

INSPECTION REPORT

PLEASANT STREET PRIMARY SCHOOL

Liverpool

LEA area: Liverpool

Unique reference number: 104569

Headteacher: Mrs M Cunningham

Reporting inspector: Mr John D Eadie
20191

Dates of inspection: 20th - 23rd January 2003

Inspection number: 246387

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 category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Pleasant Street Liverpool
Postcode:	L3 5TS
Telephone number:	(0151) 709 3802
Fax number:	(0151) 707 1145
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Ms Deirdre Lynskey
Date of previous inspection:	March 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
20191	Mr J D Eadie	Registered inspector	Science Information and communication technology Music	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
19430	Mr E T Hall	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
23081	Mrs C Waine	Team inspector	Foundation Stage English Design and technology History Religious education	How good are the curriculum and other opportunities offered to pupils?
23245	Mr A Farrage	Team inspector	English as an additional language Mathematics Art and design Geography	
28882	Mrs B Jones	Team Inspector	Special educational needs	The speech and language unit
8560	Ms M Lynch	Team Inspector	French	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Number on roll aged three to 11	225	Broadly average
Of these, 30 are in the Reception class and 22 full time and 13 part time in the Nursery.		
Percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals	61.1 per cent	Well above average
Percentage of pupils whose mother tongue is not English	21.6 per cent	High
Most of these speak one of the Arabic languages or Somali.		
Percentage of pupils identified as having special needs	22.1 per cent	Broadly average
Percentage of pupils with statements of their special needs	3.5 per cent	Above average

The school is in the centre of the city of Liverpool and is housed in a building which is three years old. Housing in the area is mostly terraced, much of it being divided into flats. Many of the socio-economic indicators for the area are well below average. There is a wide range of ethnic groups in the school, the largest of which is white British, though more than a quarter of the pupils are from a variety of Black ethnic groups. There is a special unit attached to the school for 20 pupils who have difficulties with speech and language. Most of the other pupils with special educational needs have difficulty with their reading, writing and mathematics. When they start at the school, most children have low levels of attainment. The school is a member of the Dingle, Granby and Toxteth Education Action Zone and also receives support from Excellence in Cities.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school is successful in providing a sound education for its pupils. Although standards are generally below average, the pupils achieve well largely due to the good quality of teaching. This is also helped by the good attitudes that the pupils have to their school and their work. The school is well led and effectively managed and gives satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The quality of teaching is good overall and the pupils consequently learn well and make good progress. The pupils in the speech and language unit make very good progress.
- Standards in music and French are above average by the end of Year 6 and, in art, are above average through most of the school.
- The pupils enjoy coming to school and generally want to work very hard.
- The school is a harmonious place where pupils are valued and cared for very well. Particular strengths in this area are the way that the pupils in the speech and language unit are included in the school and the complete integration of all ethnic groups. Relationships are very good at all levels.
- The pupils benefit from many trips out of school and visits to places of interest.
- The headteacher provides good leadership for the school.

What could be improved

- Standards at the end of Year 6 in English, mathematics and science.
- The pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to research and investigate, particularly in Years 5 and 6.
- The pupils in Years 3 to 6 do not spend sufficient time on some subjects.
- The teachers do not use the results of assessments well enough to help the pupils progress.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in March 1998 and has made satisfactory progress since then. Standards have improved at the same rate as the national standards, but are still some way below average. All the key issues from that inspection have been addressed, but with varying degrees of success. For example, although good progress has been made in raising standards in information and communication technology, less progress has been made in raising standards in science or design and technology or in the use of assessment. There are a number of teachers who are new to the school and there is much enthusiasm and a good commitment to

improve.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests. Similar schools are those with a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	D	D	C	A
mathematics	E	D	E	B
science	E	E	E	C

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

Results in the tests in English have improved significantly in the last few years, owing to a new structure of teaching reading and other strategies that the school has put in place. Standards in mathematics and science have not improved at the same rate, as the pupils have not been given sufficient opportunities to carry out experimental and investigative work in these subjects. Targets set are appropriately challenging and were missed by one per cent in English, but by ten per cent in mathematics. In Year 2, standards in the tests last year in reading were very low and in writing and mathematics they were well below average. Judgements of the inspection are that most children have made good progress in the Nursery and Reception although standards are still below average as they enter Year 1 because of their low starting point. The pupils continue to make good progress through Years 1 and 2. Largely because of their very low starting point, the pupils in the current Year 2 have below average attainment. Overall, the pupils make satisfactory progress in Years 3 to 6 and achieve below average standards in Year 6. Progress is good in Years 3 and 4. Standards seen during the inspection in art in Years 1 to 4 and in music and French are above average. Standards in English, mathematics, science, design and technology, geography and religious education are below average in Year 6. The pupils in the speech and language unit make very good progress and others in the school with special educational needs make good progress. Those pupils whose mother tongue is not English make good progress. The pupils generally achieve well during their time in the school, though progress slows during their last two years.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	The pupils enjoy coming to school and are keen to work and take part in activities.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Most of the pupils behave very well in class and behaviour is generally good around the school. There are some instances of inappropriate behaviour. There was one entirely justified fixed period exclusion last year.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are very good. Personal development is good. Pupils are given insufficient opportunity to take initiative and responsibility.
Attendance	Rates of attendance are improving and are now approaching national levels. A significant number of parents find it difficult to get their children to school on time.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery & Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
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Quality of teaching	Good	Good	Satisfactory
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Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that the teaching is adequate and strengths outweigh weaknesses.

The quality of teaching and learning in the school is good overall, although it is not so good for the oldest pupils. However, the pupils in these classes benefit from very good specialist teaching in French and those in Year 6 also benefit from very good teaching in history. All pupils in Years 3 to 6 have very good specialist teaching in music. The teaching in the speech and language unit is very good. English and mathematics are generally well taught and the pupils learn the skills of literacy and numeracy well. A particular strength of the teaching throughout the school is the teachers' management of their classes. They create a calm, orderly environment in which it is easy for the pupils to learn. The major area for development of teaching is to give the older pupils more opportunities to work independently and to use their own methods of recording. Although they are taught techniques and routines they are unable to adapt and use these routines to solve new problems. The needs of most pupils are met well. For example, those pupils whose mother tongue is not English are supported well. Those with special educational needs also make good progress due to sensitive teaching. However, some of the older, more able pupils are not often provided with work that challenges them.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum. Insufficient time is spent on some subjects in Years 3 to 6. The curriculum is significantly enriched by trips, visits and by visitors into school.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good provision is made for the pupils with special educational needs. They are supported well by the specialist teacher and support staff and make good progress. The pupils in the speech and language unit make very good progress due to the sensitive teaching and very good support that they receive.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good organisation by the specialist teacher and her good liaison with class teachers ensures that the pupils for whom English is not their mother tongue make good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Good provision is made for the pupils' personal development. A particular strength in this area is the way that all cultures represented in the school are celebrated and an even wider range of cultures is appreciated by the pupils.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school takes very good care of the pupils. They are supported well by all adults and a keen interest is taken in all their personal successes and needs. Assessment procedures are only recently in place and there is still work to be done to ensure that the pupils' progress is checked effectively.
How well the school works in partnership with parents	Parents generally have positive views of the school. The school has satisfactory links with parents and provides satisfactory information for parents, although the information about the curriculum is not consistent between classes. The impact of parents on their children's learning is unsatisfactory.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher gives good leadership. Many subject co-ordinators are enthusiastic and have good plans to develop their subjects. However, a number are fairly recently in post and management overall is satisfactory. The school applies the principles of best value well.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors fulfil their responsibilities satisfactorily. They are very supportive of the school and their role is developing well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Those in management have a clear view of what needs to be done to take the school forward, but the school is in early stages of taking action to improve.
The strategic use of resources	There is a good number of teaching and support staff, the accommodation is good and resources for most subjects are good. Finance, staffing,

accommodation and other resources are used well.
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PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teachers expect their children to work hard.• Their children like school.• Staff are approachable.• Teaching is good.• Behaviour in the school is good.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The range of activities outside lessons.• The information they receive about their children's progress.

As can be seen from earlier sections of this report the inspectors agree with all positive parental comments. With regard to the areas that some parents would like to see improved, the judgement of the inspection team is that:

- there is a very good range of activities outside lessons and the curriculum is significantly enhanced by visits and visitors; and
- parents receive satisfactory information about their children's progress.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Standards of work seen in the inspection are below average overall by the time that the pupils leave at the age of 11. Standards in English, mathematics and science are below average in Year 6. The pupils have low attainment on entry and generally make good progress during their time in the school and achieve well. Standards have risen in line with national trends since the last inspection.

Strengths in standards achieved are:

- the pupils make good progress through the school;
- standards achieved in French, music and art and design are above average;
- the pupils make good progress in the Foundation Stage¹;
- the pupils in the speech and language unit make very good progress;
- the pupils with special educational needs (SEN) make good progress; and
- the pupils with English as an additional language (EAL) make good progress.

Areas for development are:

- standards in English, mathematics, science, design and technology (DT), geography and religious education;
- writing in English across the curriculum and speaking throughout the school;
- investigative and experimental work, particularly in mathematics and science; and
- the progress made by the pupils in Year 6.

2. Standards in the subjects of the curriculum seen in lessons and in the scrutiny of pupils' work are displayed in the following table.

Standards	At the end of Year 2	At the end of Year 6
English	Below average	Below average
Mathematics	Below average	Below average
Science	Below average	Below average
Art and design	Above average	Above average
Design and technology (DT)	Insufficient evidence	Well below average
Geography	Average	Below average
History	Average	Average
ICT	Average	Average
French	-	Above average
Music	Average	Above average
Physical education (PE)	Above average	Average
Religious education (RE)	Average	Below average

3. The children enter the Nursery with low levels of attainment in all areas of learning, particularly in their communication, language and literacy and their personal and social skills. The curriculum for the children in the Nursery and Reception classes is well organised. The quality of teaching is good and the support from classroom assistants is good so children make good progress to reach below average

¹ The Foundation Stage comprises of children in the Nursery and Reception classes.

levels of attainment overall by the time they start in Year 1. Progress is good in all areas of learning for these children, but because of their low starting point their attainment in communication, language and literacy is still below average by this stage. Progress is particularly good in their personal and social development and the children reach expected levels in this area of learning by the time they start in Year 1.

4. The results of the 2002 National Curriculum tests for seven-year-olds give the attainment of the pupils in Year 2 last year as being very low in reading and well below average in writing and mathematics compared with all schools. Compared to those schools with a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals, the results were below average in reading and writing and well below average in mathematics. A significant reason for the present standards being better than these results is that the teachers in Reception and Years 1 and 2 are new to the school. The test results in 2002 were lower than might be expected owing to the high proportion of pupils in that year group with SEN. Although girls have performed better than boys in these tests, there is no clear reason why this should be so. The school has put in place various strategies to try to address this imbalance. The proportion of pupils attaining the higher levels in these tests is about what one would expect.
5. In the National Curriculum tests for 11-year-olds in 2002, the results were average in English and well below average in mathematics and science. The results have improved significantly in English in recent years due to the structured approach to teaching reading and other initiatives which the school has put in place. However, there is still work to be done to improve standards of writing and this is keeping down the overall standards in English. Standards in mathematics and science have not improved at the same rate as there is insufficient experimental and investigative work done in these subjects, particularly in Year 6. This results in the pupils being unable to apply their knowledge to unfamiliar questions in the tests. When compared with the results of schools with a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free schools meals, the results were well above average in English, above average in mathematics and average in science. However, when the results are compared with the results of schools where the pupils scored similarly in the tests for seven-year-olds four years previously, they are average in English, well below average in mathematics and very low in science. These results are a further indicator of the lack of opportunities that the oldest pupils are given to use an investigative and experimental approach. The proportion of pupils attaining the higher levels is as expected in English, but well below average in mathematics and science. As in the tests for seven-year-olds, girls have performed better than boys over the years. The school has done considerable analysis of why this should be the case, but neither they nor the inspection team can find any clear reason. The school has also carried out good analysis of the test results by ethnicity, which shows that all ethnic groups make the same progress.
6. As can be seen in the above table, standards in art and design, music and French are above average in Year 6. These standards in art and design are due to the good teaching of skills, the good use of multicultural resources available in the area and the enthusiasm and expertise of the co-ordinator. In music, the above average standards are due to the specialist teaching that the pupils in Years 3 to 6 receive and the well-planned curriculum. In French, the teacher is funded by the Education Action Zone and her expertise ensures that the pupils achieve good standards in this subject.
7. Standards in DT are well below average and in geography and RE they are below average for a variety of reasons. The major one, in geography and DT, is the lack of sound curriculum planning to ensure progressive learning for the pupils. In RE there are insufficient opportunities for the oldest pupils to research and record their work. There are also some inconsistencies in timetabling arrangements between classes. For example, in some classes RE is not taught weekly. There are also instances of subjects being taught in six month blocks. The result of a subject not being taught from February to September is that the pupils often have to relearn aspects of the subject before starting on new work.
8. The pupils with a range of SEN show good, and sometimes very good, improvement against targets individually set. This applies across the curriculum. In English, mathematics and science some of these pupils gain sound levels of success in National Curriculum tests. In music, art and PE standards are often good for these pupils. The pupils with SEN make good progress throughout the school. This shows an improvement since the last inspection.
9. There is a high proportion of pupils for whom English is not their mother tongue and these pupils speak a wide variety of different languages. These pupils attain results appropriate for their age and capability and they make good progress towards national expectations.

10. The majority of pupils make good progress through the school and achieve below average standards from a low starting point when they join the school. The exception is that some more able pupils do not always make the progress of which they are capable. This is because they are not always given work appropriate to their capabilities. For example, in many lessons for the oldest pupils, all pupils are expected to do the same task. There are instances in most classes where pupils all start with the same work regardless of their levels of prior learning. The school ensures that the pupils with particular talents in music and PE for example, are challenged by organising extra opportunities for them.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. The pupils' attitudes, values and personal development are good. The parents wholeheartedly support the school in this. They firmly believe their children enjoy school and make good progress. Standards have been maintained in this area since the last inspection.

Strengths in this aspect are:

- the pupils are very keen to come to school. They appreciate their teachers and are prepared to work hard;
- behaviour is good;
- the pupils' personal development is good overall;
- relationships between the pupils and between pupils and adults are very good; and
- attendance is improving.

An area for development is:

- more opportunities for pupils to show initiative and accept responsibility.

12. The pupils are eager to come to school and approach their lessons with enthusiasm. They settle down quickly at the start of lessons and most maintain concentration very well to the end of the day. They enjoy the short dialogues in lessons and make constructive contributions. The pupils with SEN show good attitudes towards their work and behaviour. The pupils with EAL have positive attitudes towards school, show an interest in, and are involved in all aspects of school life. In general they try hard to achieve their personal targets. Very good relationships are formed with others in school and respect given to the efforts of others. The pupils are orderly when moving around the school and maintain a good sense of purpose when moving from whole class activities to individual work. They collaborate well in groups when encouraged to do so. The pupils are willing to talk about what they are doing and explain how they arrived at their answers. They display good qualities of independent learning when given the opportunity. This is not sufficiently developed by the older pupils.
13. Behaviour for the great majority of pupils is good and by many in all classes, very good. This is directly due to the patience and dedication of teachers, with the co-operation of parents. The pupils are polite, courteous and trustworthy. They look after their environment and enjoy cheerful conversation over lunch. Play is very good-natured, with a broad mix of small and large groups absorbed in lively activities. They readily co-operate with lunchtime supervisors who stimulate play with the younger pupils very well. This overall atmosphere is spoilt by a few pupils in some year groups. Their personal behavioural problems sometimes affect the progress of lessons and take up too high a proportion of the teacher's time. However, all, including the offenders, know how very seriously these instances are viewed. On most occasions they know how to say sorry. All the pupils know the school rules well and feel the systems of rewards and sanctions are fair. There are a few moments of aggression, name calling and bullying, though these are rarely racially motivated. These are dealt with fairly and firmly with the support of parents. An isolated exclusion, during the past year, is out of character for this school.
14. The pupils' personal development is good overall. They have a clear understanding of the impact of their actions on others. This is particularly evident from talking to Year 6 pupils, who exhibit a responsible understanding of sharing and caring and of what school is about. Some encouraging maturity is developing amongst the younger pupils through circle time and for the older pupils through personal and social education. There is a strong moral code. All the pupils are clear about the difference between right and wrong. They know well what is expected of them in and out of school.
15. The pupils have a good respect for others' feelings and beliefs. They readily accept one another's differences. They enjoy the trips and visits, which result in a growing appreciation of the vast world of

resources and relationships around them, strengthening their spiritual awareness. They are happy to discuss some of their best work, proudly displayed about the school. They respond very well in moments of reflection during class assemblies. However, there are insufficient times when the whole school meets together to build up the corporate atmosphere.

16. Social development is satisfactory. The pupils can show initiative and willingly take responsibility when asked. Even the youngest know where to put their things. The pupils act as register monitors, hand out resources and tidy up at the end of lessons. However, there are insufficient opportunities to ensure that the pupils have a widening range of responsibilities and experiences as they move up the school. Good work in lessons is celebrated and valued by the whole class. For example, in a Year 1 lesson a pupil's good work was celebrated by an impromptu cry of "well done" from the rest of the class. In some classes, the pupils enjoy sharing the success of their learning objectives at the end of the lesson, but this is not always done. End of year reports are not shared with pupils. The pupils speak confidently about moving to their next school and speak with genuine pride about their time at this school. A wide range of social and personal achievements is highlighted at the weekly celebration assemblies. Those presented are warmly applauded. The pupils appreciate the work of the visitors who come to talk to them, for example charity representatives and from the police.
17. Relationships are very good. This is particularly the case with the pupils from ethnic minorities who are sensitively supported by staff and other pupils. The pupils are content in their environment. They smile readily when spoken to. They confidently share their thoughts with staff. Consequently a good rapport is evident between the pupils and between pupils and adults in school. This reflects well in their work and play.
18. Attendance is well below the national average, although it has consistently improved since the last inspection. The school ensures the pupils and their parents are regularly made aware of the criteria for authorised and unauthorised absence. Regular attendance and punctuality are constantly stressed as good habits to be fostered for the future. There is much competition for the attendance cups and certificates. These are awarded to individuals and to classes for both regular attendance and punctuality. Consequently, as most of the pupils enjoy coming to school, they are early. This is spoilt by the small number of families whose children are too often absent or are regularly late. Occasional days off and holidays during term time are too common. Authorised and unauthorised absence have remained high as a result. However, levels in the first term of the current year do show a further significant improvement towards acceptable standards. Registration is prompt and effective.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

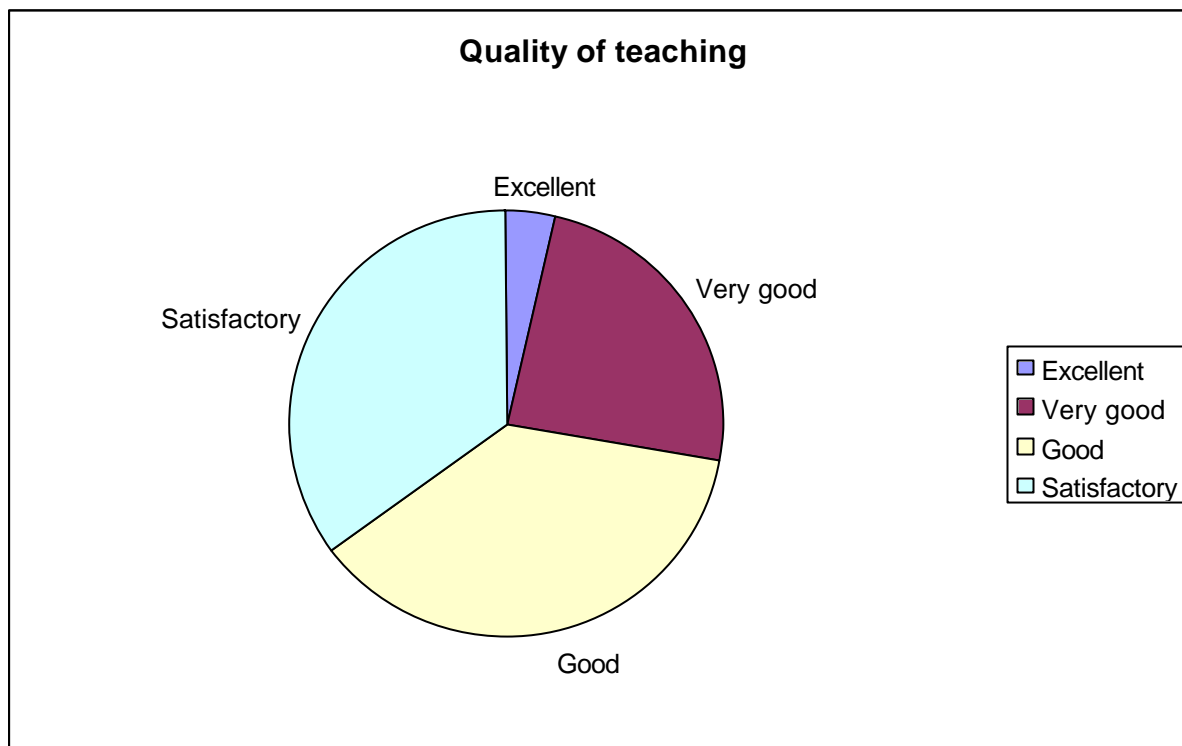
19. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. The proportion of very good and excellent teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection and all teaching observed during the inspection was at least satisfactory.

Strengths in teaching and learning are:

- the teaching in the Foundation Stage is good and these children are given a good start to their learning;
- the teaching of French and music by specialist teachers is very good;
- the teaching in the speech and language unit is very good;
- teaching is good in Years 1 to 4; and
- the teachers generally manage their classes well.

Areas for development are:

- to give the pupils more opportunities for independent learning, particularly for the oldest pupils;
- to ensure that pupils are always given work appropriate to their capabilities;
- to improve the consistency of marking; and
- to give the pupils greater knowledge of their own learning.



20. The quality of teaching is variable between classes. In the Foundation Stage and Years 1 to 4, the quality of teaching and learning is good overall and it is satisfactory overall in Years 5 and 6. The books of the oldest pupils indicate that much learning in many subjects is expected to be gained from copying quantities of knowledge into their books. In these instances, the pupils of all capabilities complete the same task. These tasks are not providing effective opportunities for learning for pupils of any ability and little learning is taking place when this happens, particularly bearing in mind the time taken by some pupils to complete the task. This is a waste of time. However, these pupils benefit from some specialist teaching. Two visiting specialists teach music to all classes from Years 3 to 6. French is also taught to Years 5 and 6 by a specialist. The pupils in Year 6 also benefit from the teaching of history by another member of staff. Much of this specialist teaching is very good, resulting in very good learning in these subjects.
21. The learning environment in the Foundation Stage is very well organised and the teachers provide a rich variety of learning experiences for the children. Opportunities are not missed to reinforce their development. While the children in the Nursery were tidying up after a group of activities, the classroom assistants and teacher were using this as a further opportunity to develop their spoken language. They asked them questions about the equipment they were putting away – counting or naming objects, for example.
22. The teachers manage their classes well and so create a good learning environment for their pupils. The pupils respond well to this and are interested and involved in their learning. For example, in an RE lesson where the pupils were learning about the second pillar of Islam, the teacher had created a peaceful classroom. This and the good use of Islamic objects retained the enthusiasm of the pupils who showed their interest by asking searching, relevant questions. There are no shortcomings in the teachers' subject knowledge across the range of subjects. This represents a considerable improvement since the last inspection in science and ICT, where increasing the teachers' knowledge was a key issue.
23. The teaching by specialist teachers benefits the pupils considerably. The French assistant, funded by the Education Action Zone project, is benefiting the pupils significantly. Not only do the pupils make good progress in their acquisition of spoken French, but there are gains in learning and self-esteem in a number of other areas. For example, the need for careful listening has benefits across the curriculum. There are considerable benefits to those who find written language difficult, particularly those with SEN and EAL. They can succeed in French as all pupils have the same starting point and this gives them

valuable self-esteem. For music, there are two teachers who visit each week to take all the classes from Year 3 to 6, one for singing and the other for the other aspects of music. The expertise of these two teachers and their enthusiasm for their subject inspires the pupils to try their hardest and achieve well. The teaching in the speech and language unit is very good. The teachers and the visiting speech therapists, have the expertise to ensure that the pupils in the unit make very good progress in relation to their abilities.

24. There are a few general areas for development in teaching. Too often the pupils of all capabilities are expected to do the same work. This particularly hampers the progress of the more able. For example in a mathematics lesson, although the teacher had planned tasks of three differing levels of difficulty, all the pupils started with the easiest task, one which many of the pupils could do easily. The time taken in doing these straightforward tasks is not effective learning time for the more able pupils. There are also inconsistencies in the teachers' marking. Only occasionally do the comments, help the pupils to see what it is that they need to do to improve further. Although several teachers display or share the learning objective² at the beginning of lessons, few then return to the objective at the end of the lesson, so that they and the pupils can judge the effectiveness of learning that has taken place.
25. Individual education plans are written carefully for those pupils with SEN, in conjunction with the co-ordinator, the specialist support teacher and class teachers and are reviewed each term. Records of each child's attainment and progress are kept and staff generally show good understanding of the pupils' needs. The teachers set work that is appropriate and assessment is used in planning. The very good teaching by the specialist support teacher and strong back-up by the learning support assistants promote effective learning for these pupils.
26. The pupils with EAL, many of whom have very limited spoken English when they start in the Nursery or later in the school, are particularly well supported so they quickly acquire a secure English vocabulary. The specialist teacher works in close conjunction with the class teachers and teaching assistants to ensure that the support provided is used well. All staff are aware of their roles and provide effective models of spoken and written language.

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

27. The broadly based curriculum meets all statutory requirements, as it did at the time of the previous inspection. There has been satisfactory improvement in producing new policies and schemes of work for all subjects. Some of these are very new and not yet fully embedded into the curriculum, particularly those in DT and geography. They are not yet ensuring that pupils develop skills and knowledge progressively. The curriculum provides a good range of learning opportunities for the children in the Foundation Stage and the pupils in Years 1 and 2 and a satisfactory range for those in Years 3 to 6. The provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is satisfactory. An equal opportunities policy is consistently implemented, with no significant difference in provision because of gender, disability, race or culture.

Strengths in the curriculum are:

- the curriculum for the Foundation Stage and the pupils in Years 1 and 2 is good;
- there are good amounts of time for English and mathematics;
- the curriculum is enriched by the specialist teaching of French and music;
- the good provision for those pupils with SEN and the very good provision for pupils in the speech and language unit;
- a very good range of trips and expert visitors enriches the curriculum; and
- the very good links with the community and other schools that enrich learning.

Areas for development are:

- the amount of teaching time in Years 3 to 6 is below the nationally recommended minimum time;
- the allocation and use of time for different subjects;
- planned opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking and literacy skills across the whole curriculum;

² Learning objectives are the skills, knowledge and understanding pupils should learn from the teacher during the lesson.

- the development of independent learning skills through research and investigation for the oldest pupils; and
 - the use of ICT as a learning tool in lessons in all subjects.
28. The children in the Foundation Stage benefit from a good curriculum that develops their skills, knowledge and understanding in all the recommended areas of learning. There is a good focus on developing children's personal, social and emotional skills and their spoken language. Frequent visits to local places of interest, for example museums and cultural centres, much enriches the curriculum and contributes very well to the children's knowledge and understanding of their world. Games against other schools and an annual residential visit enhance the pupils' social development. The pupils in Years 1 and 2 benefit from a good curriculum that provides them with many opportunities for practical work in all subjects, which engage their interest and enthusiasm. Whilst this is continued into Years 3 and 4, work in Years 5 and 6 is less practically based and much more directed by their teachers. The pupils in the older classes spend much time copying work unnecessarily, which they themselves say is boring. A strength in the curriculum for Years 5 and 6 is the learning of French.
29. The amount of teaching time for the pupils in Years 3 to 6 does not match the nationally recommended teaching time, although that for the younger pupils does. Additionally, the timings of lessons within the school day are out of balance, particularly in the afternoons. For example, in Reception and Years 1 and 2, a long lesson before the afternoon break is followed by a much shorter one, with two subjects usually taught during the afternoon. This sometimes means one of the subjects taught is split by the break, soon after it begins, which interrupts the flow and means that teachers, of the younger pupils in particular, then have to recap what was said before the break, wasting time. Similarly, the lesson time after this short break is difficult to fill purposefully. There is no whole school approach to planning subject coverage in the timetables across the year, which restricts the pupils' ability to develop their skills, understanding and knowledge progressively. For example, some classes only provide teaching in DT in a six-month block, such as from mid-February to July, which means that the pupils have to then recall what they learned from a very long while ago.
30. The school correctly places a strong emphasis on the teaching of English and mathematics and implements the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies appropriately. However, there is no whole school planning for the development of the pupils' speaking skills across the whole curriculum. This results in inconsistencies between classes and particularly affects the oldest pupils who rarely have opportunities to discuss and debate their ideas and the issues that affect their lives. Although medium-term plans provide teachers with opportunities to plan to develop literacy, numeracy and ICT skills in other subjects, there is no structured approach to doing so and there are inconsistencies between classes. Younger classes have more opportunities than older ones for pupils to express themselves independently in writing in all subjects, so that they can show what they have learned. In many lessons, particularly in Years 5 and 6, recording of work too frequently involves copying out long passages from the board or commercial texts. This was also the case at the time of the previous inspection and it continues to restrict the progress of all pupils but especially those who are higher attainers. They say that this work is "boring" and they lack interest in their work. Similarly, the pupils have too few opportunities to investigate and carry out research for themselves in other subjects, such as science and mathematics. This work is often too directed by the teacher and the pupils lack challenge and the opportunity to learn to organise their own work. Although there are some opportunities to conduct research in lessons in the ICT suite and occasionally from reference books in classrooms, older pupils do not have enough opportunity to use the library independently and they make insufficient use of computers in their classrooms for research and recording in other subjects.
31. The pupils with SEN have access to all subjects of the National Curriculum and to extra-curricular activities. All pupils are included with their peer group in external visits and take part in whole-school events. Additionally, extra tuition is given to these pupils on an individual or small-group basis to promote literacy and numeracy skills. Specialist help for those with speech and language or movement problems is available. The school is well supported by outside agencies.
32. The pupils with EAL receive a broad and balanced range of experiences, firmly placed within the National Curriculum. Withdrawal from lessons is kept to a minimum and teachers provide many opportunities for supported speaking and listening.
33. The provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good and for cultural development

it is very good. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Major festivals of several faiths are celebrated and acts of collective worship give opportunities for pupils to reflect on their world. The weekly Star Badge Assembly is an occasion for pupils to reflect on the many good things in school and a genuine feeling of pride in each other's achievements is apparent. The spiritual quality of some daily acts of worship in classrooms is very good. Notable instances are when the pupils in Year 6 with a temporary teacher reflect on how they could have a positive influence on their own happiness by considering for example, "What you believe is what you are." They considered the implications with a high level of maturity. Another occasion was when a teacher shared one of her own poems with the class. The pupils responded sensitively to the special atmosphere that it created. When Buddhist visitors chanted and burned incense to create atmosphere, the pupils were enthralled and handled the religious artefacts with care and respect. Visits to the cathedrals nearby provide opportunities for pupils to experience a spiritual element to the learning and they respond well to such stimuli. One pupil wrote, "We saw big, colourful stained glass windows, full of light."

34. Moral development is good. The pupils have a well-developed sense of right and wrong as was demonstrated by a group of older pupils discussing the school's behaviour plan. They all agreed that it was fairly implemented. All adults act as good role models for the pupils and establish secure relationships as the basis of moral development. The learning mentor³ adds to the school's provision by working with a small number of pupils who occasionally have problems with behaviour. This work is sensitively managed and is generally successful in raising these pupils' self-esteem. Rules of behaviour are displayed around the school, providing reminders and motivation to all. The school promotes its values through fairness, honesty and respect for truth.
35. Social development is good. When opportunities are provided for the pupils to work in pairs or small groups they work collaboratively and sensibly. The pupils have a well-developed sense of community in school and provide help for each other when the need arises. The pupils with EAL are quickly assimilated into classes and their new friends ensure a good level of social support. In a class of younger children, one pupil was helped to overcome her temporary sadness by another child "giving her one of his smiles." There are few formal arrangements for monitors to help run the school but those that exist are effective. This social responsibility extends to adults as well as to each other. Recently the two pupils who give out the registers reported to the headteacher that a teacher was looking unwell and they were concerned for her well being. Such care and responsibility is a feature of many of the pupils in the school.
36. Cultural development is very good. There are many strengths in the school's provision. For example, the promotion of the richly varied culture of the city features regularly in many areas of the curriculum. The curriculum is enriched through the use of music from Mexico, China, Africa and many other areas. The art curriculum affords many opportunities for the pupils to explore the cultures of, for example, the Caribbean islands through visiting the centre in nearby Toxteth. One pupil wrote of her feelings during a visit to a tropical garden as "a peaceful sanctuary for the people." The school provides opportunities for the pupils to sing, dance and paint as part of a week of cultural activities with visitors from an arts foundation. There are opportunities for the pupils to study British culture from other times, such as the Jarrow Crusade for jobs in the 1930s. Such work encouraged the pupils to write very sensitive poetry, proving their understanding of the problems faced by those who lived in those times.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

37. The school takes very good care of the pupils.

Strengths in this aspect are:

- the provision for child protection and for ensuring the pupils' welfare is very good;
- the school promotes regular attendance and punctuality at every opportunity;
- procedures for monitoring and promoting self-discipline are very good;
- procedures for eliminating oppressive behaviour are very good;
- there are good procedures in place for assessment in English and these are used well in Years 1 to 4;
- national test results analysed well by ethnicity and gender;
- good ongoing assessment is carried out in the speech and language unit; and

³ A learning mentor is a member of staff who works with individual pupils to help them with their individual behavioural and emotional problems.

- individual support for the pupils' personal development is good.

Areas for development are:

- assessment procedures are not used effectively to check the pupils' progress in mathematics and science; and
- there are few procedures for assessment in foundation subjects and RE.

38. The pupils are welcomed into a secure, warm and clean environment. The staff provide good role models for the pupils and have a good rapport with them. They provide a happy working atmosphere in which the pupils can grow into rounded individuals. All adults in school are aware of the strict criteria to be observed in child protection. The school has good access to educational, medical and social agencies. There is sensitive care for those unwell.
39. There are very thorough procedures for monitoring and improving attendance. The learning mentor and welfare officers patiently monitor attendance every morning. Any unexpected absences are chased up immediately. Attendance and punctuality are strongly promoted at every opportunity, for example, during registration, through assemblies, the pupils' individual reports and by attendance certificates. The criteria for absence, with good comment on the past year's levels, are clearly stated in the school prospectus and the governors' annual report. This is slowly having a beneficial effect.
40. Procedures for monitoring and promoting self-discipline and eliminating oppressive behaviour are very good. There is a comprehensive behaviour policy covering a very wide range of strategies to encourage good attitudes to learning and behaviour. This is shared with parents and implemented conscientiously, although not always consistently in some classes. Where the pupils have individual behavioural problems, this is the constant concern of staff. Pastoral care of each situation is constantly reviewed, generally with improving results. Bad behaviour is viewed very seriously and with disappointment. Any instances of name calling or bullying are dealt with swiftly and effectively. The parents are thoroughly involved. The headteacher, too often, spends a disproportionate amount of her time in sorting out individual pupils' problems, particularly with some older pupils.
41. At the time of the previous inspection, there was no assessment system in place. There has been satisfactory improvement and a policy and procedures are in place in English, mathematics and science, which provide sufficient information to check that pupils make enough progress from year to year. In English, the procedures are good; they allow the teachers to check progress from year to year and through each year in reading and writing, with individual targets set for improvement. Whilst the information is used well in some classes, it is unsatisfactory that it is not so in all classes. For example, the pupils in Year 2 have their writing targets displayed in their books, but those in Year 6 are unaware of their targets. The information gained from assessments has recently been entered into a computer and, although this is now providing a useful picture of progress in the three subjects, it has not had time to be effective in raising standards. Information has not yet been used effectively to improve the curriculum so that it meets the needs of all pupils. There is little assessment in other subjects, which is unsatisfactory. Assessment procedures for the children in the Foundation Stage have improved and are now good. They provide an ongoing picture of how children are progressing and are used well to plan future work.
42. Results of national tests are analysed thoroughly and highlight areas for curriculum improvement. For example, it was noted that reading in Years 1 and 2 was a weakness and new reading schemes were purchased that would provide better structure and interest levels for all pupils. Standards are consequently rising. The results are also analysed to check how well boys and girls and the pupils from different racial groups achieve compared to others. This has identified that boys, particularly those of white UK origin, do not perform as well as other groups of pupils and the school is now focusing on improving their achievements.
43. The quality of provision for the assessment of the progress of the pupils with SEN is now good, which is an improvement on the result of the last inspection. Assessment for the pupils in the unit continues to be good. Documentation is up to date. A newly formed policy is well written, apt and relates positively to the current Code of Practice. Revision of the format of individual education plans is taking place. The school is monitoring the progress of pupils on the register for SEN more closely and is looking carefully at pupils who may need to be identified earlier. There is good support from the psychology and support services.
44. Members of staff are very patient with pupils with EAL and especially in their understanding of pupils with

difficulties, such as those who have limited understanding of the English language. They allow enough time for these pupils to answer questions in discussions and they encourage and praise them so they are not frightened to have a go. There is no coherent system for monitoring language development to enable individual pupils' progress to be tracked.

45. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are good. Staff are caring. They know the pupils well. External agencies make a valuable contribution to this atmosphere. The learning mentor and classroom assistants add considerable support. The teachers are always willing to listen to pupils. They are very respectful of the pupils' individual needs and support them well. Consequently, the pupils can confidently share their thoughts and concerns with more than one member of staff. The parents are pleased that teachers expect their children to work hard and do their best. They feel teachers help their children to mature and be increasingly responsible. The school has an open door policy. The headteacher is always available. The parents feel confident, therefore, in approaching teachers to discuss any concerns. They feel they are listened to and their views valued.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

46. The parents have generally positive views of the school. This is evident from comments at the parents' meeting, the positive returns of questionnaires and parents spoken to during the inspection. However, links with parents overall are underdeveloped.

Strengths in this aspect are:

- the parents' confidence in the headteacher and staff; and
- the parents' positive views of the school.

Areas for development are:

- information to parents, particularly about their children's progress; and
- the impact of parents on their children's learning.

47. Statutory information is good. There is a comprehensive school prospectus with extremely full comment on the school's aspects, expectations and policies. It includes many helpful comments for parents on the social behaviour of young children. The governors' annual report gives very good insight into governors' responsibilities, decisions made and how they impact on the work of the school. Some minor matters are having attention. There are regular letters covering all the events and activities of the school.
48. Information to parents about their children's progress is satisfactory. A small number of parents expressed concerns about information on their children's progress. This was also a concern at the last inspection. The inspection team found there is a limited amount of curricular information sent out during the year and this is mainly for the youngest children. The parents attend the two consultation sessions, in the autumn and summer terms, very well. Their children's work is always available to view. Written reports conform to requirements, are detailed, individual to the pupil but they lack clear evaluation and pointers for future development. Nevertheless, there are ample opportunities for parents to speak to staff at the beginning and end of each school day or make appointments to discuss their children's progress.
49. The impact of parent's involvement with the work of the school is unsatisfactory. The home/school agreement has had a very good response but there is no clear evidence of a sound partnership in learning. The home/school reading records are inconsistently and often sparingly used. Consequently with the exception of the younger children, the school has no clear indication of parental help for their children at home or how often they hear them read. A few parents have enjoyed the PSP (Parent School Partnership) initiatives or attended the 'Parents as Educators Course'. A good number of parents are always willing to help with trips and visits. There is no tradition of a parents' association but parents help at the school's fund-raising efforts. All this service is valued and large numbers of parents and extended family enjoy the special assemblies, concerts, shows, faith festivals and celebrations.
50. The parents of pupils with SEN are generally supportive. Parents are invited to the school on a regular basis and they attend annual reviews. However, there is not a particularly close involvement by parents in the construction of individual programmes of learning and all parents do not necessarily understand the targets set for their children.
51. The parents of pupils with EAL have been invited to workshops in school to learn about the range of support provided for their children. This supports the home/school partnership and ensures a consistent

approach to improving these pupils' spoken English.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

52. The quality of leadership and management is satisfactory overall and has been maintained since the last inspection.

Strengths in leadership and management are:

- the headteacher has worked hard to raise standards;
- the governing body is becoming more involved;
- most co-ordinators provide good leadership for their subjects;
- learning resources are good in most subjects;
- the accommodation is good; and
- there has been a good increase in the number of teaching assistants.

Areas for development are:

- the systems for checking on the progress of development;
- the lack of everyday access to a suitable outdoor play area for children in the Reception class;
- the use of the Year 2 classroom as access to the playground for other classes; and
- the lack of a disabled toilet on the ground floor.

53. The headteacher provides good leadership for the school. She has had many difficulties to overcome in her comparatively short time in post and most of these have been surmounted well. She has made good appointments in posts that have become vacant during her time and there is now a good team of subject co-ordinators. Most of these have been in post for only a short time and have not yet had an opportunity to have an impact on standards in their subjects. Almost all co-ordinators have produced good plans to develop their subjects. Exceptions are in mathematics, where the co-ordinator has not analysed the weaknesses in the subject and in DT where the co-ordinator teaches in the Foundation Stage and has not had sufficient opportunity to liaise with her colleagues.
54. Leadership of SEN remains sound, with the co-ordinator playing a largely administrative role; though general management is strong, backed by the work of the specialist teacher, support assistants and all other staff. The headteacher and the new and enthusiastic governor for SEN have a very positive attitude for future development. Resources are satisfactory and this is an improvement since the last inspection, though ICT is not used sufficiently to support learning for these pupils. The co-ordinator, specialist teacher and support staff do not meet regularly enough to establish maximum understanding. The pupils with SEN benefit greatly from the strong inclusion policy the school practises.
55. The governing body has had a number of changes in recent years and has only just begun to establish some continuity. Despite this, they have a clear view of their responsibilities and of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. There is a sound committee structure and the finance committee in particular, takes an active role in managing the finances of the school.
56. The school development plan is a comprehensive document, giving a clear view of developments in the school. Although there are clearly defined criteria for judging the success of items in the plan, the systems for checking on this success are not clearly defined or fully in place. Items in the plan are costed, but neither within school, nor within the governing body is there any rigorous system for checking on whether developments are cost-effective. Although there is a good whole-school policy for checking on and improving the quality of teaching and learning, the headteacher has had other appropriate priorities during her first couple of years. This has reduced the effectiveness of any rigorous monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning and has allowed some inconsistencies to continue.
57. The governors and the headteacher make good use of all the specific grants available to them. Day-to-day management of finances is efficient both within school and by the finance committee of the governing body. Finances are clearly linked to educational priorities both in the school development plan and in the day-to-day management of the budget. Although the school is carrying forward significant funds, these are planned to be used to redesign the facilities for the Foundation Stage. The school office is run very efficiently, releasing much of the day-to-day administration from the shoulders of the headteacher and other teachers.

58. The school is well staffed. The number of teachers is appropriate for the size of the school. They are suitably qualified to provide a good standard of education for their pupils. Staff new to the school are given good levels of support to help them in their early days in post. Specialist teachers of music, French and English as an additional language provide further expertise, which promotes high standards. There is a good number of learning support assistants who complement the work in classrooms, particularly in supporting pupils with SEN and EAL. The accommodation is good. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The classrooms are generally well appointed and provide good bases for learning. An exception to this is one classroom that also acts as an exit route for several other classes. This is unsatisfactory as the arrangement causes some disruption to learning despite the good organisation of the class teacher. A further unsatisfactory arrangement is the distance that the Reception class is from the Nursery. This means that Reception children do not have ready access to a suitably equipped secure outside play area. A room has been set aside to provide a good library and small computer suite but these are not used well to allow the pupils to carry out independent research. Toilet facilities for the disabled are situated on the first floor only. Should there be an occasion when the lift is out of order, access to this toilet would be denied. The school has spent considerable sums on improving learning resources and the provision is now good. Resources are good in quantity and quality giving good support to teaching and learning across the whole curriculum and across the age range of pupils in the school. This is an improvement since the last inspection.
59. The school has established very good financial procedures that are based firmly upon the principle of best value⁴. Taking into account all relevant factors, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

THE WORK OF THE SPEECH AND LANGUAGE UNIT

60. The quality of provision in the speech and language unit is very good. Improvements have continued to develop since the previous inspection and the general ethos of the unit provides pupils with a calm yet stimulating environment in which to learn.
61. All pupils in the unit have access to the National Curriculum and a major aim is to enable each child to return to mainstream schooling. At present two pupils within the unit have a statement of educational need. Exercises in motor control are given if a child has movement difficulties. Two pupils in particular have greatly benefited from this facility. The unit consists of a large open-plan area with two separate rooms for speech and language therapy. Accommodation is good and the unit is very well resourced. Staff work as a strong team which includes two specialist teachers with a wide background of experience and training, and two well-trained support assistants. Two speech and language therapists complete the picture, sharing their considerable expertise with the staff during two days each week. Team meetings occur weekly and these prove invaluable for exchanging information. The collective talents of the staff form a very strong basis from which to help those in their care. In addition, the unit has complete support from the headteacher, governors and all members of the school.
62. The pupils of Years 1 and 2 age remain in the Unit for all lessons; Years 3 to 6 age pupils attend as many mainstream lessons as possible, aiming for full integration eventually. Unit staff provide back-up lessons for some subjects, especially for literacy and numeracy. Two pupils of Reception age are included in the Nursery activities, such as water and sand play and painting each afternoon, with experience on playground apparatus under the care of a support assistant. The beginning of each day is given over to mixed activities until taxis have arrived. During this time help with reading is given, stories are read, work finished, constructional toys utilised and children encouraged to use language. It is a very interactive and fulfilling part of the day. The pupils in the unit are very much part of the whole-school ethos, sharing in general school activities and taking part in school events. Taxi times restrict attendance at after-school clubs, however, one pupil has been able to join a football group.
63. The unit has a good working relationship with all outside agencies. The particular involvement of the speech and language service is of special value. These therapists play a crucial role in the development of each child's education and well-being, working very closely with staff in the school and keeping good contact with parents. The pupils are seen weekly in school and are given daily exercises to practise. Advice from an occupational therapist is available if needed. Every opportunity to learn and succeed is given to children in the unit whatever their difficulties.

⁴ Best value requires the organisation to challenge the need for spending, to get competitive prices for goods and services, to compare its performance against similar organisations and to consult its users.

64. All pupils with speech and language impairment are working within the range of their capability. They make very good progress against personal targets. Some pupils gain satisfactory results within the national expectation in some subjects, including English and mathematics. In practical and creative areas, such as PE, art and music, attainment is at least sound and sometimes good. Some fine examples of good detailed artwork are evident in the classroom, together with a variety of children's work in a range of subjects. ICT features strongly in displays and the pupils are proud to talk about their achievements. Links with the local community provide additional learning opportunities. Visits to an art gallery have stimulated interest in the work of famous artists and visits to parks in the area have produced topics incorporating literacy, science, mathematics and an interest in the environment. Connections are frequently made between subjects of the curriculum. During the inspection, for example, a unit teacher was able to connect a story from Indonesia with geography, by locating the country on a world map and discussing similarities and differences.
65. The quality of teaching in the unit is very good. Lessons are thoroughly prepared, with careful attention to detail and consideration of individual needs. The teachers show very good subject knowledge in all learning areas. Explanations are clear and appropriate. Assessment is on-going and is directly related to planning. The teachers have high expectations. They are supported by the exceptionally good work of the classroom assistants and the very special skills of the speech and language therapists. Class management is excellent. Examples of pupils' work are beautifully presented in wall displays.
66. The pupils show very positive attitudes towards learning. They try hard with their work and respond well to the stimulation provided by teachers. In lessons they concentrate well, are keen to answer questions and are enthusiastic about tackling new goals. Their standard of behaviour is very good and they are aware of the needs of others. The pupils settle well in groups and work co-operatively with each other. Their personal and social development is very good.
67. Management of the unit is extremely thorough. Individual education plans are carefully written and are constantly being updated. All staff are involved and targets are discussed with the pupils. The daily recording and weekly reporting process involving the whole team provides up-to-date information and constant feedback. All staff are engaged in regular and specific training and are totally committed to enhancing the education and lives of these pupils. A daily home/school diary relays information to and from parents. The children have regular homework and ongoing tasks relating to speech and language needs. Most parents are co-operative and help children at home. They keep in touch with the school and meet staff whenever possible. They are given copies of individual targets and are invited to comment. Parents of pupils with a statement of educational need attend annual reviews and any parent may observe a speech and language session should they so wish.
68. The environment presented to pupils in the unit is wholly beneficial for these children. There are occasions when they do not have sufficient involvement with school assemblies for example, in order to further enhance social development. Much is done to help children with speech and/or language difficulties to overcome their problems. They have made great strides towards extending educational development in general terms and boosting confidence. Video recording is now in use in therapy sessions to show progression over time. Links with other schools are retained, with the aim that all unit pupils will return to mainstream education in their local school. Meanwhile the atmosphere engendered in the unit sustains hope and high expectation for the future success to all pupils. The speech and language unit is a strength of the school.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

69. In order to continue to raise standards, particularly in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 6, the governors, headteacher and staff should:
- (i) Ensure that the pupils, particularly those in Years 5 and 6, have sufficient opportunities for independent work by:
 - increasing the opportunities for research and investigative and experimental work, particularly in mathematics and science;
(*Paragraphs 5, 12, 20, 28, 30, 58, 81, 87, 92, 107*)
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to express their own thoughts and record these in their own way;

- (Paragraphs 5, 12, 20, 28, 30, 80, 82, 92, 110, 111, 112, 131)
 - ensuring that those pupils of higher capability are consistently given work which extends their learning; and
(Paragraphs 10, 20, 24, 30, 79, 87, 92, 110, 112, 131)
 - ensuring that computers are used in all subjects of the curriculum, and particularly for research.
(Paragraphs 58, 117)
- (ii) Adjust the time spent in teaching and learning so that:
 - the school spends at least the recommended minimum teaching and learning time in Years 3 to 6;
(Paragraph 29)
 - sufficient time can regularly be spent on all subjects of the curriculum;
(Paragraphs 7, 29, 101, 108, 132)
 - all teaching sessions are long enough to be used effectively; and
(Paragraphs 29, 132)
 - the specialist teaching of music and French can be continued.
(Paragraphs 23, 28)
- (iii) Extend the use of assessments so that:
 - the teachers have records in all subjects that tell them exactly what the pupils know and understand;
(Paragraphs 41, 84, 104, 113, 132)
 - these records are then used to check on the progress of all pupils;
(Paragraphs 41, 84, 94)
 - these records are used to set targets for the pupils' future learning, both in the long and short term; and
(Paragraphs 41, 84, 87, 94)
 - the teachers consistently include these targets in the marking of the pupils' books:
(Paragraphs 41, 84, 87, 94)
- (iv) Put in place a structured approach to improving the pupils' speaking and range of vocabulary.
(Paragraphs 30, 80)

In addition to the areas for development above, the governors should consider the following for inclusion in their action plan.

- Refine systems for keeping a check on the success of initiatives within the school to ensure that progress is being made in areas for development.
(Paragraphs 56, 104, 108, 132)
- A consistent whole-school approach is taken to all aspects of the school, (Paragraphs 7, 24, 29, 40, 41, 49, 84, 96) and particularly:
 - the planned curriculum for geography and design and technology;
(Paragraphs 7, 29, 101, 108)
 - the marking of the pupils' work; and
(Paragraphs 24, 83, 87)
 - the use of the behaviour policy.
(Paragraph 40)
- Improve the links with parents.
(Paragraph 49)
- Ensure that all needs of the disabled are met.
(Paragraph 58)
- Provide more opportunities for the whole school to meet together.
(Paragraph 15)
- Ensure that the children in the Reception class have ready access to a suitably equipped play area.
(Paragraphs 52, 70)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

54

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

68

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
Number	2	13	20	19	0	0	0
Percentage	4	24	37	35	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 nearly two percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	24	196
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	n/a	114

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	40

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	56

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	10
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	15

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	7.4
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	1.6
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	14	10	24

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	8	7	10
	Girls	7	8	9
	Total	15	15	19
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	63 (72)	63 (72)	79 (81)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	10	11
	Girls	8	8	9
	Total	18	18	20
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	75 (72)	75 (81)	83 (81)
	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	13	14	27

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	9	8
	Girls	12	10	12
	Total	21	19	20
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	78 (59)	70 (67)	74 (74)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	7	7
	Girls	11	9	11
	Total	19	16	18
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	70 (48)	59 (52)	67 (67)
	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	61	1	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	5	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	9	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	56	0	0
Chinese	4	0	0
Any other ethnic group	27	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	34	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)	11
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	17.8
Average class size	28

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	260

Qualified teachers and support staff: Nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24
Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	60
Number of pupils per FTE adult	8

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	3
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2002
£	
Total income	689,780
Total expenditure	636,731
Expenditure per pupil	2,881
Balance brought forward from previous year	73,229
Balance carried forward to next year	126,277

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	225
Number of questionnaires returned	56

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	81	18	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	61	32	4	4	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	49	44	4	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	49	37	12	2	0
The teaching is good.	61	37	2	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	49	32	16	0	4
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	74	25	2	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	67	32	0	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	46	40	9	4	2
The school is well led and managed.	61	30	5	0	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	56	37	4	2	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	41	29	14	4	13

Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding

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

70. On entry, there is a wide range of attainment but it is generally low overall because of the high proportion of children speaking little English and a similarly high proportion who have SEN. It is particularly low in oral communication, early reading and writing skills and mathematics. This is confirmed by the assessments that the school makes on entry. Teaching is good in both classes, as at the time of the previous inspection and children make good progress, so that when they enter Year 1, attainment is average in personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative and physical development. However, it remains below average in the important areas of spoken English, early reading and writing and mathematical development.

Strengths in the provision are:

- teaching and learning are good and the children make good progress;
- there is a good curriculum;
- there is a very good programme of visits to enrich the children's learning about their world;
- the children enjoy their activities and develop good attitudes and independence;
- provision for the children with EAL is good; and
- resources are good in all areas of learning.

An area for development is:

- the outside play area is underdeveloped and is not easily accessible to the children in the Reception class.

71. As at the time of the previous inspection, the curriculum is good. Teaching is good as the teachers plan a wide range of practical activities that interest the children and build well upon their previous learning. These include a fortnightly programme of visits to local places of interest, such as parks and shops, which greatly enrich learning. Lessons provide for a good balance of directly taught activities and independence in the choice of other activities. Adults have very good relationships with children and manage their behaviour very well. The children's performance is assessed continually and good records maintained, with samples of work and photographs that help staff plan effectively for the next steps in learning. Well-qualified support staff work very effectively with class teachers. An extra nursery nurse in the Nursery focuses particularly on the children's spoken language, supporting the good work carried out by the teacher for children with EAL. She is very effective in improving the children's understanding and communication skills so that they can communicate with the staff and other children and take a full part in activities. A number of parents offer their children good support with learning at home and the teachers provide interesting homework that extends the children's learning. For example, when children in the Reception class were learning about solid shapes their task was to locate these shapes in their own homes and bring samples in the next day.

72. The new school building provides an area for outdoor play for the children in the Nursery and the improved resources are now good, as they are in other areas of learning. However, the Reception class has been built at the opposite end of the school and children in that class are some distance from the outdoor play area. The teachers ensure that they have sound opportunities to visit this area and to extend their physical skills further in well-planned PE lessons. The area itself is not yet fully developed because it has only just been made fully secure. The school has outline plans to extend the building to create a Foundation Stage unit to make better use of the accommodation and resources for this area of learning.

Personal, social and emotional development

73. Adults promote the children's personal, social and emotional development effectively. The warm and caring atmosphere in both rooms promotes the children's sense of security and they settle quickly into school. They learn skills of independence, for example by registering themselves when they arrive in the mornings, by looking after their own personal needs and undressing and dressing unaided for PE lessons. Staff constantly raise their self-esteem by praising their efforts and achievements and make very good use of a digital camera to record the children as they work. These pictures are displayed and children enjoy seeing themselves at work. The staff value what children have to say, listening with

interest and the children develop confidence and trust in them. The adults set a good example of co-operation for children to follow and children make good progress in learning to work and play together constructively. Behaviour is very good and children work together as friends, sharing equipment and waiting patiently for their turn in activities. Most concentrate well and enjoy taking responsibility, for example when choosing their own activities. By the end of the Reception Year, children are as confident and independent as most other children of the same age.

Communication, language and literacy

74. The teaching of basic literacy skills is good and the children make good progress. They learn some of their letter sounds and how to form letters and some begin to write for themselves. However, a significant proportion know few letters and find it hard to apply what they know in spelling out words. The children listen to adults and each other with respect but only about half are happy to speak aloud in whole class sessions, with a sound range of vocabulary. Most use only a basic range of words and speak in short phrases or sentences. The children listen to stories with enjoyment, joining in with those that they know. The staff take every opportunity to engage children in conversation whilst they work and play, using correct technical vocabulary to help children develop their own range of language further. The children enjoy books and have a sound understanding about how to read them. For example, they hold them correctly, read from front to back and left to right and know that the print carries the meaning as well as the pictures. By the end of the Reception Year, a few are beginning to read some common words, such as the names of characters in the school reading scheme but this work is below average for their age. Only a small group of higher attainers reach the levels that might be expected for their age in reading and independent writing, the general level of attainment being below average.

Mathematical development

75. Teaching is good and the children make good progress because of the practical approach to teaching. There are many opportunities to use equipment in counting, ordering and comparing. For example, by counting how many small bottles are needed to fill a large one, when playing in the water. By the end of the Reception Year, higher attaining children count to 20 accurately and begin to add and subtract with numbers to ten. Average attainers count accurately to ten and understand the order of numbers, whilst lower attainers work on learning numbers to ten. The children know and understand simple properties of two- and three-dimensional shapes and identify them in their own environment. The children work together to collect numerical information, which they present on a pictorial class graph; for example, when they look for animals in displays around the school and make a class graph to show how many of each type they found. By the end of the Reception Year, despite good progress, standards are still a little below average, with a significant number of children not attaining the levels expected for their age and few exceeding them.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

76. Teaching is good and interesting lessons, combined with the very good range of visits, deepen the children's understanding of their world so that they make good progress and almost attain average standards. They develop a sense of place and time through studies of their environment and their own lives. For example, the children compare how they looked as babies and how much they have grown and changed. They observe flowers and fruits carefully, feeling, smelling and tasting before drawing pictures of what they see. They plant the seeds from these fruits and watch them grow. They learn to love and care for their world, visiting the park to observe the wildlife and feed the ducks and other birds in wintertime. The children explore the use of dry and wet sand and water independently. They learn good skills in using computers, playing simple matching, literacy and numeracy games and creating pictures. The children also learn to control the movement of a robotic toy, moving it in different directions for different distances.

Physical development

77. Provision has improved since the previous inspection because of the outdoor play area. Teaching is good and there are good opportunities for the children to manipulate simple tools and toys; they make sound progress in developing their finer control, such as in writing, drawing and cutting. The children make good progress when they take part in outdoor play and PE lessons, learning to control their movements and develop an awareness of space and others. The children have sound opportunities to play with large

equipment, such as balls, wheeled vehicles and climbing, crawling and balancing equipment outdoors. By the time they enter Year 1 standards are average, with most children attaining the levels expected for their age, although a few still have difficulty in controlling a pencil or scissors.

Creative development

78. Teaching is good and the children make good progress. They learn to draw and paint by observing carefully; for example, when they study people who help us they draw and paint pictures of their visitors. They extend their creative work on a computer art program, using different drawing tools, altering the thickness of their lines and filling with colour from the brush or fill tools. The children use a variety of materials to create collage pictures and print with a variety of tools, creating repeating patterns. In the Nursery, the children join in happily with action songs and rhymes. Those who speak little English take part by joining in with the actions and quickly begin to try to repeat the words with other children. Reception children learn the names and sounds of simple instruments and how they should be played and create their own from solid shapes they have studied in mathematics. The children enjoy their role-play opportunities and take their parts confidently. For example, in the Nursery the children play independently in the home corner, dressing up, going shopping and talking on the telephone to their friends. A few are limited by their command of English but enact their parts appropriately. Overall, standards are close to the average when children enter Year 1, with most attaining the levels expected for their age.

ENGLISH

79. Standards in Year 2 and Year 6 are below average. The pupils make good progress through Years 1 and 2 from their entry point but it slows to satisfactory in older classes, where the pupils spend too much time copying and completing mechanical exercises. This particularly affects the progress of the higher attaining pupils who do not achieve enough. Despite this, most of the pupils have made good progress by the end of Year 6. This maintains the standards noted at the previous inspection and is an improvement on those recorded in the results of the national tests at the end of Year 2 in 2002. In Year 2, the high proportion of the pupils with EAL or who have SEN is adversely affecting the standards achieved.

Strengths in the subject are:

- good achievement, particularly in the younger classes;
- good teaching and learning in the younger classes;
- the good support for the pupils with SEN helps them make good progress towards their targets;
- the support for the pupils with EAL helps them make good progress in speaking and understanding English;
- good leadership, which is promoting improvement; and
- the good resources.

Areas for improvement are:

- the pupils' speaking and listening skills;
- the provision of more interesting and challenging tasks in independent working sessions, especially for the oldest pupils;
- the provision of more opportunities for pupils to write independently in all subjects;
- the provision of more opportunities for the pupils to practise their skills in finding information in the library;
- the use of computers in research and in writing; and
- improving the use of end of lesson sessions, the consistency of marking and the setting of targets so that pupils understand how well they are succeeding and how they could improve.

80. Inspection evidence shows that, as at the last inspection, standards in speaking and listening are below average at the end of Years 2 and 6. In Year 2, standards in listening are average but many the pupils who have EAL have not yet developed their understanding of spoken English. The staff support their learning well, by providing clear models of speaking, checking that pupils understand and encouraging them to speak in group and class activities. By the time they enter Years 3 to 6, their speaking and listening skills are similar to those of other pupils. However, few pupils use a wide enough range of descriptive vocabulary and most speak in phrases or single sentences. Not many explain themselves clearly and use only simple, short sentences. In Years 3 to 6, the pupils listen carefully to their teachers so that they understand what they are to do and follow instructions well. Whilst the pupils in Years 3 and

4 are encouraged to speak in class or group discussions, as at the time of the previous inspection, the older pupils have too few opportunities to develop their skills through planned opportunities to discuss or explain their work, or debate issues that affect themselves or the wider community. Many lack confidence in speaking aloud and do not volunteer information; they answer direct questions mainly with a simple sentence and lack a range of descriptive and technical vocabulary. By the end of Year 6, the pupils do not have good enough skills in arguing their case or expressing their thoughts effectively. There are insufficient opportunities for the older pupils to develop their speaking skills further through role-play or drama in other subjects.

81. Standards in reading are average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Whilst the pupils achieve well at the end of Year 2, the pace of learning slows in Years 5 and 6. The pupils in Year 2 have sound knowledge of the letter system (phonics) and its use in learning to read new words. They read with enjoyment and expression, using a good range of strategies to work out new words and discuss their books eagerly. Until recently, the school had no structured selection of books to teach reading in the younger classes, which is why standards fell. This has been remedied and there is now a wide selection of good quality books that inspires these children to read. Parents are encouraged to help their children at home with reading but even in the younger classes, only just over half do so. These parents provide valuable support for their children. The school compensates for the general lack of support by using qualified classroom support to provide additional reading activities. This help and the good new resources are providing for improvement in reading standards. Whilst pupils in Year 6 read at average levels, with sound understanding, they have lost their enthusiasm for literature and express a preference for non-fiction texts. Higher attainers discuss their books with a good understanding of characters and themes in the book but they and the average attainers find it hard to name even the most popular modern authors and cannot compare and contrast the different styles of writing. For example, a higher attaining pupil could not name J K Rowling as the author of the Harry Potter books and only Shakespeare as a poet. Lower attainers lack confidence but are accurate and have sound understanding of their books. The pupils in Year 6 have sound skills in locating information in books and in the library, although they have too few opportunities to develop these skills further by conducting personal research across all subjects, either in books or on computers and by learning to select appropriate information from a range of sources. Those pupils who are lower attainers, or who have SEN, are given good quality individual support to help them make good progress towards their personal reading targets.
82. Standards in writing are below average in Year 2 and Year 6. Standards at the end of Year 2 are rising after a period of decline, thanks to better teaching of the basic skills that pupils need to learn to write and the use of a new assessment system. This helps teachers identify individual targets for pupils that they share with them, so that they understand what they need to do to improve their writing. Standards in Year 6 show a decline on those noted at the previous inspection and during the inspection there was little evidence of pupils writing independently. Most pupils in Year 2 write at appropriate length in neat print and their standards of spelling are average. Only high attainers are beginning to show a sound understanding of how to use capital letters and full stops to punctuate their sentences. They use sentence joiners such as 'and' 'so' or 'because' correctly to create more complex and interesting sentences, but lack a range of descriptive vocabulary to enrich their work. Average attaining pupils structure their work appropriately and are beginning to use punctuation on some occasions. Lower attainers produce a small amount of work and show an awareness of full stops, although they are applied inaccurately. About a third of the year group have SEN and this group is supported well to enable them to make good progress towards their writing targets. In Year 6, pupils' handwriting is neat and well formed and standards of spelling and punctuation are sound. Work is structured appropriately and average and higher attaining pupils organise it into paragraphs. However, because of the great amount of work that is copied, from the board, worksheets or spelling and comprehension cards, particularly in Years 5 and 6, pupils have insufficient opportunities to express themselves creatively or to write their own reports of work in other subjects to show how much they have learned. The range of different styles of writing, such as reports, stories, letters and poetry, which are used, are very limited and this inhibits the progress of all pupils, but particularly those who are higher attainers. Only in history, taught by a specialist teacher, do pupils have a sound range of opportunities for independent writing in different styles. This is unsatisfactory and has a negative impact on pupils' attitudes to learning. The pupils spoken to in Year 6 report writing as boring and say that work in some other subjects, particularly RE, is also boring because it also only consists of copying, with some missing word work (cloze procedures). Literacy, therefore, is generally not used well in other subjects of the curriculum.
83. Teaching is good overall, particularly in the teaching of basic skills of phonics, reading and writing in

younger classes. It is only satisfactory for the oldest pupils, where there are elements of unsatisfactory practice in the teaching of writing and planning opportunities to develop pupils' speaking skills. Most teachers have good subject knowledge and plan well to meet the needs of their pupils. The teachers organise and manage their classes well, forming very good constructive relationships with their pupils. Most have high expectations of their pupils' work and behaviour, which are amply rewarded by the way that the pupils concentrate well and work hard throughout lessons. Older pupils generally maintain their concentration and work hard even in lessons that they themselves say are boring. In most classes, lessons are well structured, making good use of time and resources to interest pupils. Introductory sessions of lessons are usually lively and clear and the pupils understand what it is they are going to learn. Independent work varies considerably in quality. The teachers in younger classes plan tasks to build on pupils' achievements appropriately but, in older classes, there is heavy over-reliance on using outdated commercial materials. In these lessons, the pupils spend too much time copying and this limits their focus on the lesson's learning target and therefore the progress that they make. At the end of lessons, the teachers usually share pupils' work with the rest of the class and congratulate them on success. This time is not used well to discuss how well the pupils have actually achieved the learning targets so that they know how much they have learned and how they might improve. All teachers mark work regularly but not all provide comments on how work could be improved or how well pupils are progressing towards their personal targets. Only in Year 2 are targets recorded in pupils' books and reviewed on an ongoing basis so that pupils understand how well they are succeeding in achieving them. Throughout the school, teachers do not use computers sufficiently in literacy lessons so that the pupils recognise their value as an everyday writing tool, particularly in drafting and redrafting their work. The good quality of the teamwork between the classroom support staff is a strength of teaching. Support staff are used very well to support lower attaining pupils and those pupils with SEN, which helps them take a full part in lessons and enhances their progress and self-esteem. For example, in one class in Years 3 and 4, a child with SEN worked alongside his classmates, to write his own sentences, with his support assistant and was selected to share his work with the class. His pleasure in doing so was clear. Good teaching by the SEN support teacher also contributes well to the progress of these pupils. The same teacher also provides good support for the pupils with EAL and promotes good progress in their use and understanding of spoken English.

84. Good leadership has recently provided for good improvements in resources and the use of assessment, which are now resulting in rising standards in Years 1 and 2. Management systems are not as well developed but do ensure that the school's policies are consistently applied throughout the school. Results of national tests are analysed thoroughly to identify areas of concern and effective action is taken, such as the reintroduction of a structured individual reading scheme and the provision of a better range of non-fiction texts to interest boys. There is a whole school approach to the monitoring of teaching and learning but this has not been effective in ensuring that teachers take a consistent approach to implementing school policies and improvements. There is a good new system for assessing pupils' learning and data is now providing the school with information to check that pupils make sufficient progress from year to year and across each year group. Whilst this is now having an impact on standards in younger age groups, where targets are set for individual improvement, it is not as effective for the oldest pupils and pupils in Year 6 are unaware of their targets. The curriculum is enriched well by the visits of visitors and special events, such as theatre group performances. There is a very clear understanding of what the school needs to do to improve further and a strong commitment to achieving it.

MATHEMATICS

85. Standards are below average at the end of Year 2 and at the end of Year 6. The pupils make good progress through the school due to the good teaching that they are receiving but progress for the oldest pupils is slower. The pupils with SEN make good progress. Improvement since the school was previously inspected is satisfactory.

Strengths of the subject are:

- the good quality of teaching and learning;
- the range and quality of learning resources; and
- the pupils' very good attitudes to their learning and their behaviour.

An area for improvement is:

- insufficient opportunities are given for the pupils to investigate, solve problems practically and apply mathematics in a range of contexts.

86. Throughout the school the quality of teaching is generally good. Lessons are planned in accordance with the National Numeracy Strategy and there is now a good range of resources to support learning. This is an improvement since the school was last inspected. The teachers use mathematical vocabulary well and give the pupils opportunities to explain why they have used a particular strategy. For example, in a very good lesson in Year 1 in which the focus was shapes, the teacher asked the pupils to describe their thinking in answering questions such as "How did you know it was a triangle?" Many of the oral sessions at the start of lessons encourage these thinking processes with the use of questions like "Did anybody get the answer a different way?" The pupils usually offer their answers readily and they listen carefully to others' suggestions and ideas. The concluding part of some lessons is rushed. This denies the pupils opportunities to reflect on what has been learned.
87. The teachers organise their classes into groups so that their pupils can work with those of similar ability. Generally this arrangement works well but often the more able pupils are not given sufficient challenge in their work, particularly in the areas of problem solving and investigation. The proof of this is the relatively lower proportion of higher levels gained in the National Curriculum tests in both Year 2 and Year 6 over the years. Despite having a good recall of number facts, a group of Year 6 pupils could not apply this knowledge in solving a problem and they could not systematically work through the possibilities for potential solutions. This lack of confidence is rooted in the underdevelopment of mathematical investigations, particularly for the older pupils and for boys. In some lessons some of the more able pupils have to complete the same tasks as the other pupils when they have clearly mastered the concept and are ready to move on to more demanding tasks. These pupils do not learn as effectively as they should. The procedures for assessing mathematics are underused. Whilst there are regular written tests and reviews of the pupils' attainment, the results of these assessments are not used well to plan for the next stage in each pupil's learning. As a consequence the teachers and pupils are not aware of the pupils' targets for improvement. Although the pupils' work is always marked by the teacher there are few good examples of marking which helps pupils know what to do to improve. The National Numeracy Strategy has been implemented and the three-part lesson is firmly established. The use of homework is inconsistent, with some activities being merely the completion of a low level worksheet that does not extend learning further.
88. There are good relationships in lessons and a purposeful learning atmosphere is the norm. The teachers and support assistants co-operate well to help the learning of individuals and small groups of pupils. For example, in a Year 4 lesson one pupil with SEN was given sufficiently good support for him to feel confident to demonstrate his work to the whole class. His efforts brought a spontaneous round of applause from the other pupils. Those pupils with EAL are supported well and they make good progress. They are given every opportunity to practise the vocabulary of mathematics and so improve their understanding.
89. The teachers are generally good at involving the pupils in their own learning. For example in a Year 6 lesson the teacher successfully encouraged the pupils to describe their methods and strategies. The pupils consistently used the correct mathematical vocabulary, for example "partitioning and chunking." The teachers usually display the lesson objectives so that the pupils can refer to them as the lesson progresses but only occasionally are the objectives returned to at the end of the lesson for pupils to measure their own progress. The teachers manage their classes well and behaviour is generally good.
90. The quality and quantity of learning resources are good. The teachers use these resources well to support the pupils' learning, for example in one lesson the overhead projector was used well to illustrate formal methods of finding the factors of three and four digit numbers. The opportunities for the pupils to use ICT, to support their learning, are not sufficient and in only one lesson observed was the computer used. The opportunity to apply mathematics in other areas of the curriculum is not often taken, a notable exception being in a Year 1 DT lesson where shape and scale were used very effectively. Although there have been opportunities for the co-ordinator to check the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school, there has been little impact on provision as a result. The co-ordinator has not analysed the weaknesses in the subject or planned effective strategies to raise standards.

SCIENCE

91. Standards at both the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are below average. The pupils make good progress from a low starting point when they enter school, although this progress slows for the oldest pupils. The pupils

with SEN are supported well and make good progress relative to their abilities. Similarly the pupils with EAL are supported sensitively by the teachers and support assistants and make good progress. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Although a number of improvements have been put in place since the last inspection, these have not yet had an impact on standards in Year 6 and progress has been satisfactory.

Strengths in the subjects are:

- the progress that the pupils make;
- the good quality of teaching and learning;
- the plans the co-ordinator has put in place to raise standards; and
- the resources for the subject.

Areas for development are:

- the opportunities for experimental and investigative work for the oldest pupils; and
- the use of assessments to check on the pupils' progress.

92. The co-ordinator has developed a scheme of work that encourages the use of experimental and investigative work and much of the curriculum for Years 1 to 4 is now taught in this way. This is resulting in increased rates of learning and deepened understanding for these pupils. For example, in a lesson on teeth in Year 4, the teacher had organised a practical activity which excited and enthused the pupils and led to very good learning about teeth and dental hygiene. The work in Years 5 and 6 is not organised in this way. The pupils' books in these year groups show much work copied from the board or other sources and learning often expected to take place through the copying of extended pieces whilst filling in a few missing words. Although the pupils are mastering some knowledge, it is with little understanding and is the major reason why standards in Year 6 are not higher. For example, the pupils have very limited understanding of a fair test. Discussions with pupils confirm this. The other factor of the way in which work is presented in Years 5 and 6 is that all pupils are expected to complete the same tasks. This means that the work is not suitably challenging, particularly for the higher attaining pupils.
93. The quality of teaching is good overall, although it is better in Years 1 to 4 than in Years 5 and 6. The teachers generally make particularly good use of the very good range and quality of resources available to them. For example, in a lesson in Year 2 where part of the focus was on healthy eating, the teacher had planned the use of some very useful commercial products for the lower attaining pupils to give them a greater understanding of the contents of a healthy diet. The school has spent significant sums on additional resources in the recent past and this is enabling the teachers to use an experimental and investigative approach to their teaching.
94. The co-ordinator has good plans to raise standards in the subject and has already done a lot of work to this end, despite being fairly new to the post. For example, she is in the process of revising the scheme of work and has been responsible for the new resources. She has analysed the weakness in investigative and experimental work and staff are attending courses to address this weakness. Raising standards in science was a key issue at the last inspection and although standards have not risen for reasons given above, some of the specifics, such as raising levels of teachers' knowledge and expertise, have been addressed. The co-ordinator has made a start at monitoring the curriculum and assessing the pupils' attainment, but assessments are not yet being used to keep a check on their progress, nor targets set for their future learning.

ART AND DESIGN

95. At the end of Year 2 and Year 6, attainment is above average. The pupils make good progress due to the good quality of teaching. This is an improvement since the previous inspection.

Strengths in the subject are the:

- use of sketch books with the younger pupils;
- use of displays of pupils' work;
- use of resources to develop the pupils' skills; and
- vision and enthusiasm of the art and design co-ordinator.

Areas for improvement are the:

- use of sketch books throughout the school; and

- need for a scheme of work.
96. From the earliest stages up to Year 4 the pupils use their sketchbooks to develop drawing and observational skills. They are able to check their own progress and maintain a record of the work they have done. This encourages them to learn from previous experiences and to explore and develop their ideas further. A particularly good example of this was seen in Year 3 where the pupils used pastels to draw a still-life composition that involved shading and perspective. The use of sketchbooks is not extended into Years 5 and 6 and this lack of consistency of approach slows progression in art and design skills.
97. The quality of teaching is good. The pupils are given a good range of opportunities to develop and refine their work through using a variety of media, such as paint, pastels, pencil, clay, etc. They work very well in collaborative situations and can discuss their work, suggesting ideas for improvement. The teachers have good subject knowledge and demonstrate ideas effectively to the pupils. The teachers use the work of famous artists to stimulate the pupils, for example in Year 5 the work of Hans Holbein was examined as a prelude to the pupils drawing self-portraits. This link to Tudor art helped the pupils understand the place of court artists from other times as well as how to compose portraits. Year 2 pupils, when drawing fruit, looked at the work of Giuseppe Archimboldo and could appreciate his style as they tried out a variety of tools and techniques. Very good use is made of the many cultural opportunities which the school presents to the pupils. An annual visit from the Osun Arts Group provides a superb focus for a wide range of creative arts activities, including tie-dye and batik work. Painting in an African style is accompanied by work on music and dance to give the pupils an understanding of the cultural diversity which the city makes available to them. Regular visits to the Toxteth Caribbean Centre are occasions for the pupils to experience the art and music of other parts of the world and the nearby cathedral is used regularly to inspire the pupils.
98. The pupils have very good attitudes. They listen very carefully to the teacher and try out ideas sensibly. For example, the Year 4 pupils used the "viewfinder" technique to explore composition before beginning their observational drawings. They develop their skills in using perspective in line drawing and can effectively employ the shading technique to suggest texture. The pupils take great pride in their work and readily talk about how they carried out the tasks. They develop good brush techniques when painting and they can mix colours skilfully. The pupils also use their art and design skills in other areas of the curriculum. Some exciting clay work resulted from history work on the Anglo-Saxons, with the pupils designing and making their own versions of jewellery. Some sensitive drawing by Year 6 pupils followed their study of the Jarrow Crusade. These opportunities help the pupils understand art and design in the wider context of everyday life and from different periods in history.
99. The subject is well led by an enthusiastic and knowledgeable co-ordinator. She is aware of how she will lead the next stages of the development of art and design and has the necessary drive to ensure the pupils acquire the range of skills as they progress through the school. She is working on a new scheme of work, which is scheduled to be completed by Easter 2003 and plans to provide a secure structure for the art and design curriculum. Classrooms are well appointed for artwork and resources are good. Display around the school and in classrooms is of a high quality. The pupils know that the teachers value and respect their work and they enjoy looking at the well mounted and thoughtfully composed displays.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

100. Only one lesson was observed during the inspection and judgements are supported by evidence from a very limited range of photographs of completed work, displays of work in Year 4 and discussions with pupils and the co-ordinator. There is insufficient evidence for a judgement to be made on standards at the end of Year 2, as these pupils have not yet started the subject curriculum this year. Evidence shows that pupils' work is well below average at the end of Year 6 and that pupils make insufficient progress through Years 3 to 6. All pupils, including those with SEN and EAL, could achieve more. A whole school policy and programme of work that builds up pupils' skills and knowledge progressively has only just been introduced. However, these are not yet being implemented in all year groups and improvement since the last inspection is unsatisfactory. Resources were previously unsatisfactory but these have been improved to a good level.

Strengths in the subject are:

- the new curriculum guidance provides for progressive teaching of skills and knowledge;

- resources have improved and are good; and
- current leadership is providing improvement.

Areas for development are:

- standards and the pupils' achievement;
- the organisation of time for the subject;
- the consistent implementation of the new curriculum especially for the oldest pupils;
- assessment procedures; and
- the co-ordinator's role in managing the subject and checking provision and standards.

101. A new co-ordinator has developed a satisfactory policy and good detailed guidance for teachers, to support them in planning for the progressive development of the pupils' skills and knowledge. This shows an appropriate range of projects planned over the year. These are arranged into one six month period of study in some classes, which makes it difficult for the pupils, especially younger ones, to recall what they learned some time ago. The pupils in some year groups are building up sound skills and understanding, as they undertake the full process of designing and making their products but, because of a previous lack of experience, standards in Year 6 are not high enough. The pupils in Year 6 have only just begun their first full project and have few designing and making skills to draw on. Their designs for a fairground ride are well below the standard usually found in pupils of this age. They complete only one design view, which includes no ideas of scale or measurement and list their resources and tools. As they are only allowed to use paper or card, this restricts their ability to make decisions about the suitability of different materials for different functions. The models they have begun to make have no accurate measurements and the card is clumsily rolled and joined with sticky tape. Discussions with pupils provide evidence that they have insufficient experience of working with different materials, such as plastics and wood and different tools, such as saws and glue guns. They have poor knowledge of specific vocabulary, such as mechanisms and cams and are unaware of what these are or how they might use them in making products with moving parts. A small group of pupils has attached motors to models when they visited a local high school. The pupils have very limited knowledge of how to test or evaluate the success of their products.
102. The lesson on houses observed in Year 1 was excellent. The stimulus of a quilt picturing a house, together with a very well told story, inspired the pupils to question and discuss how they might build a house. They drew simple designs, planned their resources and then collaborated to construct their houses. They completed the process by considering how they could improve their models. There is little evidence to show that this is a regular feature in all year groups. The pupils in Year 4 complete work of a satisfactory standard, linked to their work in history on invaders.
103. There is insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement on teaching and learning but the low level of pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding in Year 6 indicates that it has been unsatisfactory over time. Expectations of the pupils in Year 6 are not high enough, planning does not offer sufficient levels of challenge and pupils work at far too low a level. Despite this, the pupils have good attitudes towards the subject; Year 6 pupils say they enjoy it because they do not have to write. Insufficient use is made of pupils' mathematical skills and of computers in the design process.
104. Leadership and management of the subject have been unsatisfactory since the last inspection. A series of co-ordinators have failed to secure sufficient improvement. The new co-ordinator is now providing sound leadership but there is no system to provide her with a clear picture of the quality of learning or of standards across the whole school. No assessment system is in place.

GEOGRAPHY

105. By the end of Year 2 standards of attainment are average but by the end of Year 6 they are below average. This is largely due to the lack of a scheme of work and an inconsistent allocation of teaching time throughout the school. The pupils' progress is not satisfactory. Improvement since the school was last inspected is unsatisfactory.

Strengths in the subject are:

- the pupils' good attitudes and their interest in geography; and
- the range of opportunities afforded by the school's location.

Areas for improvement are:

- the need for a scheme of work; and
- the need for geographical enquiry to be part of every pupil's work.

106. No lessons were observed during the inspection as most classes did not have the subject on the timetable for this part of the year. Evidence was gained from the scrutiny of pupils' work, displays and discussions with the pupils and the subject co-ordinator.
107. The pupils in Years 1 and 2 are beginning to develop a range of vocabulary and recognise features in their locality such as the cathedral, supermarket and corner shops. Year 2 pupils show good knowledge of the locality and can describe similarities and differences in a contrasting locality, such as the Isle of Struay. Year 6 pupils have a limited understanding of the technical terms describing the features of a range of environments. They struggle to name features such as tributary and estuary when discussing rivers and do not recognise the key in ordnance survey maps. Much of the work observed is based on worksheets. The lack of opportunities for geographical enquiry in the curriculum deprives the pupils of those first-hand experiences that help them develop the ability to investigate and offer solutions to everyday problems, such as improving the environment. These pupils lack a thorough understanding of geography and do not have the necessary skills to discuss it confidently.
108. There is a policy but no scheme of work. There is an urgent need for curriculum guidance and support to ensure that the pupils develop their knowledge and understanding. The allocation of blocks of teaching time for the subject is also in need of review. There are significant gaps between occasions when the subject is taught, which makes it difficult to develop skills, knowledge and understanding systematically. This has an adverse effect on standards as many pupils do not remember the previous work and have to have it explained to them again. The co-ordinator is aware of the need to provide a scheme of work and knows of the pitfalls involved in the inconsistent allocation of teaching time. Opportunities for checking the quality of teaching and learning are not in place so the co-ordinator is not fully aware of what needs to be done to make things better.

HISTORY

109. The pupils make satisfactory progress throughout the school and standards are average at the end of Years 2 and 6, as they were at the time of the previous inspection. Since that time a scheme of work has been fully implemented and resources are much improved.

Strengths in the subject are:

- the good quality of specialist teaching in Year 6;
- the focus on developing skills of historical research;
- the very good range of visits, especially in studies of local history;
- the good resources; and
- the enthusiasm of the co-ordinator.

Areas for development are:

- there are too few opportunities for pupils to record what they have learned in their own words;
- there are too few opportunities for pupils to carry out personal research, particularly on computers;
- there is no assessment system;
- the co-ordinator has no clear overview of provision and standards through the school; and
- the pupils' work is insufficiently celebrated in displays.

110. At the end of Year 2, pupils have satisfactory knowledge of life in different eras in the past. For example, they understand that the Great Fire of London changed the materials used for building houses. They learn about famous people, such as Mary Seacole and Florence Nightingale and understand that changes they made affect how we live today. They know that they can find evidence of how people lived in the past by examining photographs and items from that period. There are some opportunities for pupils to record their own work in their own words, for example, when they complete a timeline about the Great Fire, with their own comments made at appropriate points. However, in many classes, the higher attaining pupils complete the same work as lower attainers. This gives a lack of challenge to higher attaining pupils and means that lower attainers sometimes do not finish the task. There are often simplified tasks for the pupils with SEN that help them to work at an appropriate level on the same topics as other pupils and they make satisfactory progress. The pupils with EAL are supported in their work so

that they understand and can take a full part in lessons.

111. The pupils in Years 3 to 6 build appropriately on their skills and knowledge and develop a satisfactory understanding of life in different eras. They develop appropriate skills in finding information from various sources of evidence, such as artefacts and books, but do not make enough use of computers in this work. The pupils in Year 6 develop good skills in finding out about the past and learn to evaluate the quality of their evidence and pose questions to help them learn more. Their skills in comparing and contrasting life in different periods is not as well developed, because they have had insufficient previous experience in other year groups to discuss, debate and record their work in their own words. They understand how hard life was for some people in the past, such as the Jarrow marchers and empathise with them. The pupils undertake good local history studies, searching for evidence and identifying this in their many local visits. For example, they study the Liverpool Rope Walks, taking digital photographs of historical features and noting their evidence. They then write reports of their visits and pose further questions for investigation.
112. Teaching is satisfactory throughout the school and the specialist teaching in Year 6 is good, sometimes very good. Whilst teachers plan an appropriate depth of study and most make good use of resources, such as videos, artefacts and visits, the tasks that they give pupils to complete are often mundane and uninspiring, with all pupils completing the same work. For example, they spend a large part of some lessons copying out worksheets, putting in missing words, or copying out questions before answering them. This lacks challenge for higher attaining pupils and the lower attainers and pupils with SEN have too much to complete. It does not give pupils enough opportunity to think, discuss and record for themselves. It affects the attitudes of pupils to the subject, although they continue to behave well in lessons and concentrate hard. In Year 6, where pupils record in their own words, the teacher provides a sound range of opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy skills by writing in different styles, such as newspaper reports, letters and posters. These pupils are also encouraged to talk about their work and explain the evidence for their answers, whereas in some classes pupils simply answer direct questions from the teacher with a single sentence or phrase and are not encouraged to think about 'why?' or 'how?' things were so. Sometimes the pupils' opportunities to find out things for themselves are limited by the provision of a single textbook, rather than a range of sources of evidence, such as a collection of books and the use of computers and the school's reference library. In the Year 6 lesson observed, the pupils were fascinated by the excellent range of artefacts that the teacher provided from World War 2 and displayed very good levels of interest and enjoyment. Some teachers make good links with other subjects to maximise the use of time and make learning practical and interesting. For example, the pupils in Year 4 design and make Saxon purses in DT and jewellery in art.
113. The subject is well led and this has promoted good improvement in the curriculum and in the provision of good resources, although the school is still building its collection of artefacts. Management of the subject is underdeveloped and there are no procedures to check the quality of teaching and learning, or to assess standards. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' cultural development.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

114. Standards in ICT are average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. The pupils make good progress due to the good quality teaching of the subject. Good progress has been made since the last inspection, when raising standards in ICT was a key issue.

Strengths in the subjects are:

- the progress that the pupils make;
- the leadership of the subject;
- planning for coverage of the curriculum; and
- the resources available for teaching the subject and particularly the use of digital cameras.

Areas for development are:

- the use of ICT in other subjects of the curriculum; and
- to use the existing computers more.

115. Good progress has been made since the last inspection, where the teachers' knowledge and expertise in the subject and the lack of curriculum documentation was a key issue. Both of these have been addressed well. The teachers and a number of the classroom assistants, are now confident in their use

of the computers and their confidence ensures that the pupils are also very confident in their use of the computers. There is now a good scheme of work for the subject and the co-ordinator has worked hard to put in place all necessary policies. For example, there is a very clear and comprehensive Internet security policy, a synopsis of which is displayed beside each computer. The co-ordinator leads the subject well and her file for the subject is a model of planning and shows the hard work put in over the last four years.

116. The pupils make good progress, largely due to the well-planned curriculum which is ensuring that they are exposed to progressively more challenging tasks. The small computer suite is used well to teach skills. There is a good number of computers and good provision of other equipment in the school. As well as the suite, most classrooms have at least two computers and there is a digital camera in each classroom. These digital cameras are used very well, both by the pupils and by teachers, to enhance learning. For example some of the older pupils had taken a series of photographs to create a series of posters on friendship and the problems of being a pupil new to the school. The teachers use the cameras well to record pupils' work, though this is an area for development in some subjects, DT for example. The school has an interactive whiteboard, though this is not yet connected and is not in a position where it can be used.
117. Despite the good levels of resources, many computers are underused and ICT is not used well in other subjects of the curriculum. For example, the suite is rarely used, except to teach skills. The pupils are therefore missing opportunities to use it as a resource in other subjects, for research in subjects such as history or to draft and write in English. Computers in classrooms are not often used to best effect, rarely being seen in use during the inspection. A notable exception was in a Year 2 mathematics lesson, when the two classroom computers were being used well to support the learning of some less able pupils.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES (FRENCH)

118. The Modern Foreign Language (MFL) Enrichment Project is funded by the Education Action Zone. As a result of this initiative, teaching of French was introduced, in September 2002, to Year 5 and Year 6 classes.
119. The teaching programme follows a scheme of work for Key Stage 2. As both Year 5 and Year 6 pupils began their studies of French at the same time, lessons observed during the inspection, in both Year 5 and Year 6 classes, were similar in theme and content. The teacher of French for both classes is a French 'assistant' who is regularly supervised by the LEA's MFL Enrichment Programme Representative. This specialist teaching of French is delivered through the French language. Standards of work, at five months from the introduction of the project, are above average, with evidence of very good standards of work from more capable pupils and from pupils whose first languages are Somali, Arabic, Tamil and Chinese.
120. French is taught with pace, rigour and enthusiasm in a lively interchange between teacher and pupils. Models of pronunciation are clearly articulated by the teacher and the pupils respond and repeat, with enthusiasm, in French. Teaching observed was at least very good. In one lesson teaching was excellent. A brisk pace of teaching was a feature of both lessons observed and questions in French were asked of and answered by many pupils individually as well as by the class in unison.
121. In the lesson where teaching was excellent, the pupils were alert, keen and ready for the lesson. They all faced the teacher and had nothing on their tables to distract them. These pupils were eager. Some had come with information on French breakfasts - the research challenge set at the end of the previous week's lesson. Varied and useful teaching methods were used throughout the lesson. The teacher, whilst speaking in French, clapped out the rhythms of questions asked in French, for example, "What is your name?" Hand movements and varied vocal inflections were used to encourage the pupils to reply appropriately, for example with accurate masculine or feminine endings, to questions such as, "What is your nationality?" Challenges, stated in French, were given to different groups of pupils, for example, to the girls, or to the boys, to those on the left hand side of the room, to those at the back. Throughout the lesson the teacher provided opportunities for pupils to practise repetition in an enjoyable way. The teacher's excellent pace, clarity of diction and challenge inspired all pupils to consolidate acquired vocabulary, to learn new vocabulary, to reinforce previous learning and to understand new concepts. As a result of the excellent teaching and the excellent attitudes and behaviour of the pupils in this lesson, time was exceptionally well used. The teacher was able to assess pupils' performance throughout the lesson

and correct or refine the pupils' speaking in French.

MUSIC

122. Standards are average by the end of Year 2 and above average by the end of Year 6. The pupils make good progress through the school largely due to the very good quality of teaching of the subject. Standards have risen and good progress has been made since the last inspection.

Strengths in the subject are:

- the specialist teaching in Years 3 to 6;
- the good teaching in Years 1 and 2;
- the planned curriculum for the subject; and
- the good resources.

There are no areas for development in this subject.

123. For some years a specialist teacher for singing has taken the pupils in Years 3 to 6. Last year the Education Action Zone (EAZ) funded this. The funding has ceased this year but the school has continued to employ the teacher, funding coming from school funds. This is very worthwhile as the teacher is teaching proper techniques and is enabling the pupils to reach good standards. Proof of this is that the EAZ last year organised a competition for all those schools which they had funded in this way and Pleasant Street won. The employment of a specialist teacher to take other aspects of music in Years 3 to 6 is equally worthwhile. Both of these teachers bring considerable skills and enthusiasm to the school and inspire and engage the pupils. The pupils consequently learn well and achieve good results. For example, in a Year 6 singing lesson, the pupils were singing a North American canoe song tunefully and with good regard to dynamics and pitch. In a Year 5 lesson on rhythm, the pupils were putting together their own rhythm patterns in groups. This was a challenging activity and the pupils achieved success, two groups in particular keeping their own patterns going whilst listening carefully to the others in order to keep in time. The co-ordinator is the Year 2 teacher and the pupils in her class benefit from her expertise. This was demonstrated in a lesson on pulse, where she used a variety of techniques to ensure that the pupils learnt well. The teaching in Year 1 is also good. This continuous good teaching through the school ensures that the pupils make good progress.
124. One of the specialist teachers has written a very clear scheme of work, which is being updated by the co-ordinator in conjunction with the specialist. This ongoing desire to move forward ensures that standards continue to rise. There is a very good range of instruments and other resources for teaching the subject, the range of untuned percussion being particularly good. This enables after school clubs such as the Djemba drumming to take place, a very worthwhile experience taken by a visiting expert. The co-ordinator, in her first year at the school and her second in teaching, runs a singing club, which is preparing a production of 'Oliver' for later this term. The pupils in this club sing enthusiastically and are clearly looking forward to performing in public.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

125. By the end of Year 2, standards are above average and by the end of Year 6, standards are average. The pupils experience a wide range of physical activities and their progress is satisfactory over time. The pupils with SEN enjoy these tasks and this enhances the progress they make. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection.

Strengths in the subject are:

- the use made of the accommodation and the range and organisation of learning resources;
- the good teaching, especially of younger children; and
- the vision and enthusiasm of the co-ordinator.

An area for improvement is:

- the need for a scheme of work to provide a consistently challenging curriculum for all the pupils.

126. Throughout the school the quality of teaching is good. In some lessons it is very good. The teachers have good subject knowledge and this provides a secure foundation for all lessons. The teachers make effective use of the warm up and cool down in each lesson. One cool down session involved the use of

music to give the pupils an atmosphere which encouraged reflection on the lesson. All teachers demonstrate activities well and use examples of good practice by pupils and evaluations of the activities by the pupils themselves. This ensures that all pupils give thought to their actions and take an interest in those of other children. One good example of this was with pupils who were practising skills with small apparatus. They assessed each other's skills before trying to control a bouncing ball themselves or to dribble between obstacles. Lessons are inclusive. Thoughtful support was provided to one pupil with mobility problems so he could take part fully in the lesson.

127. The pupils show very good attitudes to their learning. Their behaviour is very good. They have a very secure understanding of important features of the curriculum such as health and safety and the significance of warm up and cool down in lessons. Even young children check their pulse rate and recognise the impact of exercise on the body. They use equipment sensibly and move apparatus safely. Boys and girls work well together and have a good understanding of fairness in competitive situations. Because they have high levels of concentration and listen well to what the teacher has to say, the pupils understand instructions quickly and make good use of the time available to them for skills development. They work well individually, in pairs and small groups. This is good provision, which promotes co-operation and collaboration between the pupils.
128. The school provides a full curriculum that includes swimming lessons, in which the pupils achieve average standards. The more able and talented pupils are also given opportunities to take part in activities out of school such as those with Everton and Liverpool Football Clubs, where they receive training in football, athletics and other activities. The older pupils also attend the community classrooms at these football clubs to learn about citizenship and responsibility. Visiting coaches work with the pupils in a range of sports and physical activities, including dance. The pupils have opportunities to experience the dance of other cultures during a week of creative arts with a visiting group. Inter-school sports competitions are also available for pupils to put into practice the skills they have developed in their lessons. There is a good range of resources available to support learning in all aspects of the subject. Accommodation is very good for indoor lessons and the use of a nearby park for outdoor games adds to this provision. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The lack of an agreed scheme of work has a detrimental effect on standards of attainment. The PE policy has been developed but the absence of a scheme of work means that there is not a consistent approach to improving the pupils' skills as they progress through the school. The co-ordinator is aware of this and has plans to address this in the future. Opportunities to check on the quality of teaching and learning are not yet in place so it is difficult for the co-ordinator to identify exactly what needs to be done to improve provision.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

129. The pupils make satisfactory progress in Years 1 and 2 and standards at the end of Year 2 are in line with those expected in the Liverpool agreed syllabus for RE. Although pupils make sound progress in the Years 3 and 4, this slows in the older classes and is unsatisfactory in Year 6, where standards are below the level expected. The pupils with SEN make satisfactory progress in the younger age groups, because of the additional support that they are given, but they make unsatisfactory progress in Year 6. The pupils with EAL make satisfactory progress in younger age groups but unsatisfactory progress in Year 6. Standards and provision in Year 6 have declined since the last inspection.

Strengths in the subject are:

- most teachers make good use of resources to create interest in the subject;
- there is a good policy and guidance to help teachers in planning work;
- links with local faith groups enhance the curriculum; and
- visits to local places of worship enrich the curriculum and make learning real.

Areas for improvement are:

- standards at the end of Year 6;
- the adjustment of curriculum time to provide regular lessons of appropriate length;
- the pupils' written tasks often lack interest and challenge;
- there are insufficient opportunities for the older pupils to discuss their work and develop greater understanding of the underlying beliefs and values of different faiths;
- the procedures to check the quality of teaching and learning; and
- the assessment of what pupils learn.

130. The pupils in Years 1 and 2 gain satisfactory knowledge about significant events and customs, artefacts and features of different faiths. They know that there are some similarities between faiths as well as differences. For example, they study the ways in which different faiths use light in their festivals. They visit local places of worship, such as the cathedrals and handle the artefacts of different faiths with respect. For example, the pupils in Year 1 responded to the visit to a cathedral with beautiful stained glass window work in art. Year 2 pupils examine replica Seder plates whilst learning about the significance of the Passover in Judaism. Whilst this work is built on appropriately in Years 3 and 4, the pupils in Year 6 display a low level of knowledge about the different faiths and struggle to recall simple facts that they have learned previously. They have only limited basic knowledge of Christianity and other faiths and cannot identify similarities or differences between them. For example, they do not recognise 'Lent' and are unaware it involves fasting; some know that Ramadan is a period of fasting for Moslems. When prompted, they identify similarities between Christmas and Eid. Few discuss why faith is important in peoples' lives and some others lack interest or respect.
131. Teaching is satisfactory overall and good in some lessons. The pupils learn appropriate knowledge about their own and other faiths. Most teachers plan appropriately to provide lessons in the faiths represented in the school community, making good use of resources to stimulate interest. However, in Year 6, evidence from pupils' work and discussions with pupils shows that they do not learn enough. Most teachers have good relationships with the pupils and expect them to behave well and behaviour is good. The teachers sometimes give pupils written work that enables them to show what they know and understand, but most work for the oldest pupils is copied or consists of simple comprehension questions, which sometimes have to be written out before they are answered. Work is the same for all pupils, although lower attaining pupils are given some letter clues to missing words in their work. These uninspiring tasks affect pupils' attitudes to learning and they lack interest in the subject. The lack of opportunities provided for older pupils to discuss their own and others' beliefs restricts their learning and their understanding considerably.
132. The subject is well led. There is a good policy and guidance to support teachers in planning work and these are supported well by a good range of artefacts, visits and visiting members of the different faith communities. For example, two practising Buddhists visited a Year 4 lesson to share their beliefs and demonstrate their worship customs. They created a spiritual atmosphere, which inspired pupils to think and ask questions to deepen their own understanding. Management is not as well developed and does not allow the co-ordinator to gain an overview of what is happening in classrooms, or of the standards achieved or take effective action to improve the quality of provision. There is no assessment system, to provide a picture of how pupils are progressing or the standards they achieve. In some classes there is insufficient time devoted to RE and in others time is not used well. For example, in Year 2, the lesson has to be split by a break because of the way the timetable is arranged and the teacher has then to spend time on recapping what was done before the break before pupils can begin work.