things out for themselves. It came alive for pupils when they re-enacted Roman battle formations in Year 3 and packed their cases to become evacuees in Year 4. This approach to learning also adds considerably to the spiritual dimension of the pupils' experiences in the way they show empathy with people and

conditions in the past. Afterwards, when questioned by the teachers, their knowledge and understanding of the period being studied was very good. The subject is also effective when it is used as a vehicle for developing pupils' literacy skills. There are some good examples of well-written reports and stories such as a child's account of life in a factory in Victorian times and a Roman soldier writing a letter home to his family. Not all work is as purposeful and, at times, there has been too much focus in the past on completing simple worksheets and colouring pictures that prevent pupils from moving on enough in their learning. Recent work shows more challenge and purpose.

119. The subject is led and managed in a satisfactory way. The co-ordinator is new to the post but is keen to move the school forward and her commitment to further improvements are good. She has begun to monitor the teaching and planning as well as examining pupils' work. Although there are some examples of pupils' work being marked in a way that outlines what is needed to improve, this good practice does not feature enough in teachers' marking at the moment. The procedures for assessment and monitoring of pupils' work are satisfactory.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

120. The pupils' attainment in information and communication technology is in line with national expectations at the end of Year 2 and above average at the end of Year 6 and all pupils, including those with special educational needs and the more able, make at least satisfactory progress. Progress in the use of spreadsheets and control technology is good with pupils attaining above average standards in these aspects by the end of Year 6. Good progress has been made since the previous inspection and the school has continued to raise standards and improve the provision. Good use is made of the computer suite. Effective use of computers is made in subjects such as English, mathematics and science and the school has identified the need to develop their use in other subjects.
121. By the end of Year 2, most pupils have satisfactory word processing skills and use a word processing program well to write simple stories and accounts. They order and correct text using the backspace, enter and return keys. The pupils know how to load, save and print their work and they use a satisfactory range of software. All pupils demonstrate good skills in using a mouse and they use the shape and fill functions to produce simple images. In their work using control technology, the Year 2 pupils demonstrate satisfactory skills in programming a floor robot to follow a route and to undertake a series of turns although the unreliability of the robots means that the pupils do not always make the progress of which they are capable. Year 1 pupils demonstrate a clear understanding of how a computer can be used to order a set of instructions and recognise it is quicker than using pencil and paper. By the end of Year 2, the pupils recognise that computers can be used to store information and produce graphs and charts about favourite foods. However, the pupils need more opportunities to use computers for these types of activities to raise standards further. The pupils have a good understanding of how computers can be used to measure sound and pupils in a Year 1 lesson confidently read the decibel level of a number of musical instruments to determine which was the loudest and which was the quietest.
122. By the end of Year 6, the pupils demonstrate good word processing skills. They amend their work well using the full range of editing features. The pupils use these skills effectively when they produce multi-media presentations, inserting pictures and text and amending their work appropriately. As part of their literacy work, the Year 6 pupils used their word processing skills effectively to write an account of 'Kensuke's Kingdom'

which they then illustrated well using either a publishing program or by inserting pictures. The pupils have a very good understanding of how to use spreadsheets. For example, during the inspection in a very good Year 5 lesson, the pupils entered information and used a formula to calculate the cost of a party. The pupils know how to use formulae to calculate costs and they recognise the value of such procedures when carrying out a number of similar calculations. The pupils develop their understanding of databases and combine this knowledge with their understanding of spreadsheets to produce graphs and charts. Good use is made of the Internet and CD ROMs to carry out research. The pupils make particularly good use of local websites for locating information.

123. The quality of teaching and learning is good throughout the school. The teachers have worked hard to improve their subject knowledge and some staff have very good skills, enabling them to use computer technology very effectively to enhance the pupils' learning. For example, in a good numeracy lesson in Year 5, the teacher made very effective use of the interactive whiteboard to make the activity more interesting and to successfully motivate the pupils. As a result, the pupils made good gains in their knowledge of finding number factors. The teaching of information and communication technology is carried out regularly and systematically using the computer suite. However, the limited number of computers makes it difficult for whole class activities although the teachers generally ensure all groups are usefully occupied. The teachers also make effective use of the computers in classrooms. The teachers generally have high expectations of what the pupils can achieve and this has resulted in improved standards. There are regular opportunities for the pupils to improve the word processing skills, particularly in English. Lesson planning is good and clearly identifies the skills that the pupils are to acquire. However, the teachers' planning needs to identify opportunities for using computers to promote learning in other subjects.
124. The subject is well led and managed. Whilst there is still work to do, much has been achieved in terms of developing the assessment procedures, improving the teachers' confidence and raising the level of pupils' skills in all aspects. Good use has been made of the LEA's advisory service and in-service training to raise the profile of the subject and to improve staff confidence. There is an adequate range of computer hardware and programs to ensure all areas of the subject are taught effectively.

## **MUSIC**

125. By the end of Year 2, most pupils attain standards in line with national expectations and make satisfactory progress. It is not possible to judge the overall standards that pupils attain, or the progress they make in Year 3 to Year 6. This is because no class music lessons took place during the inspection. A drama lesson of fifteen minutes in Year 6 provided some limited opportunities to observe pupils playing a few musical instruments but was too short to judge the standards reached in performing and composing. However, evidence from about a third of pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 who attend a choir and recorder club is that standards here are average and pupils are making satisfactory progress. About a fifth of pupils in Year 3 to Year 6 are learning to play musical instruments. From the records kept, these pupils are making good progress and a few who have been learning for longer are now at a more advanced stage in their attainment and entering for examinations. No judgements were made on standards or progress at the last inspection.
126. Satisfactory improvements have been made to the provision for music since the last inspection. A scheme of work has been introduced which is helping teachers to cover the elements of music more systematically throughout the school. More time has been

allocated for music to be taught and improved resources have meant that pupils now have the opportunity to listen to more music from different times and cultures and to play a wider selection of instruments.

127. By the end of Year 2, pupils have learnt a good range of songs which they enjoy singing. Singing is strong and mostly in tune but without expression yet. Pupils have a good sense of rhythm when they add an accompaniment on the instruments. The teacher makes sure that all pupils have opportunities to play instruments in lessons in order to improve their skills in composition and to keep interest levels high. In a lesson seen during the inspection, pupils were skilled at choosing an instrument that matched the sound of the onomatopoeic words in the songs. In accompanying the song they keep to a steady beat and stop and start correctly. Pupils have not yet had the opportunity to move on to explore the ways in which sounds can be combined and used expressively in composition and therefore there is some lack of challenge for the more able pupils in the teaching.
128. By the end of Year 6, pupils have good opportunities to extend their musical skills by joining the choir or learning to play the recorder or an orchestral instrument, although not enough recognition is given to the achievements of many of these pupils who are learning instruments. They are not given regular opportunity to play their instruments in lessons or in a school orchestra. Only on special occasions and occasionally in assemblies do the instrumentalists play together for the school. The choir is building up a good repertoire of songs and in unison singing pupils are confident performers, generally in tune and with phrasing and expression slowly developing. They are not yet secure with singing confidently in a round and have not learnt to sing in parts either in the choir or in lessons. Although there is a weekly hymn practice for all pupils in Year 3 to Year 6, the hymns they learn are not sung regularly enough in assemblies. Although pupils now have more opportunities to listen to more recorded music, the pupils in Year 6 find it difficult to discuss their own musical preferences or experiences, indicating that appraisal skills are weak. In discussion with them they have little recall of the music they have heard or the composers who have written it. This was a weakness at the last inspection that has still not been addressed sufficiently.
129. It is not possible to judge the overall quality of teaching in the school because only one lesson was observed in Year 2. This lesson was judged to be good. The pupils in the choir and recorder clubs are receiving appropriate levels of support from the teachers to help them to improve their singing and playing. In the good lesson observed and in other related musical activities through the school, the teachers keep interest levels high through the good pace of the lesson, improved resources and a comprehensive scheme of work which is proving beneficial for the less confident teachers in the school. It is clear from talking to pupils in Year 6 that there are some gaps in their knowledge and understanding of the different elements of music but these are now being addressed with more time for lessons and improved planning from the scheme of work. Satisfactory links are beginning to be made with other subjects and, in the good lesson in Year 2, the key skills of English were very well promoted when the teacher successfully explored the word patterns in different songs and the sounds they made. Recorded music too is used effectively at the beginning of teaching sessions to establish a positive and calming atmosphere in which to work.
130. The co-ordinator is providing satisfactory levels of leadership and management in the school. A new co-ordinator will be taking over the role shortly. The monitoring and evaluation of the subject are satisfactory with opportunities made to talk to pupils, examine teachers' planning and observe the teaching in a few classes. This has given the co-ordinator an overview of the current provision in the school. A more focused



action plan is now needed to help the new co-ordinator to identify clearly the strengths and areas for further development and to plan the next steps for improvement. Assessment procedures have only recently been introduced and are not effective yet in guiding the teaching and planning. The generally good profile of music around the school is having a positive impact on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, but more needs to be done to improve the contribution that music makes to school assemblies.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

131. Attainment in physical education is in line with national expectations by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Good progress has been made since the previous inspection. The appointment of a co-ordinator with very good skills in physical education is enabling all staff to receive appropriate guidance on monitoring the pupils' learning and ensuring skills develop throughout the school. In addition, the issue regarding poor quality of resources identified in the last inspection has been addressed and there are sufficient for all aspects of the subject to be covered satisfactorily. The physical education lessons observed were gymnastics and athletics. Discussions with the co-ordinator, teachers and pupils and a scrutiny of teachers' planning indicate that the school provides a balanced programme of physical education, which meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. Pupils learn to play games, participate in athletics and gymnastic activities and respond to music through dance. All pupils in Year 3, Year 4 and Year 5 have swimming lessons at the local pool and most Year 6 pupils can swim at least 25 metres by the time they leave the school at the age of eleven.
132. Pupils of all abilities make satisfactory progress overall. By the end of Year 2, the pupils understand the need to warm up and understand the effect exercise has on their body. They travel around the hall, demonstrating satisfactory control of their body, stopping, and starting when instructed to do so by the teacher. The pupils learn how to put a number of movements together to form a sequence, for example, travelling, jumping, landing and then rolling, and they demonstrate a satisfactory level of skill when doing this. Whilst most pupils carry out forward rolls satisfactorily, a small number lack sufficient control, not tucking in their heads when executing the movement.
133. Pupils in Year 5 demonstrate satisfactory running, jumping, hurdling and throwing skills. During the inspection they were observed undertaking these activities, and showed a keen interest in what they were doing. The pupils record their performances through measuring and timing and are pleased when they improve upon their previous best. Although the less confident and skilful pupils do not perform as well as their peers, the activity provides them with the opportunity to improve upon their skills.
134. Teaching is satisfactory. Teachers plan their lessons thoroughly. They have clear learning objectives and appropriate expectations, and give precise instructions to ensure the safety of the pupils when using apparatus and equipment. Teachers manage their lessons well and a very good standard of behaviour is maintained. Regular use of the pupils to demonstrate and develop learning points is a good feature of the lessons.
135. The attitudes displayed by pupils taking part in physical activities are very good throughout the school. A similar picture emerges in terms of behaviour. The great majority of pupils enjoy taking part in physical education lessons. They listen attentively to instructions and behave well. The enjoyment is often visible on pupils' faces and many are willing to take on board advice that is given by teachers to help improve their level of performance. The younger pupils get ready for lessons quickly, and change

after the lesson in a calm and sensible manner. This ensures lessons start punctually and no time is wasted.

136. The school makes very effective use of specialists to assist with a range of physical activities. Staff from the local secondary school teach dance and pupils in Year 3 to Year 6 visit the local leisure centre for sport activity days. A coach from Everton Football club visits to provide tuition for a large number of boys and girls.