

INSPECTION REPORT

SPRINGWOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Liverpool

LEA area: Liverpool

Unique reference number: 104545

Headteacher: Mr P A Daniels

Reporting inspector: Frances Forrester
11590

Dates of inspection: 7 – 10 July 2003

Inspection number: 246384

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior school

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Danefield Road
Liverpool

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs E A Mooney

Date of previous inspection: 9 March 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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11590	Frances Forrester	Registered inspector	English as an additional language Foundation stage curriculum Information, communication technology	The characteristics and effectiveness of the school The school's results and pupils' achievements How well the school is led and managed
9952	Lillian Brock	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development Pupils' welfare, health and safety Partnership with parents and carers
15015	Mike Wehrmeyer	Team inspector	Science Art and design Design and technology French	
2200	Jim Stirrup	Team inspector	Geography History Physical Education Educational Inclusion	
22452	Mary Farman	Team inspector	English Music Special educational needs provision	
20086	David Speakman	Team inspector	Mathematics Religious education	Quality and range of opportunities for learning

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school has 266 pupils, 126 boys and 115 girls. This includes 51 children in the nursery who attend either full or part-time. The school is situated in a disadvantaged area of Liverpool. The numbers on roll have fallen over the last few years. The present junior and infant school was opened in 1979 as a result of the amalgamation of junior and infant schools. It will amalgamate with a local special school for disabled pupils in September 2003. Most pupils live in or around the immediate locality. The school is slightly larger than most primary schools. Other important information is that:

- 94 pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is well above average.
- 74 pupils have special learning needs, which is above average and seven pupils have educational statements of provision.
- 7 pupils are learning English as an additional language, of whom 6 are at an early stage. This is low. Home languages are Chinese, Bengali, Arabic and Urdu.
- When the children start school in the nursery or reception class, they have had little or no pre-school education and low attainment.
- There are slightly more boys than girls and gender imbalances in Years 3, 5 and 6.
- The school has Investors in People status as well as two achievement awards.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very effective school with excellent features. The outstanding leadership of the headteacher is the driving force behind the school's improving performance. Pupils achieve well. By the time they leave school, most reach or surpass the standards that are expected nationally. The school is successfully managed and it provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- The standards of reading are very good.
- The quality of teaching in Years 1 – 6 is very good; staff have an excellent commitment to school improvement and capacity to succeed.
- The school's procedures for monitoring the quality of teaching are excellent, successfully ensuring pupils have very good learning opportunities.
- Pupils are very enthusiastic and they readily show initiative and take responsibility; they support each other and relationships are very good.

What could be improved

- The learning opportunities in the nursery and reception class could be better, and the outside play activities and equipment are limited.
- Some pupils do not attend school regularly despite the school's successful initiatives for rewarding classes when there is a 100% attendance.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Very successful improvements have been made since 1998. The leadership and management, the quality of teaching and the role of teachers with responsibility for a subject, have been much improved. This has ensured standards in Years 3 – 6 are also improved. Governors are effective and they have a clear action plan for further improvement. The special educational needs provision is more effective and now very good. Pupils have better computer skills and their attitudes, which were good, are even better. Spiritual, moral and social development has been enhanced and is now very good. The way that the school cares for its pupils is even better and is now very good. The learning opportunities have been improved, as has the range of additional activities after school.

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	20001	2002	2002	
English	E	C	E	C	<i>well above average</i> A
Mathematics	D	C	E	E	<i>above average</i> B
Science	D	B	E	C	<i>Average</i> C
					<i>below average</i> D
					<i>well below average</i> E

In the national tests last year, pupils achieved standards by the end of Year 6 that were well below average in English, mathematics and science. You can see in the table above that, when the results in 2002 are compared with schools that serve communities with similar numbers of pupils with free school meals, results were average in English and science, and well below average in mathematics. These results were disappointing and a direct result of several changes of teachers which disrupted pupils' education in one Year 6 class. The results this year suggest that most pupils will attain the standards expected nationally, and some will reach the higher standard of Level 5. The school's results vary slightly each year because classes differ. The strong teaching in Year 6 is having a very positive impact on the school's performance. Inspectors found no evidence of any groups missing out. Boys and girls have similar standards, and pupils with special learning needs make good progress. The very few pupils who speak English as an additional language are suitably supported. Most achieve their potential, becoming reasonably fluent speakers of English. The school has agreed realistic targets for future years, and it has the capability to achieve them. Inspectors judged the standards in Year 5, and it is clear that the school is on course to increase the number of pupils who reach Level 5 each year. Pupils in Year 2 attained average results in the 2002 national tests in reading, writing and in mathematics. When these results are compared with similar schools, they are well above average. Inspectors found good standards in religious education and in information communication technology in Years 3 - 6. Throughout the school, pupils attain in line with national expectations in other subjects. In the case of music and geography in Years 1 and 2, there was insufficient evidence during the inspection to judge attainment. The reception children also achieve appropriately, and they make suitable progress in their learning. When they move to Year 1, they have attained the standards expected nationally for this age group, except in writing.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are very interested in their work, and they willingly contribute imaginative ideas. They are very well motivated.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. The school has very good procedures for monitoring pupils' behaviour. Pupils behave well in class and they are polite and helpful to visitors. There is no evidence of any bullying or harassment at playtime.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils have strong relationships with their teachers, and this successfully impacts on their personal development.
Attendance	Just below the national average. The school is working hard to promote good attendance, but figures show that there are still too many pupils who have gaps in their education because they are absent.

Pupils' great enthusiasm for school, their good behaviour and their very positive personal development, are very positive strengths and a contributory factor in the school's popularity.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The very good quality of the teaching in Years 1 - 6 has a significant impact on learning. Half of the lessons observed were very good or excellent. In English and mathematics, the teaching is very good. In these strong lessons, the teachers have high expectations of their class. They skilfully link work with different subjects, and this makes the topic more interesting for pupils of all abilities. In information and communication technology, music and geography it was not possible to judge the quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2. However, the quality of teaching in most subjects is a great strength. When the teaching is very good, pupils are given work that stretches them and challenges them to think hard. Gifted and talented pupils are identified throughout the school, and they are given good support and extension activities that challenge them. The lessons that were only satisfactory lacked pace and challenge. In these lessons, the teacher was unable to motivate the whole class because the topic was not presented in an interesting way. Consequently, a very few pupils underachieved.

In the nursery and reception classes, the provision is only satisfactory. One good lesson was observed. The teacher had an imaginative approach to reinforcing children's understanding of mathematical shapes. However, the resources and outside play space are limited, and this means the range of activities does not enhance all aspects of learning. The quality of planning and evaluation of learning is out of date and not matched to national guidelines for this age group.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. The school provides an imaginative range of learning opportunities and additional activities. The nursery and reception classes provide a suitably wide range of learning opportunities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Pupils with learning difficulties are successfully supported and they make progress commensurate with their individual ability.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The school gives appropriate support to pupils learning English as an additional language.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. The school makes very good provision for pupils' personal development. Spiritual development is excellent. Moral and social development are very good. Cultural development is good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good. The school demonstrates that pupils are truly valued at all times.

There are very good links with parents. There are no weaknesses in the curricular and other opportunities that are offered to pupils, and the school meets all legal requirements.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher has a strong vision for his school. His leadership is outstanding. He and his deputy work very well together to promote very good quality teaching.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors are effective and they fulfil their legal responsibilities well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The action taken to meet the school's targets is very good.
The strategic use of resources	The school uses its resources very well and it has a very good regard for best value.

Teachers and support staff are very successfully matched to the curriculum, and resources are good. The accommodation is shabby because a new school is about to be built. The strong leadership and management are having a very positive impact on the quality of education provided. There are no weaknesses in the leadership and management.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reading is a priority; • pupils are making good progress and working hard; • parents are kept well informed; • the leadership and management; • the school is helping pupils to be mature and responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the classes with mixed age groups; • some parents felt there could be more additional activities.

Parents hold the school in high regard. The inspection team agrees with all the strengths parents identified. They heard pupils read, and were impressed with their enthusiasm for books. The school has tried hard to manage the mixed age groups in Years 4 and 5 by teaching the lower attainers in a separate smaller group. This is working well. Parents should be reassured that inspectors judged the school's additional activities to be very good.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

- 1 In the national tests in 2002, pupils achieved standards by the end of Year 6 that were well below average in English, mathematics and science. When the results in 2002 are compared with schools that serve communities in similarly disadvantaged circumstances, the results were average in English and science, and well below average in mathematics. These results were disappointing and a direct result of teacher absence and several changes of teacher which disrupted pupils' education in one Year 6 class. The school has agreed suitable targets for its performance in national tests. The provisional results for 2003 suggest that, in English, the school will meet its targets although it is presently appealing to the marking authority because several pupils missed Level 4¹ by only one mark. Fourteen pupils will reach the higher standard of Level 5. In mathematics, the provisional results show fewer pupils reaching Level 4, lower than in English, but nine pupils will attain Level 5. The school's results vary slightly each year because classes differ. The overall trends in performance differ in English, mathematics and science. For instance, in 2002, fewer girls attained Level 4 in mathematics than in English and science. Inspectors noted the observed strong teaching in Year 6, and judge that this is having a very positive impact, although this has not yet impacted on the school's overall performance.
- 2 Inspectors found no evidence of any groups missing out. The school has rigorous systems in place to check no pupil is at risk of falling behind other pupils. Gifted and talented pupils are identified and given extension activities, which challenge them well. During the inspection, boys and girls had similar standards, although in recent years, there have been some differences in boys' and girls' performance in Year 6. Pupils with special learning needs make good progress. The very few pupils who speak English as an additional language are suitably supported. Most achieve their potential, becoming reasonably fluent speakers of English. The school has agreed realistic targets for future years, and it has the capability to achieve them.
- 3 Inspectors judged the standards in Year 5, and it is clear that the school is on course to increase the number of pupils who reach Level 5 each year. Already, about a quarter of the pupils are attaining Level 5 in English and mathematics. The very good impact of the literacy and numeracy strategies are clearly making a great impact on pupils' performance.
- 4 Pupils in Year 2 attained average results in the 2002 national tests in reading, writing and in mathematics. When these results are compared with similar schools, they are well above average. The provisional results for 2003 show that almost a fifth of Year 2 pupils attained the higher Level 3, in reading and mathematics. However, these results also indicate that writing standards are lower than in reading and mathematics.
- 5 Inspectors found good standards in religious education and in information and communication technology in Years 3 - 6. Throughout the school, pupils attain in line with national expectations in art, design and technology, history and physical education. The standards in religious education are in line with the requirements for the locally agreed syllabus by the end of Year 2, and good by the end of Year 6. In the case of

¹ National Curriculum Levels are stages of learning. Pupils are expected to cover each level over a period of two years. Average pupils in Year 2 attain Level 2 and, in Year 6, Level 4.

music and geography in Years 1 and 2, there was insufficient evidence during the inspection to judge attainment, but by the end of Year 6, standards are in line with national expectations for the age group.

- 6 The nursery and reception children also achieve appropriately, and they make suitable progress in their learning. When they move to Year 1, they have made good progress in personal, emotional and creative development, and achieved well. They attain the standards expected nationally for this age group in all areas of learning except writing. When non-English speaking children are first admitted, members of staff do their best to give suitable support. However, the school does not use the local education authority specialist language support service. This means the teachers do not have access to bilingual assistants who can assess children's knowledge and understanding in their mother tongue. The teachers have no means of formally assessing the children's language acquisition, which impedes the progress they make in language and literacy.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

- 7 Most children play well and settle to their daily routines in the nursery and reception class. They generally become independent, although some tend to wander from one activity to another. By the end of their year in the nursery, they confidently choose from the activities on offer and apply themselves appropriately to the chosen task. For instance, some enjoy working on the class computer while others prefer to spend time playing with other children and pretending they are in a veterinary surgery. In both the nursery and the reception class, children have good behaviour. Only a few find it difficult to socialise with others. By the time they leave the reception class, the children work and play well together and they understand what their teachers expect of them.
- 8 Pupils' attitudes and personal development through Years 1 – 6, are very good, and their behaviour is good. Many of the strengths in these areas of school life have been maintained and in some instances built upon since the time of the previous inspection. Pupils have very good attitudes to school, and this contributes significantly to their learning and to the progress that pupils of all abilities make. Pupils thoroughly enjoy coming to school and are keen to learn. They are interested and involved in their work, and they collaborate very well in pairs and groups. They contribute well to class discussion, and this is reflected in pupils' enthusiasm for activities and lessons across the curriculum. Pupils listen well to their teachers and one another, and instructions are followed quickly and quietly. When presented with challenging and stimulating questions, pupils offer thoughtful replies, as seen in a Year 3 literacy lesson when pupils discussed the feelings and emotions of the characters in poems about the family.
- 9 Pupils' behaviour is good, and in some lessons, it is very good. The pupils are proud of their school and take good care of it. Adults in school are very good role models. They speak to pupils with courtesy, and this promotes mutual respect. The behaviour of pupils during a Key Stage 2 assembly was good when pupils sang the School Rule song: "This is an important matter, how we should behave at school". They entered the hall in a respectful manner and waited patiently for others to arrive. In the playground and around the school, pupils are friendly and polite to one another and to adults. Respect for all is a theme that runs through all aspects of school life. No bullying or oppressive behaviour was seen during the inspection, and pupils state that they have no concerns in this respect. There have been no recent exclusions.
- 10 Relationships throughout the school are very good and make a significant contribution to pupils' progress and to the pleasant atmosphere for learning. The PALs project (Peace at Lunchtime) is having a positive effect on pupils' social skills, and

their self-esteem and self-confidence are raised during a range of activities. The Quiet Room provides a haven of peace and tranquillity when pupils are under stress for any reason. Many pupils have benefited from the opportunity to talk with an adult about their worries and concerns, or participate in the range of therapies available. Pupils with special educational needs appreciate the very good levels of support they receive from teachers, other adults and from their classmates.

- 11 Pupils' personal development is very good. The school council is a shining example of a group of pupils making decisions that will enhance the lives of their fellow pupils. Due to the efforts of the council, the playground now has markings and there is a range of playtime resources available, as well as a "Buddy Bench". The council is proud of its involvement in the Liverpool Children's Parliament, where a range of issues were discussed that could influence the lives of young people in Liverpool. The playground "Buddies" help pupils who are feeling lonely or left out, and older pupils support younger ones in paired reading sessions. Personal and social education lessons are a prime mover in the development of personal skills, as seen when Year 2 pupils explored the meaning of 'friendship and loyalty'.
- 12 Attendance is now just below the national average² for primary schools at 93.6 per cent. Last year, figures were well below average so this is a great improvement. Unauthorised absence is low which is better than a lot of schools in similar locations. Pupils are absent for a variety of reasons but often, poor health or difficult social circumstances accounts for regular gaps in pupils' education. Most pupils arrive punctually because they like school and want to attend.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

- 13 Teaching and learning are very good. The teaching was judged to be good in the last inspection, so this is an improvement. Of 51 lessons or parts of lessons observed, half of those observed in Years 1 - 6 were very good or excellent because:
 - teachers have outstanding expectations of the pupils;
 - teachers have very good relationships with their classes;
 - the class management is excellent;
 - teachers successfully match lesson activities to pupils' individual abilities;
 - topics are made interesting, which effectively captures pupils' attention;
 - pupils are very involved in their school and eager to learn;
 - their intellectual, physical and creative effort is excellent.
- 14 Of the remaining lessons, over a third of the total lessons were good and five lessons in the main school were satisfactory. The school has excellent procedures in place for monitoring teaching. Regular classroom observations now take place as part of the school improvement plan. In addition, pupils' books are carefully scrutinised to check that work is tidily set out and appropriately marked. These excellent procedures help to ensure pupils achieve well and that they are successfully motivated to work hard and do their best. Strong teaching successfully promotes all pupils' learning, and helps them to acquire a good knowledge and understanding. There is no evidence of any groups missing out. The lessons are made interesting, and this results in very good attitudes and good behaviour. For instance, in one outstanding example of a most successful science lesson, pupils presented the results of a scientific forensic investigation in different ways. One talented group staged an impromptu court case, which demonstrated the outcomes of testing evidence.

² The rate of attendance nationally is 94%

- 15 The quality of teaching and learning for children in the nursery and reception class is satisfactory. There was one session where teaching was good. Children learn appropriately, and any that struggle are given extra help and support. There is a suitable balance between structured and free play activities, which allows the children to be increasingly independent. In the nursery, the staff know their children well and there are good relationships. The temporary reception teacher, who was only recently appointed, has already built a warm relationship with the class. Consequently, the children are happily adapting to the new routines. In both classes, the children have appropriate attitudes to learning. Children's social and emotional development is good, and their creative development is also good. There is a strong emphasis on promoting children's speaking and listening skills, because many of the children have very immature language when they first start school. Other areas of learning are satisfactory. The management of children overall is good, and all teachers work closely with the teaching assistants to provide caring support and help to stimulate children's learning. There are limitations in the way outside play is managed, because there are no opportunities for children to move spontaneously in and out of the classroom.
- 16 In the nursery and reception classes, the provision is satisfactory. However, the quality of the planning is unsatisfactory because it is not based on the nationally agreed Early Learning Goals³. There are plans to introduce a new planning format in September, when these two classes are merging. The new coordinator for the Foundation Stage is introducing plans that are carefully matched to the recommended Early Learning Goals. The teachers' evaluations are presently descriptions of the activities, rather than focusing on the effectiveness of children learning. There are no individual comments on what needs to be done next. The teachers keep detailed records of the children's attainment and a profile of examples of children's work. However, the children's profiles include published worksheets that they have scribbled over, and this does not demonstrate to parents how children have progressed.
- 17 The play resources are satisfactory in the classrooms, but there are shortcomings in outside play. Staff do their best and try to set up play areas such as a garage. The nursery staff and the children painted boxes that represented petrol pumps, and children had clipboards so that they could pretend to write down their mechanical jobs. However, although this makes the children use their imagination, the general appearance lacks excitement for young children. In the one good session, the teacher used an imaginative approach to reinforcing children's understanding of mathematical shapes. The children were given paper ribbons to twirl in the air to make different shapes. On returning to their classroom, the teacher continued to reinforce their understanding and she encouraged the children to draw shapes including spirals on the classroom flip-over white board.
- 18 In English, teachers always ensure the basic skills are very well taught. In mathematics the teaching is good although there were examples of very good and excellent lessons observed during the inspection. Teachers have a very good knowledge of the national strategies. For instance in an excellent English lesson, the teacher constantly probed the pupils' knowledge to extend their learning by skilful questioning. This led to pupils' achieving well so that they attained above average skills. The teaching in science and French is very good and a strength. In religious education and physical education, the teaching is consistently good. The few lessons covering different subjects that were only satisfactory lacked pace and challenge. In these lessons, the teacher was unable to motivate the whole class because the topic was not presented in an interesting way, and a few pupils underachieved.

³ Early Learning Goals are nationally agreed areas of learning for the nursery and Reception children.

- 19 Throughout the school, teachers have clear learning objectives for their lessons. They group their pupils carefully, vary their activities and consider the best methods to use. They make good use of the school's resources. They carefully provide equal opportunities, and endeavour to include all pupils in class discussions by wording questions carefully. The lessons proceed at a good pace, which keeps pupils interested and well motivated. More challenging work is provided for the higher attainers. The school identifies gifted and talented pupils so that teachers can set additional extension work for these pupils.
- 20 Very good support is given to pupils with special learning needs, both in lessons and in small group or individual activities. The headteacher is presently responsible for special educational needs provision, and he ensures that very detailed records are kept so that he can successfully monitor pupils' progress. Teaching is sympathetic and in most cases challenging, to ensure that pupils learn successfully and make good progress. Teachers give regular homework which parents value. The older classes have a particularly good range of additional work.

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

- 21 Overall, the quality and range of learning opportunities for children in the nursery and reception class are satisfactory. The requirements for this age group have changed significantly since the last inspection, and consequently the very good judgement in 1998 is no longer the case and the provision is now only satisfactory. The school's planning for the children takes little account of the six areas of learning agreed nationally for the Foundation Stage⁴. Although there are adequate resources in classes, there are insufficient learning opportunities provided in the play equipment for outside play.
- 22 The school's curriculum meets all legal requirements. It covers the full National Curriculum and the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. The quality and range of learning opportunities are very good for all pupils in Years 1 to 6. This reflects an improvement for these pupils since the previous inspection where the curriculum was good for all ages. The curriculum for older pupils is well balanced and relevant to their learning needs. The school has won national awards, such as the Basic Skills Award for its quality work in literacy and numeracy skills and a Quality in Study Support award. These awards reflect the quality of learning opportunities made available by the school.
- 23 Planning across the school is very good and ensures that lessons systematically develop knowledge and skills in all subjects. Subjects are linked together through planned common themes and topics. Information and communication technology is used throughout classes to support other subjects, including literacy and numeracy. The curriculum supports a very good breadth of study in the national literacy and numeracy strategies. All subjects have appropriate policies and good schemes of work. Over the year, an appropriate amount of time is given to each subject of the curriculum. Because some classes are of mixed age, curriculum planning is organised so that all pupils, in whatever teaching arrangement, have full entitlement to a progressively developed range of learning opportunities. Termly curriculum planning is very effective, including detailed work for pupils of different abilities. The planning contains appropriate opportunities for assessment of progress and standards, which are used well and are

⁴ The Foundation Stage is the official name given to the nursery and Reception classes.

effective. Basic skills in information and communication technology (ICT) are used to support work in a range of other subjects.

- 24 The effectiveness of the school's strategies for teaching literacy is very good, and many opportunities are provided for pupils to speak, listen, read and write in a range of situations, for instance, in religious education and personal, social and health education. Opportunities for writing at length are good, and are included in subjects other than English. Arrangements for planning, teaching and practising numeracy skills are very good. Pupils have many opportunities to use and develop their skills in a good range of other subjects.
- 25 The school is very aware of the needs of the wide range of ability for which they cater. In addition to the very good support for pupils with special educational needs and pupils with English as an additional language, those who are gifted or talented in aspects of their work also receive very good support. There is a Saturday morning school for those who are gifted mathematicians. The Education Action Zone supports a Summer School for gifted and talented pupils, and teachers are aware of these pupils in their classes and make good provision for them in lessons.
- 26 Enrichment of the curriculum is very good, and effectively strengthens the quality of learning opportunities. A good range of visits and visitors supports pupils' education well. Pupils visit the cathedrals in Liverpool and various art galleries, such as the Lowry, as part of their studies. Special themed events add richness to the curriculum. There is an Arts Week, when pupils take part in activities focused on art, drama and music. A Maths Enterprise Day is becoming a popular annual event, when each class embarks upon an activity to make profit out of a base £25. Events of this nature strongly support pupils' personal development. The Education Action Zone provides a significant level of support for these and many other activities such as after school sport activities.
- 27 The arrangements for pupils' personal, social and health education are good. There is a very good scheme of work in place for each year group which supports the progressive development of personal skills and which enables the school to monitor learning from one year to the next. Pupils develop a good understanding of what being a member of a community means. Sex education and the development of awareness of the danger of the misuse of drugs and medicines prepare pupils well for future life. Key messages are reinforced in science and health education work.
- 28 Provision for the pupils' personal development is very good. Very good provision is made for their moral and social development, good provision for their cultural development and excellent provision for their spiritual development. Central to the work in the school is the way it leads pupils towards a clear set of values based on its aims. Very good relationships, based on caring for all individuals equally, are at the heart of this provision. The pupils are taught to value themselves and each other, and to understand and follow the rules that govern the school community. Pupils are involved in drawing up the rules for their classes, having to consider the opinions of others, seeing and evaluating different points of view. The school helps them to understand and aim towards high standards of behaviour and positive attitudes and relationships. All understand right and wrong, and do their best to behave well and care for each other. The school council makes a very positive contribution to the work of the school. Pupils on the council are proud to serve, and feel that their voices are listened to and acted upon. Many of the suggestions they have made, such as a Buddy Bench, Tuck Shop and playground markings, are now in place.

- 29 Assemblies and class discussions, in personal, social and health education and religious education for example, place ideas into a spiritual context. Opportunities are taken to encourage pupils to appreciate the wonders of the natural and man-made world, such as growing seeds and bulbs, and in the flowerbeds surrounding the playground areas. In literacy, art and design and music, pupils have very good opportunities to develop aesthetic appreciation and to be thoughtful. Poetry in Year 5 illustrates the level of spirituality in the pupils' thoughts. In the poem 'On The Way To War', one pupil writes 'People are wounded, screaming no more.' The pupil goes on to explore feelings of fear, regret and sorrow felt by the soldiers. Expressive art work on display in classrooms, inspired by the music 'Mars', reflects the spiritual feelings created by listening to the music. Achievement is celebrated at all levels, from an impressive display of certificates and sports trophies representing whole school achievement, to the celebration of individual achievement in assemblies. This makes pupils proud, not only of themselves, but of their school and the achievement of others.
- 30 The provision for pupils' cultural development includes not only the visits and visitors above but also a range of stories, poetry, art and music from around the world that they are introduced to in lessons. The school also prepares the pupils well for life in a more multicultural society than that represented by their immediate area, for example by a celebration of Chinese New Year, a study of Islam, the Hindu custom of Diwali and Buddhism. The school is keen to be actively involved in the City of Liverpool's celebrations at being named European City of Culture. For instance it has already designed a large poster, which was displayed in the docks at a recent Tall Ships Race.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

- 31 This is a very caring and supportive school where the welfare and well being of pupils are afforded a high status. The procedures for child protection and for promoting pupils' personal development are very good, and there are good procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance.
- 32 The school provides a safe and caring environment where all are equally valued. Pupils are well supported by the very good relationships that exist, and they feel confident and happy during their time at school. All adults know pupils very well, and are sensitive to their particular needs and difficulties. The school keeps a detailed register of gifted and talented pupils. Pupils with special educational needs are very well cared for and supported.
- 33 Children in the nursery and reception class are well cared for, and it is evident that most feel happily at ease and confident with the staff. Assessment and record keeping procedures are satisfactory, but there is limited emphasis on the areas of learning. On-going observations are used to monitor the children's progress against the 'Stepping Stones'⁵. However, there is very little evaluation taking place to highlight areas of learning requiring further development.
- 34 The headteacher leads by example and, with good support from staff, has created a safe school where all pupils are valued and very well cared for. The building is clean and well looked after by the temporary site manager. Through the Private Finance Initiative, routine safety checks are carried out by the contractor, and the school managers and the site manager are vigilant on a daily basis. There are sufficient qualified first-aiders

⁵ Stepping Stones are the steps in learning that nursery and Reception children take as part of the nationally agreed areas of learning for this age group. They cover activities that promote their personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, creative and physical development and their knowledge and understanding of the world.

on hand to deal with minor injuries, which are meticulously recorded. In the absence of a child protection coordinator, the headteacher and the child support officer have successfully taken on the responsibility for child protection, and the reporting procedures are working well. There are guidelines for staff to follow if they have a concern. Lunchtime supervisors have received comprehensive training to help them identify and report any concerns they may have.

- 35 There are very good procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour. Pupils value the rewards they receive for good behaviour, for effort, or for simply being kind. The school's high expectations of behaviour, as set out in the school aims and in the behaviour policy, are put into very effective practice in the everyday life of the school. There are very good procedures for eliminating oppressive behaviour, and Year 6 pupils confirmed that these are rarely needed. The PALs initiative and the Quiet Room afford pupils the opportunity to reflect on their actions and consider how these affect others. The child support officer and the learning mentor are having a positive effect on modifying the behaviour of some pupils.
- 36 There are good procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance, which have positively impacted on the school's figures. Attendance in 2001-2 was well below the national average whilst, the present figures are only marginally below the national average. Registers are checked daily, and parents contacted for explanation of any unauthorised absences. The school intends to seek new ways of encouraging the parents of some children to ensure that their children attend school regularly.
- 37 There are very good procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development. The school is increasingly involving pupils in setting targets for their own achievement. Teachers report regularly to parents on how well pupils are developing personally as well as academically.
- 38 The procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are very good. Detailed information is collected from statutory and optional tests, and individual pupil and cohort performance is carefully tracked, particularly in numeracy and literacy. This careful analysis of assessment data is central to the drive towards raising standards in these subjects. A particular strength in English, mathematics and science has been the use of this information to set new school targets and to assist in developing and planning the curriculum. The very good assessment practice in English, mathematics and science is now being used as a model for the assessment of the foundation subjects.
- 39 Very good procedures are in place for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic progress. The school has introduced a computerised system to record and monitor individual achievement and progress for each cohort of pupils. This data is being used to recognise what pupils can do, and to set statistical targets for future improvement. This is well developed in English, mathematics and science, and provides a clear picture of what pupils know, understand and can do. Information is gathered by teachers and is used to predict potential National Curriculum levels by the end of Year 6, and to set group and individual targets for all pupils. Achievement is successfully monitored through planning, marking and collectively agreeing standards across subjects and year groups.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

- 40 Parents view the school as a very good school and are appreciative of the quality of the education it provides for their children. There are very good and effective links with parents, who receive a very good range of quality information from the school. No major concerns were identified either by parents who attended the meeting with the registered inspector or by those who returned the questionnaires. Evidence from the inspection supports their positive views. A small number of parents were not happy about the range of extra curricular activities, but inspection findings are that these are very good.
- 41 The nursery staff have established a good relationship with parents. Parents are offered a good induction programme. There are assessment meetings, and the parents of children in the Foundation Stage are given an Early Years Calendar and good advice on how to help their children with their learning. The staff ensure they maintain a profile of examples of children's work which parents value as the first steps in children's learning. This profile includes a tiny handprint, which children make during their first weeks in school. The staff in the nursery and reception class ensure they are welcoming as parents bring their children to school. This helps the children to feel secure and happy in their learning environment.
- 42 There are very effective links with parents, who are supportive of the school. The contribution of parents to supporting the work of the school and their children's educational and personal development is good. The partnership between the school and parents adds much to the community and family ethos of the school, and this strengthens the idea of school partnership and the benefits such partnership brings. For example, the Home/School Association is an active group of parents who organise social and fund-raising events to enhance children's learning.
- 43 The contribution of parents to children's learning at home and school is good. A particular strength is the ongoing dialogue between the school and parents of children who have special educational needs. Parents are invited to help in school, and a small number do so on a regular basis. In return, the school offers the opportunity for parents to pursue qualifications. Most parents support their children with homework. The school has arranged meetings and workshops for parents, but these have not been well attended. A recent successful workshop for "Dads and Lads" has shown the school the way to involve parents in their children's learning. A parents' room is provided for parents to meet together for training courses or simply for socialising. The school invites parents' views through an annual questionnaire, and their suggestions and comments are included in the school improvement plan. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in setting the targets in their children's individual education plans.
- 44 The school provides very good quality information for parents. Parents receive a summary of the school improvement plan and copies of the termly plans in order to keep them up to date with what their children are learning. In addition to the two opportunities each year for formal consultation with parents, the school offers parents of children in Years 2, 4 and 6 target-setting meetings, and these are attended by approximately 90 per cent of parents. The prospectus is a helpful and "parent-friendly" document which informs parents about school routines and activities in which their children are involved. Reports to parents on their children's progress are of good quality, and show that teachers know children well. Targets for future development are identified in the reports and discussed with parents. Parents spoken to during the inspection confirm their appreciation of the school newsletter and a range of leaflets on, for example, home reading, behaviour, equal opportunities and special educational needs.

- 45 All these good initiatives give parents a valuable insight into the work of the school, and enable them to play a more supportive role in the educational development of their children.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

- 46 The outstanding leadership of the headteacher is the driving force for promoting successful teaching and improving standards of work throughout the school. The last inspection made a similar judgement. The headteacher has a firm belief in the principles of good quality education for all pupils regardless of need. He has a very good relationship with the deputy headteacher and other members of the senior management team. They have a very strong working relationship and a very clear commitment to school improvement. The community spirit and especially the care that all staff provide for pupils are very good. There is mutual respect, a commitment to educational inclusion and an effective partnership between the school and the pupils' parents. The headteacher knows the local community very well, and this is most successfully reflected in the ethos of the school, particularly just as it is about to amalgamate with a local special school.
- 47 The headteacher uses effective delegation to manage change. Members of teaching staff with subject responsibilities manage their roles very well. This is most apparent in the improved performance in ICT and in the school's very good use of modern technology. The teachers have laptop computers, which have enhanced their confidence and shown them the versatility of the Internet. The very good coordination of English, mathematics and science is having a significant impact on pupils' performance. This is due to rigorous procedures for monitoring pupils' progress.
- 48 The headteacher keeps the school governors well informed. The governing body is enthusiastic about its role in school, and the governors value the headteacher's leadership. There are good procedures in place for keeping governors very well informed about the school's progress and the improvements made. The governors successfully fulfil their legal responsibilities. In the school's last inspection their effectiveness was criticised, but this did not disillusion them. They now have a good action plan, which shows they are not complacent. The governors have clear procedures and a good committee structure. All the key issues from the last inspection have been fully and successfully addressed.
- 49 The school improvement plan is very clear. In the last inspection the school development plan had weaknesses. This has been successfully rectified. Detailed, concise information is given on the action taken to meet the school's targets, time scales and the person with responsibility for evaluating the outcome. The procedures for tracking pupils' progress are particularly rigorous. Clear information is available to ensure staff are knowledgeable about pupils' performance. The improvement to the role of subject managers is very good. They were less effective in the last inspection, and this has been clearly rectified. The coordinators are very enthusiastic about their subjects, and eager to monitor standards and influence school performance. The school also has successful separate coordinators for Years 1 and 2 and Years 3 – 6.
- 50 The school manages its finances very efficiently, which allows it to provide a high level of learning support for its pupils, which is used well. The school has benefited from involvement with the local Education Action Zone, but it receives no additional financial support for the few pupils who are learning English as an additional language.

- 51 The school has a good range of resources although the outside play resources in the nursery and reception class are limited. The school has earmarked some of its fund reserve for improving these when the new building is complete. The accommodation is shabby and rain leaks through the school roof. However, staff make the best of the school accommodation. The school's new buildings are planned for completion in 2004.
- 52 The pupils' results in 2002 were disappointing. However, this was the direct outcome of difficult circumstances in Year 6, following a teacher leaving mid term, resulting in a number of supply teachers being employed. Clear evidence of pupils' attainment in Year 5 shows that the school's performance will be noticeably improved in 2004, as there are already a quarter of Year 5 attaining the higher Level 5 in English and mathematics. From a well below average starting point, pupils achieve well and make good progress. Those who have special learning needs do as well as they can and achieve standards appropriate to their abilities. The school has a significant fund reserve this year, which has been deliberately earmarked to see it through the amalgamation. In previous years, the budget has been managed carefully for the benefit of present pupils in the school. Pupil expenditure is broadly average for a school that serves a disadvantaged community. Taking this into account, the school gives very good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- 53 In order to improve further the school's effectiveness, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

1. Improve the school's provision in the nursery and reception class by:

- ensuring teachers' planning is suitably linked to the nationally agreed Early Learning Goals with evaluations of children's learning and indicating future action to be taken;
- assessing the attainment and language acquisition of children who are learning English as an additional language, preferably using bilingual support;
- improving the outside play by reviewing the planning and organisation of activities and developing the range of play equipment and resources;
- monitoring the quality of teaching and learning, with particular emphasis on the way children are taught to write.

Paragraphs 6,7, 16,17,41, 54 – 62.

2. Work more closely with parents to encourage them to see the importance of pupils attending regularly, in order to improve attendance figures and pupils' learning.

Paragraphs 12,31,36.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	51
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	36

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	4	20	18	9	0	0	0
Percentage	8	39	35	18	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 one percentage point.

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)	26	266
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	94

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	7
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	1	74

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	7

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	18
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	8

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.4
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	8	14	22

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	7	6	7
	Girls	12	13	13
	Total	19	19	20
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	86 (83)	86 (95)	95 (93)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	6	7	7
	Girls	12	12	13
	Total	18	19	20
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	82 (93)	86 (93)	95 (93)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

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	18	23	41

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	14	14
	Girls	15	9	17
	Total	26	23	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	63 (77)	49 (79)	76 (88)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	14	14
	Girls	18	16	17
	Total	28	30	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	72 (77)	73 (88)	76 (88)
	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	227	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	1	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	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	1	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	3	0	0
Chinese	1	0	0
Any other ethnic group	3	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	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)	13
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21
Average class size	27

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	12
Total aggregate hours worked per week	279

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	33
Number of pupils per FTE adult	13

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	5

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	2
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	2

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2002
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	£
Total income	711754
Total expenditure	711592
Expenditure per pupil	2535
Balance brought forward from previous year	105355
Balance carried forward to next year	105517

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	230
Number of questionnaires returned	91

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	65	33	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	69	28	2	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	52	44	2	1	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	44	48	5	1	2
The teaching is good.	65	31	2	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	63	34	1	0	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	74	23	3	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	69	30	1	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	52	43	4	0	1
The school is well led and managed.	57	40	2	0	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	63	36	0	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	45	35	8	0	12

Other issues raised by parents

Parents highly value the staff.

They say the temporary caretaker is excellent.

They recognise the school is doing its best to manage the mixed age groups in Years 4 and 5.

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 The quality of provision for children in the nursery and reception class was judged to be very good in the last inspection. The national requirements for this age group have changed since 1998, and the provision is now only satisfactory. The nursery and reception class are in adjacent rooms with a shared outside play area. The school has suitable admission arrangements, which help to prepare young children for school. Staff work hard to establish a good relationship with parents, and to involve them in their children's learning. By the time that they transfer to the reception class, children have made sound progress in all aspects of their learning. By the time they enter Year 1, the majority of children make suitable progress and they reach the standards expected nationally in personal, social, emotional, communication, mathematical, creative and physical development, and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. However, most children attain lower standards in language and literacy, particularly in writing where their progress is slow.

Personal, social and emotional development

55 Staff make this aspect of learning a priority in both the nursery and reception class. The teaching is at least satisfactory, and often good. All the children make good progress, including those with particular learning needs. They know the class routines and the expectations of staff. For instance, they know not to shout out answers. By the time they leave the reception class, most children achieve standards above those expected for their age. The children achieve well, and this is a direct result of the staff's sensitivity to developing children's confidence. Activities are planned to promote children's independence. For instance in the nursery, the staff plan themes such as a shoe shop or garden centre. The children take turns to be customers, and most are willing to take turns and share. In the reception class, they happily respond to the teacher singing, for instance when she wants them to sit on the carpet. This successfully motivates the children who find it difficult to do as they are told. Children willingly help to tidy up at the end of lessons, and take good care of equipment. They concentrate well, and most work well together in groups and listen to others' comments when they sit together on the carpet. In both the nursery and the reception class, children have good relationships with each other and with adults. Staff are caring and sensitive to the needs of very young children. They ask appropriate questions, and suitably involve themselves with children during activities. The children's spiritual and cultural development is fostered through special celebrations, for instance the Chinese New Year.

Communication, language and literacy

56 All children, including those with special learning needs, are making sound progress. They are likely to achieve the standards expected in communication, but there are weaknesses in language and literacy, and many are insufficiently challenged in writing. In the nursery, the teacher has recorded stories for children to listen to through headphones. They happily sit and listen for sustained periods of time. This helps them to establish an interest in stories and to develop their imagination. In the reception class, children read simple books and make sound progress in reading, but their progress in writing is unsatisfactory. This is because of the way writing is taught. In the nursery, there are lots of opportunities for children to 'mark make'. For example the staff had set up an imaginary filling station outside, and clipboards were used for children to pretend to 'write' down their jobs. By the end of the year in the nursery, most children know

several letters in their name and those who are more able, confidently write their name on their work. However, in the reception class, the staff usually write most script for the children to copy the words underneath. When children can do this reasonably accurately, words are written in dots for the children to join up. As a result, examples of work from even the most able children show they can only write three or four sentences by the end of their reception year. Their handwriting and letter formation is satisfactory, but their ability to write on their own initiative is limited.

- 57 Teaching is satisfactory. Teachers recognise the need to develop speaking and listening skills, and they provide many opportunities for children to talk and answer questions to promote their learning. Nursery staff introduce initial letter sounds, and this is extended in the reception class through appropriate texts that are chosen for interest and suitability for the age of the children. Children are introduced to books very early. In the nursery, the staff read stories and rhymes with expression. Children listen to story tapes, and they are eager to look at books. Children are encouraged to choose books to take home and share with their parents. More able children in the reception classes are able to read with confidence, and they try to apply their knowledge of initial sounds to unknown words in the text.
- 58 The staff try hard to support the very few children who are learning English as an additional language. However, they have no idea how effectively these children speak in their home language. There are no assessment procedures in place for evaluating language acquisition, and the school has not used local education authority bilingual support staff for this purpose. The staff have occasionally used older pupils as translators, but resources are generally very limited. There is also insufficient use of pictures and other visual clues to help children understand.

Mathematical development

- 59 The children, including those with special learning needs, make satisfactory progress. Teaching is satisfactory. Most children have an appropriate understanding of number, and are likely to achieve the Early Learning Goals for mathematics by the end of their time in the reception class. From the nursery onwards, children are encouraged to recognise and use mathematical language. They sing number rhymes and play simple mathematical games. They understand the names of simple shapes, and the main focus of the teaching is developing number recognition. This early work is suitably developed in the reception class, where children identify and understand numbers to 10. The more able have an awareness of larger numbers. For instance in the nursery, they play hopscotch using number squares. In the reception class, children carry out simple addition and subtraction. Work is planned to match the ability of the children in each group. Children explore shapes, and members of staff reinforce this knowledge. In the nursery they use different shaped cutters to make biscuits. When they play in a pretend garden centre, they order materials by length and height. In a good lesson, reception children used paper streamers to draw shapes in the air. After the activity, the teacher checked their understanding, and the children were confidently identifying squares, circles and triangles and spirals. They use simple mathematical vocabulary to describe position in relation to other objects. However, during outside play, there are limited opportunities to promote mathematical development, for several reasons. There are limited resources. There are only two members of nursery staff to supervise 26 children, so one person takes a group of six children outside to work on one activity. Although the staffing ratio meets requirements, it is quite impossible to supervise activities that take place in the classroom at the same time as children play outside. Consequently, outside activities are often arranged for all children to play outside at the same time.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

60 In the nursery, the children's knowledge and understanding of the world is being successfully developed through a variety of activities that draw their attention to the world around them. Teaching is satisfactory, and children are on target to achieve the expected national standards by the end of the reception class. In the nursery, children look at larvae, caterpillars and butterflies. They have an early understanding of healthy eating. They make biscuits and they know the importance of washing their hands. In all classes, children learn about the past, and they look at their own and each other's baby clothes and recognise how they have changed. They do simple experiments such as melting chocolate to observe change. They celebrated Chinese New Year, eating a stir-fry with chopsticks. Visitors enhance this aspect of the school's provision. A good example is a visit by mounted police. Another example was flower arranging during a special creative week. Children visited Liverpool Museum to see the 'Teddy Bear Story'. The children have regular access to a computer. They are confident to use a mouse to draw simple pictures. With help, they change the colours and click on print. They watch a Roamer following programmed instructions. Teachers give the children suitable support on the computer, and children make sound progress. The children in both classes look at the school grounds and observe bulbs growing, flowers and trees. However, limited use is made of the outside play area as an outdoor classroom. In the nursery, the children planted sunflower seeds and other plants, but generally, resources are limited so use of the outside environment for learning is prevented.

Physical development

61 In the nursery, children make satisfactory progress in their physical development during outside play. They learn through playing with other children. For instance, they practise filling containers in the water or sand tray. They steer tricycles accurately, and have an awareness of space. They willingly share and take turns. However, there are limited resources for giving the children the feeling of different sensations such as hanging upside down on a climbing frame. Reception classes have physical education lessons, which include ball skills and running and catching. They make good progress in these lessons. By the time they move to Year 1, they have an appropriate range of physical skills. The quality of teaching is satisfactory, although no outside lessons were fully observed during the inspection. Reception classes make good use of the school grounds in summer time. This helps the children to make good progress in their physical development. For example, they run freely. They enjoy the open air and the freedom to move about without restrictions. The children explore the use of space with an appropriate range of wheeled toys. They have an awareness of body space when they play with the soft play equipment. However, there are few opportunities to see things from a different perspective such as from the top of a climbing frame, in a tunnel or below a box. The nursery organisation makes it impossible for children to move spontaneously between indoor and outdoor environments. Despite this, by the end of the Reception year, most children achieve the Early Learning Goals for physical development.

Creative development

62 Children are on target to exceed the Early Learning Goals for creative development by the end of their time in the reception class. The quality of teaching is satisfactory, and children make sound progress. Activities provided for the children when they enter the nursery ensure that they receive a wide range of experiences that support the development of their creative skills. They handle paintbrushes, scissors and glue sticks

with confidence. They mix dough to make biscuits, and they eagerly explore the texture. Role-play areas are provided in each class. These are changed regularly in both the nursery and reception class to reflect various aspects of life, such as a baby clinic and fruit shop. Children enjoy dressing up as other people and, in the nursery veterinary surgery they have lots of opportunities to use their imagination and to pretend. Children have opportunities to make and play simple percussion instruments and to sing. They also have access to a range of good quality instruments from other cultures. They sing with enthusiasm, particularly in the reception class, where they sing with their teacher. Other good examples of creative activities are looking at the patterns on tyres as part of a topic on transport.

ENGLISH

- 63 By the end of Year 6, most pupils achieve average standards. The implementation of the National Literacy Strategy is very effective in making a positive contribution to the rising trend in standards.
- 64 Pupils attain above average standards in reading. This is an improvement since the previous inspection, when standards in reading were low. The attainment of pupils by the end of Year 2 is similar to that expected for their age. Their achievement in reading is better than in writing. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. The improvements are because of the increased focus on reading and writing. Improvement since the previous inspection is very good because the school has successfully focused on reading and writing. This has had a significant impact on increasing pupils' confidence and reading skills. The effect this focus has had on improving pupils' writing skills is just beginning to be evident in pupils' work. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in relation to their identified needs. There is no significant difference in attainment between boys and girls. All teachers ensure pupils have equal chances to join in class debates and discussions.
- 65 By the end of Year 2, most pupils achieve standards in reading that exceed the expectations for their age. Their speaking and listening skills meet those expected for most pupils of this age. The school is working hard to improve pupils' standards in writing. This is having a positive effect, and the pupils' performance already meets the expected levels for most seven year olds. Not enough pupils, however, achieve the higher levels in their writing skills. Inspection findings show that the older pupils' standards in English meet the expectations for their age. Their reading skills are already higher than those expected for pupils of similar age. They speak fluently, have a good understanding of English and write and spell satisfactorily. This is a very good level of improvement since the previous inspection.
- 66 Most pupils, when they enter Year 1, have below average skills in their ability to speak and use English. They achieve well and make good progress in their learning because of the careful and well-structured teaching. By the time they are seven, many pupils meet the expected standards. They take advantage of ample opportunities to increase their speaking skills through carefully planned discussion sessions. An example of this is when pupils explain what the solar system is: 'The solar system is part of the universe'. The teachers insist on pupils using complete sentences and speaking clearly. The older pupils increase this rate of progress and achieve above average standards in their speaking skills. By Year 6, most pupils speak clearly and discuss strengths and areas for improvement in each other's work. They enjoy debating and discussing matters of interest and look carefully at events from different viewpoints. For example, a Year 6 pupil looking at Jacqueline Wilson's 'The Suitcase Kid' said, 'Though it was a light

punch in Andy's opinion, it caused a red mark'. These skills result from the good quality teaching and are consistent across all classes.

- 67 Pupils' achievements in reading show an improvement since the previous inspection. By Year 2, most pupils achieve standards that exceed the expectation for this age group. They are confident and eager to talk about their likes and dislikes, and are very articulate. For example, a pupil explained his enjoyment of reading by saying, 'To me it's fun'. The same pupil also showed a secure understanding of the meaning of germs, 'They're tiny, tiny invisible creatures that spread infection'. Pupils continue to achieve well and make good progress throughout the school. This leads to above average standards by Year 6. The older pupils are confident in using the library, and enjoy browsing through books. This has a positive effect on their interest and standards. All the teachers work hard to give pupils an interest in and love of books. Many older pupils talk confidently about different authors and say what they like about their books. For example, one pupil said, 'I love reading. You can escape into another world and get lost in the book'. Further conversation led to a pupil saying, 'Films aren't as good as books. You can easily be distracted by the background. The books are the real quality'. Teachers ensure pupils develop an interest in poetry and drama. This is evident in the high quality performances and in lessons. For example, a pupil in Year 2 wrote:

'The Pain'
My brother's a pain.
He argues with me
AND he interrupts my games ...
My brother won't stop talking'.

- 68 Pupils increase their skills in writing poems as they move through the school. These sessions make a valuable contribution to pupils' spiritual development. For example, in Year 5 pupils write poems to support work in history about World War II:

'Gates are opening,
Tears drop down, falling to the ground.
People are hiding.
Can't stop now, enemies are all around!!
Bang! Bullets fly from a gun,
Hands on the trigger.
It's too late now.'

- 69 Most pupils have a clear understanding of how to use the library and find specific books to help in researching subjects such as history and geography. They find information quickly by the index and contents pages. The well-attended library club makes a positive contribution to the pupils' skills. Older pupils take advantage of the Internet to enhance their knowledge. For instance by using a search engine to discover other books written by their favourite author.

- 70 By Year 2, pupils make good progress in their writing skills. Not all pupils however use joined handwriting, and some spellings, such as 'bifday' and 'futbool', reflect their speech patterns. The school has carefully structured procedures in place to improve standards and pupils have good opportunities to regularly write. This is having a positive effect on pupils' achievements. They are developing their ability to write for different purposes and make effective links with subjects such as science. For example, a pupil wrote, 'Last night I let go of my caterpillars because they are butterflies now'. By Year 6, most pupils write clear and carefully structured stories and accounts of events. This represents a good level of achievement in progress, and very good learning. All teachers make sure that pupils' work is of a suitable length and that they use words imaginatively. This is evident in a Year 4 class where a pupil wrote: 'The streets are deserted because of that

thrashing rain'. Most have a good understanding of the use of grammar, and use different forms of writing accurately and confidently. For example, they write thoughtful book reviews and write poetry in the style of different poets. One pupil wrote, when discussing 'Macbeth', 'My favourite part is where Macbeth stabs the King. I also like it when he sees the dagger but it isn't there'. The quality of handwriting and presentation of work is good. There is effective use of English in other subjects, and pupils use computers regularly to support their work in the classroom. For instance they word process reports of visits to places of interest, edit their work and use a spell check.

- 71 The quality of teaching and learning in English is very good. This is beginning to have a positive effect on the standards pupils achieve. It is a significant improvement since the previous inspection. Teachers plan their lessons together, and choose the content carefully to make sure it is relevant to the pupils' needs. This ensures most pupils remain interested and enthusiastic in their work. There is a clear emphasis on providing work to increase the learning of higher attaining pupils across the school. This increases their achievement, learning and progress. Some teaching is inspirational, and this results in the pupils achieving high standards in their writing. For example, in an excellent lesson the teacher constantly probed the pupils' knowledge and extended their learning by using sharp questions. This led to above average skills in writing. The teacher continued by explaining the essence of writing information: 'It must tell you something; it must sound right; it must make sense'. The pupils applied this to their own work at the end of the lesson. The analysis of pupils' work confirms the judgement that teaching and learning are very good. It shows the development of links with other subjects and the ability to reflect and think about events.
- 72 All teachers share with the pupils, at the beginning of each lesson, what they are expected to achieve during the lesson. As a result, the pupils have a good understanding of what they are doing and the purpose of their work. The learning intentions match the pupils' needs and abilities very effectively. This gives all pupils, particularly the more able, enough chances to increase their knowledge and learning. At the end of lessons, all teachers encourage pupils to reflect on their work, realise how well they are doing and whether their work is good enough. This practice is consistent across the school. All teachers have a very clear understanding of how to teach reading and writing. They do this well, and are working hard to increase standards. This is having a positive effect on the quality of pupils' spelling and their ability to write with understanding. There are close links with writing in subjects other than English. All the teachers use the target setting procedures consistently. Their marking refers to the pupils' targets and gives clear pointers for improvement. They give clear guidelines as to what the pupils need to do to achieve their targets.
- 73 Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in developing their understanding and use of English. They receive very effective support within the classroom. This enables them to work alongside their classmates with an increased sense of self-esteem. All teachers ensure that these pupils have suitably challenging work that meets the requirements of their individual education plans. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Those pupils who have English as an additional language receive a very good level of support in lessons. Their achievement and progress are good, and their standards are similar to the other pupils in the class.

MATHEMATICS

- 74 During Years 1 and 2, pupils make good progress in developing their early learning experiences, and scrutiny of pupils' work in Year 2 indicates that standards at the end of this year are average. Pupils continue to make good progress to maintain standards that are in line with the national average by the end of Year 6, with a significant improvement in their ability to use and apply their learning and to solve problems. This is similar to judgements made at the time of the previous inspection, when standards were judged to be average.
- 75 By the end of Year 2, pupils have developed satisfactory numeracy skills and most can calculate accurately, both mentally and on paper. They have sound understanding of the basic processes of addition, subtraction, division and multiplication. This is due to some good groundwork by teachers, who place a lot of emphasis on pupils' understanding and are concerned with making learning mathematics effective. Pupils have a secure understanding of place value to 100 and use this information well to calculate the answers to problems, for example those involving money. With the support of number squares they can add, count on and calculate change confidently and accurately. They have a secure understanding of two-dimensional shapes, sort them into groups accurately and describe their features, using mathematical terms such as 'vertices'. They deal with data satisfactorily. Pupils in Year 2 carried out a survey on which pets they have at home. Using the data collected, higher attaining pupils learned how to use tallying to quickly work out how many belong in each group, and then interpreted this information. Average attaining pupils built bar charts, and used the height of the columns to interpret their findings. A weakness here was that they did not fully appreciate the importance of scale and keeping their blocks equally spaced to give a true representation of the data. Lower attaining pupils prepared pictograms using cut-out pictures of the animals, but again neglecting scale.
- 76 By the end of Year 6, pupils' knowledge and understanding of number is satisfactory, and by this stage they have further developed their skills in using and applying this knowledge in a range of mathematical situations. Pupils effectively make the links between addition and subtraction and multiplication and division, and use this as a means of checking the accuracy of their answers to calculations. When relating this work to fractions in a mental starter to lessons, pupils were effectively multiplying and dividing to quickly and accurately find the answers to questions such as 'Find $\frac{2}{7}$ of 49'. Many pupils are proficient at calculating with negative and positive numbers in the context of plotting coordinates and calculating the distances between points on the coordinate plane. This was seen in the Link Project unit currently being studied by Year 6 pupils. This introduces them to secondary mathematics, and prepares them well for the next stage of their education. This involved plotting points in all four quadrants and this is work generally expected of more able pupils or those older than Year 6.
- 77 All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress over time and this is evident throughout their workbooks. There are signs of improving standards in younger classes, with books, lessons observed and the results of non-statutory National Curriculum tests in Years 4 and 5 showing significant improvement in performance throughout the school. Very good standards were seen in these classes, where pupils were working at levels expected of pupils that are much older.
- 78 The quality of teaching is good, and this represents an improvement on the previous inspection when teaching was judged to be satisfactory. Some excellent teaching was seen, and most other teaching was either good or very good. Teachers vary their methods of presentation and adopt a flexible approach. For example, the teacher in

Year 6 used the interactive board to give pupils the experience of locating points on the axes. This professional approach encouraged pupils to enjoy mathematics and develop an enthusiasm for learning in this subject. Instructions are clear, and pupils are well informed and know exactly what is expected of them. Teachers' own enthusiasm for the subject helps to stimulate pupils into wanting to learn, and this has a positive impact on the progress they make. Very good management ensures pupils' full attention and very good attitudes and good behaviour. Behaviour is almost always good due to the fact that pupils are well managed. Teachers have high expectations of behaviour, and these are made clear from the outset and pupils respond well. Marking in pupils' books is good and gives pupils a good indication of how they might improve.

- 79 A major strength seen in an excellent lesson in Year 4 was the teacher's ability to constantly assess and reassess the progress pupils were making. When they were confident and answering well, she speeded up the pace and when they were unsure, she supported them so that they could confidently move on again. Teachers' planning is consistently good, and work is appropriately matched to pupils' levels of ability. Proposed outcomes of each lesson are shared with pupils at the beginning and then checked at the end to see if they have been achieved. Some teachers encourage pupils to assess their own success in achieving learning objectives for lessons, and make them aware of their own progress and learning. Support assistants are deployed for maximum effectiveness. Clear expectations successfully encourage pupils to present their work well.
- 80 The teachers have good assessment procedures and they regularly check pupils' progress. Yearly planning sheets record outcomes for all topics, giving teachers a useful source of information for planning. Through the use of end-of-year National Curriculum tests in Years 3 to 5, teachers identify pupils who may be in need of extra support.
- 81 The quality and range of learning opportunities in mathematics are good. Effective promotion of mathematics in other subjects such as geography, physical education and science enables pupils to extend their opportunities to work with number and shape. Basic skills of literacy, numeracy and information, communication technology are promoted well in mathematics, such as when pupils are made aware of specific vocabulary in use. Pupils constantly read and interpret problems and are learning new vocabulary. Speaking and listening skills are clearly encouraged as pupils explain and present their conclusions, particularly when interpreting graphs, charts and tables. The curriculum is enriched by events such as the 'Maths Enterprise' day. With the help of Year 10 pupils from a local secondary school, pupils conduct their own consumer surveys, decide how best to advertise and sell their products, and cost their production. The winners of the competition will have faced some stiff opposition. This all gives pupils a stronger awareness of the context of their learning, which effectively raises the profile of mathematics in the school and helps to make learning exciting. Pupils enhance their mathematical knowledge through their computer work. For instance they record the results of their surveys as pie charts and bar graphs.

SCIENCE

- 82 Standards in science for pupils at the end of Year 6 are in line with the national average. The trend over the last five years has been rising standards, faster than the national rate, except in 2002. One Year 6 class suffered disruptions in their teaching in Year 6 that inhibited their progress. The present Year 6 pupils have made very good progress, and achieve well. The school has worked hard to develop the level of challenge for its higher attaining pupils recommended as a key issue in the previous inspection in Years 3 – 6.

Consequently, the number of pupils achieving the higher level 5 has increased. To raise standards, the coordinator developed a strong system of measuring pupils' attainment and progress. This enabled the school to set high targets for its brightest pupils. However, the school is fully committed to inclusion, and pays good attention to the pupils who have special educational needs. The teachers and support staff give them all the help they need, in both key stages, and this enables them to make good progress and achieve good standards in relation to their starting points. The school sets high targets for all its pupils. No significant difference was observed between boys and girls. The current Year 5 is on target to reach even higher standards.

- 83 Standards at the end of Year 2 are in line with those expected for pupils aged seven. In 2002, teachers assessed the pupils to be particularly strong in knowledge of living things, and average in understanding materials and physical processes. In practical science activities, the top group were average, but the lower groups found difficulty in remembering and understanding. The school is very good at analysing the reasons that lie behind imbalances such as this, and taking action. The teachers revised the curriculum and adjusted the teaching of groups. This has had a positive effect. Almost half the present Year 2 class are performing at the higher level. The work in the pupils' books indicates, however, that the balance is still weighted on the life sciences, with not as much practical work as expected.
- 84 The quality of teaching is very good. At times it is excellent. This is because the teachers challenge the pupils at a very high level. The teachers make the lessons lively, practical and relevant. The resources used are fascinating to pupils, who learn exceptionally well by hands-on investigation. Year 2 pupils, for instance, gained responsibility and independence by having to sort out their own wiring in their electrical switch experiment. At the same time, they were learning about how electricity travels in a circuit. Year 4 and 5 pupils learned about changes in substances by melting a variety of them over candles. At one point in this fascinating lesson, the candles started going out, and it took much of the teacher's time to keep the process going. The pupils learned much more about the process of experiments than just simple changes in materials. However, they did not, however, learn a safe way to control their own heat sources.
- 85 The links with a local High School are strong, and have a positive impact on science teaching and learning. The forensic science topic being done by Year 6 pupils holds their attention and interest right up to the end of term. It encourages them to use more advanced language for abstract ideas such as 'flame', 'particle' and 'solubility testing'. Pupils are beginning to use more technical names for the substances involved. They enjoyed the actual testing lessons in the High School enormously. In class, all pupils showed a very positive attitude and they used equipment very sensibly. They are naturally safety conscious. The teachers are very good at explaining the wider context and training pupils to work towards logical conclusions. Consequently, the pupils throughout the school put a lot of thought into their work, and achieve better than average understanding. They can always state the objectives of the lesson.
- 86 The teachers have taken care to address points mentioned in the previous inspection report. The older pupils now use graphs well to record their results and guide their reasoning. This, and the careful measuring they do, makes good use of their numeracy skills. The pupils regularly use their computer skills to do research that adds to their knowledge and understanding. Teachers also make good use of the new computer projectors to display key parts of the lessons more effectively. Pupils use literacy skills moderately well when they record their observations. A larger than usual amount of worksheets tends to inhibit this, although many of these are useful and linked to the visits

which make particular topics so relevant to the pupils. A particularly strong feature is the attention teachers give to building up pupils' speaking skills, to enable them to report confidently and clearly to the whole class, using technical language, choosing from a variety of styles.

ART AND DESIGN

- 87 Standards are in line with those expected for the pupils' ages by the end of Years 2 and 6. Provision for art has improved since the previous inspection. The new planning scheme, based on national guidelines, helps teachers plan for the progression of skills, year by year. The planning scheme also states what levels of knowledge and skills pupils are expected to achieve at the end of each year. Assessment of pupils' attainment has been extended so that teachers have a clear idea where pupils are at the beginning of each year. Year 6 pupils recall learning about a good range of processes, including painting with a variety of media, printing, sketching, weaving and sculpture. In discussion, pupils found it difficult to express their ideas of the appreciation of art, because they do not have a sufficiently developed vocabulary of both technical and abstract terms to do this.
- 88 The school provides a balanced curriculum in art. The influence of artists and sculptors enriches the pupils' cultural experience. It impacts well on pupils' own work. For instance, Year 4 and 5 pupils learn a technique called 'cropping'. This is seen to good effect in the sensitive displays of their Georgia O'Keefe paintings. Not enough lessons were seen to make a judgement on teaching. Teachers' planning, however, is always thorough, detailed and sets challenging objectives. The pupils' work is wide-ranging and suggests that the teaching, and their learning, is at least good through the school. The planning shows that the teachers give thought to those pupils who have special needs, who receive additional support to enable them to achieve the same level of success as their peers. Art is a favourite subject for many Year 6 pupils.
- 89 The breadth of the art curriculum is apparent in the pupils' use of texture and three-dimensional work. The Year 1 and 2 pupils are proud of their 'sparkly' pictures and clay pots. By Year 6, the pupils are tackling life size sculpture. Their white, ghostly 'sculptures of people seated round a table in one entrance hall are quite startling. Pupils are achieving well. Teachers are now concerned to make the curriculum more interesting and relevant to pupils. They find many opportunities to link art with learning in other subjects. For instance, Year 3 and 4 pupils used their art skills, on their own initiative to paint posters and backdrops for their crisp stall in the 'Maths Enterprise' day. This gives them a stronger awareness of the context of learning.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

- 90 Standards are in line with those expected for the pupils' ages by the end of Years 2 and 6. This maintains the standards achieved at the time of the last inspection. However, the school's planning scheme has been further developed to help teachers plan for the progression of skills, year by year. It shows what levels of knowledge and skills pupils are expected to achieve at the end of each year. Assessment of pupils' attainment has been extended so that teachers have a clear idea of pupils' knowledge and skills at the beginning of each year. A particularly comprehensive portfolio of work from each class in the school indicates the wide range covered and the quality of progression. Pupils are achieving well and making good progress.
- 91 Not enough lessons were seen to make a judgement on teaching. Teachers' planning is always thorough and detailed. The teachers set challenging objectives. The pupils'

work is wide-ranging, and suggests that the teaching is at least good throughout the school. The planning shows that the teachers give thought to those pupils who have special needs, who receive additional support to enable them to achieve a similar level of success as their peers. Teachers are now concerned to make the curriculum relevant to pupils. They find many opportunities to link design and technology with learning in other subjects. For instance, Year 2 and Year 6 pupils often link technology with science. When Year 2 pupils make their wheeled vehicles, they are also learning important scientific principles about forces. When Year 6 make their moving models, they are learning about hydraulics and pneumatics. The teachers also give thought to the higher attaining pupils. These go on to using these skills in working out how to control traffic lights by computer. All pupils love this kind of challenge to use their thinking skills to solve problems for themselves.

- 92 The school is anxious to provide a balanced curriculum for technology, so teachers focus as much on design as on construction. They give equal weight to the various strands of mechanisms, structures, textiles and food technology. The impact is positive, enabling pupils to use their literacy skills well for recording their designs and evaluating their products, and their numeracy skills for measuring size and angles. The teachers take technology further than in many schools, to include the full process of discovering consumers' views and adapting products to suit them. This is seen at its best in the exciting 'Maths Enterprise' day.

GEOGRAPHY

- 93 It was only possible to observe a limited number of geography lessons in Years 3 – 6, during the period of the inspection. These observations, along with a scrutiny of pupils' written work and an examination of teachers' planning documentation, indicate that pupils make satisfactory progress in the subject and achieve standards broadly in line with expectations for their age by the time they reach the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Standards in the subject have been maintained since the last inspection. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support, and make the same progress as all other pupils. Though no lessons were observed in Years 1 and 2, pupils' written work revealed that they develop an effective understanding of the local area, including both their home environment and the school, and display satisfactory mapping skills as they link one to the other.
- 94 In the lessons observed, pupils in Years 4 and 5 could be seen to develop simple mapping skills as they produced their own 'Battleship' type games by using single letter and number co-ordinates to find items. This was part of the school's 'Maths Enterprise' day. The satisfactory progress in this lesson was helped by pupils' positive attitudes to the activities they were involved in, and the opportunity to take control of their own learning. Pupils likewise were made responsible for their own learning in Year 6 as they produced a range of pamphlets and brochures for visitors to Liverpool. Pupils were able to cut and paste a range of pictures and factual evidence from other sources to create their own pamphlets, and gathered pictures of Liverpool from a number of web pages on the Internet.
- 95 Pupils in Years 3 to 6 extend their knowledge of the local environment and they understand the reason why and where people settle. They show an understanding of climates around the world and recognise the importance of rivers and water and people's lives. They are also able to make simple comparisons between the area they live in and life in a town in Kenya.

96 The overall quality of teaching in the lessons observed was satisfactory. The lessons were well planned, organised and resourced with opportunities for pupils to take some control of their own learning. The school uses a satisfactory scheme of work to support teachers in the planning of their lessons. Much of it is taken from nationally approved schemes, with the school adding a European dimension as each year group focuses on a European country. Pupils are also given the opportunity to take part in a number of field trips to support them in their learning, with additional geographical and environmental studies taking place in the two residential holidays in Years 5 and 6. With its focus on a number of peoples and places, the subject makes a useful contribution to pupils' social and cultural development.

HISTORY

97 It was only possible to observe a limited number of history lessons during the period of the inspection. Evidence from these lessons, plus an examination of pupils' written work and teachers' planning documentation, indicate that pupils make satisfactory progress in the subject and achieve standards broadly in line with expectations for their age throughout the school. Standards in the subject have been maintained since the last inspection. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in the subject.

98 Pupils in Years 1 and 2 could be seen making sound progress in their knowledge of historical figures and their impact and influence on history. This was observed in a Year 2 class as pupils considered the life of Elizabeth I and how she gained the name 'Good Queen Bess'. Through the teacher's very good exposition and the examination of a number of factual books, pupils gained a satisfactory knowledge of events in Elizabeth's life. Pupils' written work shows that they develop a satisfactory knowledge of chronology and how things change over time, through their exploration of changes in forms of transportation.

99 Pupils in Years 4 and 5 could be seen to be developing a satisfactory understanding of key events in the Second World War and how they impacted on people's lives, as they considered the plight of evacuees. The sound progress in this lesson was enhanced by the teacher's good use of resources, in particular a video about the life of evacuees in the countryside. Pupils produced some good written work in this lesson as, in character, they wrote letters from the countryside to their parents in the city.

100 Pupils in Years 3 to 6 cover all the required topics within the history curriculum. This includes work on 'Invaders and Settlers in Early Britain', the ancient civilisation of Greece, 'Tudor Britain', 'Life in Victorian England' and events in Great Britain since the 1930s. The two lessons observed, plus additional evidence, would indicate that the overall quality of teaching in the subject is satisfactory, with some good teaching being observed during the period of the inspection. The two lessons seen were well planned, organised and resourced. Teachers are secure in their subject knowledge, and use good questioning skills in lessons to promote pupils' learning, knowledge and understanding. The school uses an effective scheme of work based on nationally approved documentation, and provides pupils with occasional visits to places of historical interest to support them in their learning. With its focus on periods of history, both in Great Britain and around the world, the subject makes a useful contribution to pupils' social and cultural development. The school has a history website which attracts past pupils to respond with their memories. In addition, pupils search the Internet to find out useful information to help them in history.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

- 101 Attainment in information and communication technology is as expected nationally for pupils at the end of Year 2, and above that expected by the end of Year 6. This is an improvement since the last inspection in 1998, when the subject was not taught as a discrete subject. Since then, national expectations in ICT have risen considerably and the school has made many very good improvements to enable its pupils to exceed the standards that are expected for Year 6 pupils. For example, the development of the computer suite, giving pupils regular access to good quality machines, has improved the rate of learning as all pupils can learn new skills simultaneously and not have to wait for their turn. The provision has also been much improved by the purchase of many good quality resources such as laptop computers for all teachers and the availability of a digital camera to record special events. This has enhanced the teachers' confidence and, as a result, this has been a major factor in helping pupils to learn effectively. All aspects of ICT are thoroughly taught over time, and pupils throughout the school achieve well and make good progress. The school also has Internet access for pupils to use in research work. The school has two websites; one is available for past pupils to add their memories. The school's involvement in the local Education Action Zone has also successfully impacted on the school's provision. The technical support this project provides ensures efficiently working computers.
- 102 ICT makes a good contribution to the development of literacy skills through pupils' use of word processing programs to write and present their work. For instance in Years 4 and 5, pupils write menus for a healthy meal. They design invitations to the Olympic Games and they also write play scripts using a range of different fonts. In Year 6, pupils word process their accounts of visits to places of interest. There are also many well-planned links to numeracy, including data handling. The school has worked hard to use computer skills to enhance other subjects, and this adds interest and relevance to the pupils' work. These links are also useful in ensuring that curriculum time is used efficiently. For example, at the same time as practising ICT skills such as searching the Internet, the pupils are learning useful information to help them in their studies in subjects such as history or science.
- 103 Pupils in Year 2 create bar charts to record the results of a survey they carried out as part of a project on buildings. By Year 3, they know how to change the size, style and colour of the text. They confidently use the Internet, and they understand its strengths and weaknesses. For instance, they know that messages are not necessarily secure, but they also recognise its flexibility. They understand it is efficient to sort emails into files. In Years 4 and 5, pupils employ search engines to find information. For instance in a very good lesson in literacy, the pupils searched for other works by their favourite author. Pupils in Year 6 have a good knowledge of the use and impact of ICT on their lives and in the wider world. They are very capable users of modern technology. For instance, they created graphs from a spreadsheet to demonstrate growth in the population of Woolton Village as part of their project work on a residential visit. Pupils with special educational needs, and those who are learning English as an additional language, make the same good progress as their classmates as they are well supported and have equal access to the available equipment.
- 104 Only one lesson in Year 6 was observed during the inspection, and that was very good. Judgements were made from displays of pupils' work from each year group. Teachers have a good understanding of the subject, and their own skills are well developed. This enables them to teach ICT confidently and demonstrate to pupils the correct procedures. Pupils are well managed and respond positively to the opportunities offered to them. They handle equipment with care, and share it sensibly when working with a partner.

Teachers successfully use interactive white boards in other lessons, and this means they provide competent role models. Teachers plan work carefully to help pupils develop their skills in a systematic way. Pupils respond well to the good teaching, behave well in lessons and are eager to learn more. This was clearly seen in a very good Year 6 lesson when the pupils were designing banners for their 'Maths Enterprise' day. They confidently used the class interactive board, and worked well together to agree their designs. The buzz of excitement and the intense concentration was palpable as the pupils worked extremely hard to complete their tasks. Pupils are very proud of their efforts and many are reluctant to end a session.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

105 After several years trialling the teaching of French in after-school clubs, the staff decided to introduce the subject to Year 6 pupils as class lessons. This has proved both popular and effective, and has become a permanent feature of the timetable. This is a significant addition to the curriculum since the previous inspection, and part of the programme of enrichment. The subject is very well led, which accounts for the quality and systematic organisation. The coordinator is considering building on the success by extending French teaching to Year 5, or even further. Year 6 pupils have made very good progress during the year, and reach the standards expected for their age.

106 The teaching is very good. The lively lessons move at a fast pace, and pupils have to listen hard to make sure they keep up with the instructions. Most of the lesson activities take the form of friendly competitive games. The pupils have to show they have understood by their actions. For instance in the game 'Jacques a dit' (Simon Says) the pupils need to move fast to register their score. In this way the teacher builds up a wide range of vocabulary covering various aspect of culture as well as numbers and actions. At other points in the lessons, the teacher tests the pupils' ability to say the French words and sentences. The teacher is a French national, so the pupils get the benefit of hearing the correct accent.

107 The teacher is careful to include all the pupils in the activities and responses. The pupils have a very positive attitude to the subject. They love the element of competition between boys and girls. The subject is particularly valuable for pupils who have special educational needs. Because all the pupils start at the same point, a level playing field, they develop a strong self image as successful learners.

MUSIC

108 Standards in music meet national expectations for pupils by the end of Year 6. This reflects the findings of the previous inspection. The school has improved its arrangements for checking pupils' progress in learning and using musical skills and techniques. This gives a clear picture of achievement and progress across the school. All teachers have clear aims about the purpose of lessons, and make sure pupils understand what they are expected to learn. There is an improvement to the quality, number and range of musical instruments. Pupils enjoy using them and are interested in the range of countries they represent. There is clear guidance and support for teachers in the scheme of work. This is increasing teachers' knowledge and confidence in planning and teaching music. The school has increased the opportunities pupils are given to use computers to support their work in music. The range of extra-curricular activities is similar to those at the previous inspection.

109 There is not enough evidence to make a secure judgement on standards, teaching and learning by the end of Year 2. Pupils demonstrated good quality singing in the singing

practice for Years 1 and 2. They sang sweetly and melodically, with well-controlled enthusiasm. The skilful teaching ensures that pupils quickly identify loud, quiet; and fast, slow; sounds and rhythms. Careful teaching of skills and techniques is apparent in the way pupils hold, play and put away instruments. The teacher makes sure that all pupils take part in the planned activities and share their work with each other. This increases the pupils' confidence and self-esteem. All pupils enjoy their work. They behave well, sing enthusiastically, and play instruments correctly. The recorded evidence shows that pupils compose and play sound effects to represent areas such as the jungle. This all makes a positive contribution to their musical skills, and provides a firm base for learning as they move into Year 3.

110 There is an increase to the rate of pupils' achievement, and learning increases as they move through the school. The skilful and enthusiastic teaching gives all pupils interest and enjoyment in music. The high numbers who attend the range of clubs and take part in the 'Children of Liverpool Sing' performance is evidence of the pupils' interest. This shows a high level of commitment and enthusiasm. The school is rightly proud of the pupils' achievements, and its participation in a range of music festivals increases skills and self-esteem. Effective teaching increases the pupils' ability to play tuned instruments and collaborate to compose pictorial scores. Pupils are less confident in using notation in their compositions. All teachers use the time at the end of lessons very effectively to help pupils understand what they have learned. For example, at the end of a Year 6 lesson the teacher reminded pupils of the lesson objectives. This enabled pupils to check whether they had achieved the lesson's expectations. Carefully targeted questioning ensures that all the pupils have opportunities to join in discussions. This increases the self-esteem of pupils with special educational needs, and ensures they make progress similar to their classmates. The teachers make sure that the work is interesting and relevant to pupils' needs and interests. For example, a Year 3 class wrote and produced a 'hospital radio' show. This involved all pupils and made a very positive contribution to the pupils' personal and social development, as well as their speaking skills. The pupils maintain correct pitch and clear diction in their singing in lessons and assemblies. This consistently good quality of teaching has a positive effect on pupils' interest, enthusiasm and achievement. All teachers make effective links with other subjects. For example, pupils in a mixed Year 4 and Year 5 class practised hard to produce a polished singing and instrumental performance of the poem, 'Cats sleep anywhere'. The teachers are confident, make their expectations clear and ensure the pupils understand the tasks. As a result, pupils work with a clear sense of purpose and take pride in their achievements.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

111 Evidence from lesson observations and teachers' planning documents indicate that pupils make satisfactory progress in the subject and attain standards in line with expectations for their age by the time the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Most of the lessons observed during the period of the inspection were linked to summer games and athletics. Standards in the subject have been maintained since the last inspection. Pupils with disabilities receive good support from classroom assistants, and have equality of access to the curriculum. Gifted and talented pupils are identified and, in the present Year 6, a local sports centre gives two of these pupils advanced coaching in tennis and football.

112 Pupils in Year 1 display good dance skills as they work in a collaborative manner in putting together a piece of work on the theme of space and aliens. The good progress in this lesson owed much to the pupils' interest in the subject matter and the opportunity to improve learning by evaluating both their own and other's efforts. Pupils in Years 4 and 5

develop a sound understanding of throwing and catching skills linked to rounders and cricket, before moving on to create their own modified games with their own rules. Pupils in Years 4 and 5 also recognise the need to work as a team in order to succeed, as they engage in a number of problem solving activities. Pupils in Year 6 display satisfactory athletic skills as they work on improving their 'scores' as they engage in standing high and long jumps. The good progress in this lesson was enhanced by their ability to really focus on the skills to be developed, and their genuine enthusiasm to improve the quality of their work. Pupils regularly visit a local swimming pool for three half terms each year from Year 2 onwards. Approximately 85 per cent of pupils achieve the national requirement of swimming 25 metres by the end of Year 6. All pupils display positive attitudes during their activities. They are aware of health and safety issues and the well being of others. They work with sustained concentration, self-discipline and control.

113 The overall quality of teaching in Years 1 to 6 is good, with some very good teaching being observed during the period of the inspection. Lessons are well planned, organised and resourced. Good warm-up activities take place at the beginning of lessons, with regular opportunities for pupils to take control of their own learning within paired and group activities. Teachers use praise in an effective manner to raise self-esteem and confidence in pupils' abilities. Lessons are structured in such a way as to give pupils the chance to improve skills within increasingly demanding activities.

114 The school provides a good range of extra-curricular sporting activities, including football, netball and athletics, as well as taking part in inter-school competitions. The school has also good links with a number of agencies that provide support for school sporting activities. This includes both Everton and Liverpool football clubs. Pupils also engage in a number of sporting activities during the two residential holidays offered in Years 5 and 6. With its emphasis on team building and inter-active skills the subject makes a positive contribution to pupils' social and personal development.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

115 The standard of pupils' work meets the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education at the end of Year 2, and exceeds it by the end of Year 6. Religious education is taught effectively in all classes, and this has contributed to the rise in standards since the previous inspection. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve equally well.

116 By the end of Year 2, pupils have an appropriate knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other world faiths such as Islam and Hinduism. This has been achieved by good teaching and a series of planned visits to places of worship, with the ensuing work focusing on celebrations, lifestyle and leaders. Pupils have a developing understanding of important signs and symbols within different religious communities. In discussion, pupils have recall of a wide range of Bible and other stories. They are familiar with the different types of buildings used for worship in different faiths, and the importance of such buildings in the lives of believers. They have a clear understanding of moral values such as kindness, and distinguish well between right and wrong. This makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual and moral development.

117 By the time they reach Year 6, pupils develop good skills with which to analyse their own and others' beliefs. They discuss ideas and opinions well before portraying how relationships are affected by different values and beliefs. They listen sensitively to the contributions of others, and ensure that all ideas are valued. They display good levels of trust and collaboration in their presentations. They are sufficiently articulate to convey

their knowledge and understanding in relevant detail both orally and in writing; their written work includes personal responses such as poems and prayers.

- 118 Pupils in Years 4 and 5 demonstrated good knowledge and understanding of important elements of different religions, such as Buddhism, at the time of the inspection. They understand the main elements of this religion as a result of the clear and meaningful messages that are communicated to them. Their knowledge of the Bible and stories from other religions is well developed, and they are able to understand clearly how these underpin the beliefs of followers, and how in turn their lifestyles and behaviour are influenced.
- 119 Year 6 pupils have produced colourful stained glass windows, which focus on inspirational figures and saints such as Saint Francis of Assisi. They clearly understand the role of these in remembrance of people and events. They remember their visits to different places of worship, such as Liverpool cathedrals and a synagogue, showing appropriate respect for religious artefacts. As they progress through Years 3 to 6, their knowledge of the lives religious leaders such as Christ, Muhammad and the Buddha deepen their religious thought. As well as learning *about* religions, pupils also learn *from* religion and how different principles can solve their own and others' difficulties. Religious education links in well with the school's provision for personal, social and health education, and in combination makes a significant contribution to pupils' personal development.
- 120 The quality of teaching is good, and teachers value the contributions made by individuals in their discussions. Good questioning is used to clarify pupils' understanding through empathy and reflection. This was exemplified in a Year 4/5 lesson when pupils explored what they had learned about Buddhism, and applied the teachings to different situations such as diet, and followed this up with debates about vegetarianism and foxhunting. Where teaching is good, lessons are planned to build successfully on pupils' knowledge and experiences, and to apply their learning to life situations. Teachers dispel misconceptions gently and sensitively, and this enables pupils to make good gains in knowledge and understanding about important aspects of religious beliefs and practices. Pupils are attentive and listen with deepening concentration and respectfulness as elements are drawn out which are within their own experiences, such as a balanced argument on vegetarianism. Pupils make good progress in understanding how we can learn from religion.
- 121 Pupils benefit from visits to places of worship, and also from contributions made by visitors. This has had a positive impact on pupils' knowledge and understanding and the good progress they are making.