

INSPECTION REPORT

**OUR LADY OF GOOD HELP CATHOLIC
PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Wavertree

LEA area: Liverpool

Unique reference number: 104670

Headteacher: Mrs S A Horncastle

Reporting inspector: Robert Robinson
21024

Dates of inspection: 17 - 20 March 2003

Inspection number: 246400

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: | Voluntary Aided |
| Age range of pupils: | 4 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils: | Mixed |
| School address: | South Drive Wavertree Liverpool |
| Postcode: | L15 8LJ |
| Telephone number: | (0151) 7336937 |
| Fax number: | (0151) 2800430 |
| Appropriate authority: | Governing Body |
| Name of chair of governors: | Mr N J Henwood |
| Date of previous inspection: | 05/02/2001 |

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Team members | | | Subject responsibilities | Aspect responsibilities |
|--------------|-----------------|----------------------|---|---|
| 21024 | Robert Robinson | Registered inspector | Mathematics Information and communication technology Foundation stage | What sort of school is it? How high are standards? a) The school's results and achievements How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further? |
| 8922 | Brenda McIntosh | Lay inspector | | How high are standards? b) 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? |
| 19041 | Roger Linstead | Team inspector | English History Music Special educational needs English as an additional language | How well are pupils taught? |
| 31963 | Malcolm Padmore | Team inspector | Science Art Design and technology Geography Educational inclusion | How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils? |

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This smaller than average primary school for boys and girls aged 4-11 years is situated in Wavertree in Liverpool. The school has 156 full-time pupils with an equal number of boys and girls. Almost all pupils are from a white ethnic background and no pupils are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. Forty pupils (25.6 per cent) are on the register of special educational needs which is about average, although very few pupils have a statement of special educational needs. Most of the pupils with special educational needs have specific learning difficulties. Children's attainment on entry to the reception is below average. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is around 23 per cent which is about the national average. There have been significant changes of teaching staff since the last inspection. Over half of the pupils in Year 6 joined the school after the end of Year 2. Major building work is due to commence to improve the accommodation.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Our Lady of Good Help Catholic School provides a good education for its pupils. Pupils achieve well overall, because the quality of teaching is usually good. Standards are in line with the national average by the end of Year 6 in English and mathematics and reach national expectations in all other subjects except science and physical education, which are below average. Pupils' attitudes to work and their behaviour are good. The personal development of pupils, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. The leadership and management of the headteacher and deputy headteacher are effective. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- The quality of teaching is good, resulting in pupils, including those pupils with special educational needs, making good progress in their learning in many subjects.
- Pupils' attitudes to work and their behaviour are good and pupils relate very well to one another.
- The fostering of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.
- The checking of pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science is good and is helping to improve standards.
- The leadership and management of the school are effective.

What could be improved

- Standards, by the end of Year 6, in science and physical education, are below average

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made good progress since the last inspection in February 2001. Standards, by the end of Year 6, have improved to be in line with the national average in English and mathematics but remain below average in science. Standards in information and communication technology and music are now in line with the national expectations. The quality of teaching is good throughout the school and unsatisfactory teaching is no longer apparent. Improved provision for pupils with special educational needs enables these pupils to make good progress. The leadership and management of the school are now good.

STANDARDS

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

| Performance in: | compared with | | | |
|-----------------|---------------|------|------|-----------------|
| | all schools | | | similar schools |
| | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2002 |
| English | E | C | C | A |
| Mathematics | E* | C | D | C |
| Science | E | C | D | C |

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

- Standards of the present group of pupils in Year 6 are in line with the national average in English and mathematics but below average in science because mainly of the school's emphasis on raising standards in literacy and numeracy. The lower standards in science are because investigative skills are not taught well enough. In all other subjects, standards are at the national expectations, except in physical education where standards are below average because too few pupils can swim 25 metres unaided. There are no significant differences in the progress of boys and girls. Standards have improved significantly since the national tests in 2000 and the trend of pupils' performance for the last five years is broadly in line with the national trend.
- Standards of the present group of pupils in Year 2 are set, by the end of this academic year, to be above the national average in writing and in line with the national average in reading, speaking and listening, mathematics and science. In all other subjects, standards meet the national expectations.
- Children in the reception class make good progress and are on course to achieve the national expectations in all their areas of learning.
- Pupils at the school achieve well, including pupils with special educational needs, because of the good quality of teaching throughout the school.
- The school's targets for the proportion of pupils likely to reach the level expected nationally and above are demanding and are unlikely to be achieved, particularly at the higher level, because of a significant proportion of lower attaining pupils joining the school since they were set.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|--|
| Attitudes to the school | Good. Pupils enjoy school and are keen to learn. They are well motivated and try hard to succeed in their work. |
| Behaviour, in and out of classrooms | Good. Pupils behave well in lessons and around school. They are polite and friendly to visitors. The school is an orderly community. |
| Personal development and relationships | Good. Relationships are of a very high quality and make a significant contribution to pupils' progress and to the pleasant atmosphere in school. Pupils have a high regard for their teachers and value their friends. They willingly take on responsibilities and carry out their duties very well. |
| Attendance | Good. Pupils like coming to school. Attendance rates are above the national average and unauthorised absences are rare. A number of pupils arrive late each day and in some instances this restricts their opportunities for learning. |

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is good overall throughout the school, with a significant proportion of very good and occasionally excellent teaching. The teaching of English, mathematics, history, information and communication technology and music is good. The skills of literacy and numeracy are taught well. Children in the reception class make good progress in their learning because the teaching is effective. The teaching of science is satisfactory. There was insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement on the teaching of other subjects.

Teachers have a good understanding of the subjects they teach which enables pupils, including those with special educational needs, to make good progress in their learning. Teachers expect pupils to work hard and behave well and they have good methods of organising lessons and very effective ways of managing pupils through the good planning of lessons; as a result, pupils work industriously, are interested in learning and behave well. Teaching assistants provide good help for pupils, particularly to lower attaining pupils. The marking of work is good and helps pupils to realise how well they are doing and how they can improve. Homework assists pupils' learning well by consolidating and extending the work they have done at school. Information and communication technology is used well overall to assist pupils' learning in other subjects. Weaknesses in otherwise satisfactory teaching, result from a lack of pace in lessons which slows pupils' learning. Investigative skills are not taught sufficiently well in science. The school meets the needs of all pupils well.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

| Aspect | Comment |
|---|--|
| The quality and range of the curriculum | Satisfactory. The school provides an interesting curriculum for its pupils that meets statutory requirements; however, the organisation of swimming does not cater sufficiently for pupils who do not reach national expectations. Some lessons in science and geography are too long. The national literacy and numeracy strategies have been implemented effectively. Extra-curricular activities are used well to enhance pupils' learning. |
| Provision for pupils with special educational needs | Good. The school provides good opportunities for pupils with special educational needs to take a full part in all activities. Individual Education Plans are clear, detailed and helpful. |
| Provision for pupils with English as an additional language | No pupils are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. |
| Provision for pupils' personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | Good. The spiritual, social, moral and cultural development of pupils is well provided for and contributes well to their overall personal development. |
| How well the school cares for its pupils | Good. Pupils are well cared for. The procedures for assessing and tracking what pupils know and understand in English, mathematics and science are good. Good use is made of the information gathered to set targets and plan future learning and this is having a positive impact on improving pupils' attainment and achievement. The school has not implemented a policy for the use of the Internet. |

The school works well with parents who have a very good opinion of the school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|--|
| Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff | Good. The headteacher, assisted by the deputy headteacher, works well to improve the quality of teaching and pupils' learning. Subject managers fulfil their leadership and management roles effectively. |
| How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities | Satisfactory. Governors have a good understanding of the strengths of the school and areas for development. The stability of the governing body has helped to move the school forward. The governors have not ensured that all necessary information is in the prospectus and governors' report to parents. In addition, procedures for recording of attendance do not fulfil requirements and guidance for staff on ensuring racial equality has not been provided. |
| The school's evaluation of its performance | Good. The checking of pupils' work and the quality of teaching are well established. The priorities in the school improvement plan are appropriate and are effective in practice. The staff and governors work well together and there is a determination to improve standards further. |
| The strategic use of resources | Financial planning is good. Additional funding provides extra learning opportunities for pupils, as well as helping pupils with special educational needs. New teachers receive good guidance. The governors apply the principles of obtaining best value soundly. |

The school has a good number of staff that is well suited to meet the needs of the pupils. Teaching assistants give good help to pupils. The accommodation is unsatisfactory; however, alterations and refurbishment of the buildings are to begin in the near future.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The good relationships with parents have a positive effect on pupils' learning.

| What pleases parents most | What parents would like to see improved |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children enjoy school and behave well • The teaching is good and children are expected to work hard • The school helps children to become more mature and responsible • The school works closely with parents who find staff approachable • The school is led and managed effectively | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of homework given • The range of activities outside lessons |

The inspection confirms and agrees with the positive views of parents, though inspectors judge that the amount of homework is appropriate and assists pupils' learning well. The range of extra-curricular activities is good considering the size of the school.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Children's attainment on entry to the reception class is, overall, below average. The range of attainment is wide with a significant proportion of children above average and a slightly greater proportion below average. The improvements in the quality of teaching and in the leadership and management of the school have resulted in pupils achieving well, overall, so that, by the end of Year 6, standards are at the national average in English and mathematics though they are below average in science. The reason for the difference in pupils' performance in science compared to English and mathematics can be attributed mainly to the school's good implementation of the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy and its particular focus on improving teaching and raising standards in reading, writing and mathematics. Science has not been prioritised in the same way, and as a result, there are weaknesses in the teaching of investigative skills. Standards of speaking and listening are average, though pupils' confidence to speak in front of an audience is weaker than other aspects of this area of learning.
2. Standards, by the end of Year 2, have varied considerably since the last inspection. This is because of a combination of factors, including changes of staffing and differences between year groups. In the National Curriculum tests in 2002, standards in mathematics were well below the national average and below the average of pupils in similar schools, mainly because too few pupils achieved the higher levels. This is no longer the case, as the school identified this weakness and took effective action to improve the performance of higher attaining pupils. An average proportion of pupils is now on course to achieve the higher levels. In the National Curriculum tests in reading and writing at the end of Year 2 in 2002, standards were in line with the national average in reading and above average in writing and compared to similar schools standards were above average in reading and well above average in writing. The present group of pupils in Year 2 remain in line with the national average in reading and above average in writing.
3. Over time, standards, by the end of Year 6, are improving broadly in line with the national trend. Standards in English, mathematics and science have risen significantly since the national tests in 2000 which were undertaken prior to the last inspection. Standards, by the end of Year 6, in 2000 were well below average in English and science and very low (lowest five per cent nationally) in mathematics. The leadership and management took decisive action resulting in standards rising to the present average levels. The tracking of pupils' progress of the present group of pupils in Year 6 clearly show good progress of pupils, including that of gifted and talented pupils and those pupils with special educational needs. Over half of the pupils in Year 6 have joined the school since Year 3. These pupils achieve well; however, the majority are average or below average attainers and this adversely affects the proportion of higher attaining pupils likely to achieve the higher levels. No significant variations in the achievement of boys and girls are apparent.
4. Children in the reception class make good progress in all their areas of learning because the quality of teaching is good and the children experience a sound curriculum based firmly on national recommendations. Pupils achieve well in history, information and communication technology and music and meet national expectations by the end Year 6 because of good teaching and effective guidance for teachers to help them plan lessons. In art and design, in design and technology and in geography, there was insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement; however, from available evidence standards are in line with national expectations by the end of Year 6 and pupils achieve well compared to their prior attainments. In physical education, pupils do not achieve as well as they should because they have insufficient opportunities to reach national expectations in swimming.
5. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets in their Individual Education Plans. This is mainly because they receive skilled support both in lessons and challenging work well matched to their targets.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

6. The standard of pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to school are good. These good features create a positive atmosphere for learning and this has a significant impact on the standards that pupils achieve. Pupils speak with pride and enthusiasm about the school and their teachers and clearly like coming to school.
7. The attitudes to learning of boys and girls throughout the school, including those pupils with special educational needs, are good. They are keen to learn and they maintain a high level of interest in their work. Pupils listen carefully to information and respond enthusiastically when teachers ask questions. They respond eagerly to opportunities, especially where lessons are made exciting and stimulating. In a Year 1 numeracy lesson, pupils were keen to participate in the counting activity and were highly motivated by their task of recognising and naming shapes. They were keen to succeed, helpful to each other and tolerant of those experiencing difficulties. Pupils contribute readily to discussions offering a range of interesting ideas and suggestions.
8. Pupils' behaviour throughout the school day is good. Parents and pupils are happy about the standard of behaviour in school. In lessons, boys and girls behave well because they want to learn and say they do not like to displease their teachers. Movement around school and between buildings is very orderly and sensible with older pupils setting good examples for the younger ones. Lunchtimes are pleasant social occasions for the older pupils who chat happily with each other over lunch in a friendly and mature way. In comparison, the younger children are quite noisy. At playtimes pupils get on well together and no examples of bullying or misbehaviour were noted. Pupils are friendly and polite and greet visitors cheerfully. There were two exclusions last year as a result of extremely unacceptable behaviour.
9. Pupils' personal development is good and begins effectively in the reception class. As a result children develop into caring, responsible and well-behaved pupils. In the reception class, the children begin to develop personal responsibility by self registering, hanging up their own coats and storing lunch boxes. Pupils carry out their class jobs willingly and sensibly. Year 6 pupils enjoy all the extra responsibility that is given to them and perform their tasks very well. Relationships throughout the school are very good and a key feature in pupils' development. When asked what they like best about the school, the pupils are quick to say their teachers and friends. They value the friendships that they make and speak well of each other. Pupils care for each other very well and show good consideration for the needs of others. In lessons pupils are at ease with their teachers and say they are not afraid to answer questions or make mistakes because the teachers react in a helpful, encouraging, way if they get something wrong. They show good levels of co-operation in group, class and individual activities; for example, Year 3 pupils worked very well in groups composing music for each of the four seasons and Year 5, pupils co-operated nicely gathering information from census data.
10. The level of pupils' attendance is good and above the national average. Unauthorised absence is rare because most parents are helpful and inform the school routinely when their child is absent. The majority of pupils arrive punctually but there are a number of persistent latecomers. This can lead to individuals missing specific opportunities for learning that are on offer at the start of the day.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

11. The good quality of teaching and learning is at the heart of the school's success. Pupils say that teachers are kind and make lessons fun, but also make sure they work. Very good relationships between teacher and pupils are the foundation of the good work in the classrooms. There has been a big improvement in teaching quality since the last inspection. Teachers have worked hard to upgrade their professional expertise.
12. The quality of teaching is good in English, mathematics, information and communication technology, history and music because of the very good leadership of English and the good leadership in the other subjects and the school's focus on raising standards in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology. In physical education, there was not enough evidence available for a judgement to be possible on the overall quality of teaching; however, in the lessons seen the teaching was good. In art and design, in design and technology and in

geography, there was insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement on the quality of teaching. The teaching of children in the reception class is good in all areas of learning, resulting in boys and girls making good progress.

13. Throughout the school, teachers' good knowledge of areas of learning ensures that lessons have precise aims that pupils understand. Teachers develop pupils' interest in new work by making the key points clear so as to simplify learning; however, shortcomings in teachers' knowledge of science in some junior classes slows down the pace of learning. Effective planning also helps to make it easy for pupils to learn. Good knowledge of the subjects enables teachers to help children promptly with their work, using skilful questioning and suggestions to take individual learning forward efficiently at a brisk pace; for example, in a Year 3 history lesson the teacher gave pupils demanding research to do on Tudor life, backed up by very effective individual help and encouragement.
14. The teaching of the basic skills of reading, writing and number is good throughout the school. After a good start in the reception class, teachers use the national strategies for literacy and numeracy to develop these skills systematically in Years 1 to 6. This is the main reason for the good standards of writing at the end of Year 2. It also explains the improving standards in Years 5 and 6, despite significant weaknesses in these year groups' previous achievement when they were in Year 2. However, teachers do not make the most of opportunities to develop pupils' speech after the good start in the reception class. Expectations of what boys and girls can achieve are high in most lessons and are leading to better standards, which are often higher than those found in similar schools. Information and communication technology is used effectively to assist pupils' learning, particularly in English, mathematics and history.
15. Teachers draw on a full range of methods to help pupils learn, often using many in a single lesson. These keep pupils very busy and interested; for example, in a very good Year 6 writing lesson pupils distinguished between discussion and persuasive text, discussed ideas in twos, studied the pros and cons of arguments, word processed findings well and shared opinions with the whole class. Teachers' very good management ensures that pupils are fully ready to learn at the start of each lesson. Good team work with teaching assistants and links with other subjects then hold pupils' interest so that they continue to learn throughout the lesson; for example, in a very good Year 1 design and technology lesson, pupils made rapid strides in understanding about healthy eating. This was because of the good quality of support, practical activities and links with work on speech, writing, number and computers. Teachers' good records of individual and class progress in lessons help them to match learning to each pupil's achievement. Pupils develop good knowledge of their own learning because teachers make the aims of each lesson clear at the beginning and discuss progress at the end.
16. The quality of learning falls below these good overall standards when pupils lose interest because they do not have enough opportunities to learn through discussion or movement; for example, Year 4 pupils lost concentration and were restless in a music lesson when they had to keep waiting before trying out steps to stimulating Flamenco music. Engagement with new learning also slackens when there is not enough change of activities in some of the lengthy afternoon lessons.
17. Teachers use homework well to support work being done in school; for example, pupils regularly learn spellings and tables. Reading at home to grown ups or brothers and sisters makes a good contribution to progress. Successful initiatives to support reading at home, such as reading journals and new diaries, are beginning to improve the amount of individual reading in Years 3 to 6. The demands of homework increase appropriately as pupils move up through the school.
18. The quality of teaching and learning for pupils with special educational needs is good. This is because teachers plan work carefully to meet their learning needs and expect and encourage them to succeed. As a result, the extra help and support for them in many lessons is effective. The teaching ensures that pupils whose special educational needs arise from emotional and behavioural problems rarely disturb learning. Pupils with statements of special educational needs make good progress towards the targets in their programmes of work. This is because of very skilful support. Gifted and talented pupils are identified and these pupils are given opportunities to attend extra lessons outside the school day.

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

19. The curriculum is broad and balanced and meets statutory requirements. It follows fully the school's aims. The previous inspection report drew similar conclusions. The curriculum promotes soundly the intellectual, physical, moral, social and personal development of all of the school's pupils including those with special educational needs. Time allocations for individual subjects are broadly satisfactory; however, the way the time is allocated sometimes leads to lessons that are too lengthy, such as in science, which lack adequate challenge and pace.
20. In the past few years, the school has placed good emphasis on curriculum provision for literacy and numeracy. Teaching and learning in both these subjects are good and lessons are effective. The school has wholeheartedly taken on the various support strategies for literacy. These operate well and have a positive effect on pupils' learning. In addition, volunteers regularly visit the school to listen to pupils read.
21. The planning of the curriculum is sound. Teachers have successfully adopted the planning required for the national literacy and numeracy strategies. There is satisfactory guidance for teachers for all subjects based on widely adopted national guidelines. Previous beneficial use of daily planning is evident for literacy and numeracy, but in other subjects it is not as well established.
22. Boys and girls have equal opportunities and make similar progress in their learning. There are good arrangements to ensure equal opportunities for pupils with special educational needs and to include them in all activities. With the help of the special educational needs co-ordinator, teachers make effective Individual Education Plans for them.
23. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities that includes a homework club. This attracts around half of Years 6 pupils and makes a good contribution to learning in literacy, numeracy and science. The various sporting activities include football, netball and rounders. In addition, there are well-attended chess, dance and guitar clubs. The Healthy Eating Club has established beneficial links with the local sports centre. Positive links with the church and other schools, such as the local high school, benefits pupils' learning well. The school has also set up effective links with local Beacon schools which are beginning to improve the quality of learning, in speech and drama being two examples.
24. Provision for personal, social and health education is sound. The guidance covers the main areas outlined in national recommendations and gives good support for teachers and pupils. The school is part of a healthy schools programme and this ensures that pupils are given clear messages about healthy living, including the relationship between diet and health and physical exercise and fitness. This is in addition to the education in matters of health taught in science. In line with the governing body's decision, sex education is taught through science. The school nurse also visits regularly to provide advice on personal hygiene and related matters.
25. The school's provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is good. The school has a good ethos that celebrates the worth of each individual. It provides a secure, calm and inclusive environment in which good individual learning can take place.
26. The provision for spiritual development is good. Pupils are given good opportunities to hear about and appreciate the values and beliefs of religions other than their own. In a gesture to show that aspects of spirituality transcend individual faiths, Year 6 created materials for last year's National Holocaust Day. Teachers value pupils' contributions in discussions. Strengths lie in the development of pupils' care and respect for themselves and others. The school works hard to develop an atmosphere within which all pupils can grow and flourish. Teachers celebrate pupils' good work and this helps to raise pupils' self-esteem; for example, in the good standard of displays of pupils' work.
27. The provision for pupils' moral development is good. A strong sense of morality is evident in the everyday dealings of the school and pupils clearly have a sense of what is right and what is wrong. The various works done by pupils and teachers to raise money for less fortunate children underpin this. Pupils are encouraged to raise money for various charities which they do willingly. Teachers help pupils well to realise the consequences of their actions on others through messages given in

assemblies as well as by staff in the classroom as and when appropriate. The reward system for good behaviour makes a positive contribution to raising moral awareness. The emphasis of teachers is always on rewarding good behaviour and stressing the value of positive contributions to the life of the school.

28. The provision for the social development of pupils is good. Pupils develop good social skills as they move through the school because teachers are very good role models for their pupils and work to make sure that they get on with each other in day-to-day relationships. Teachers encourage pupils to work together. These opportunities are used to stress the value of teamwork and to develop their social skills; for example, Year 6 pupils worked together in small groups to produce a front page of a newspaper. Pupils took on the roles of editor, journalist and picture editor and worked together very well under challenging time limits to produce and present to others their finished sheets.
29. The provision for cultural development is good. Most pupils share a common culture but there are good opportunities in the range of subjects for pupils to find out about how others live. In geography, pupils investigate their local environment and find out about the jobs the people around them do. They move on to considering other cultures and countries throughout the world. In history, they come to an understanding of the changes in their society as well as learning about changes across the world in the past. In art, pupils learn about a range of mainly European artists through imitating their styles. They go on a good range of visits that broaden their understanding of different cultures. These include visits to China Town in Liverpool. During visits to Chester, pupils find out about the effect a long gone culture has had on the city. To celebrate their own culture, all pupils have taken part in a project that contributed to the recent bid for Liverpool to be designated as a City of Culture. Harmonious relationships are actively and successfully encouraged between pupils of different ethnic groups.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

30. The school's provision for the welfare, health and safety of pupils is good and members of staff have a genuine concern for pupils' well-being. Risk assessments and regular checks of the building and grounds are undertaken so that any hazards or defects can be immediately rectified. Members of staff pay good attention to aspects of health and safety when pupils go on visits out of school. There is due regard for the security of pupils and first aid procedures are good. The arrangements for child protection are good and members of staff are aware of what to do if concerns arise about the children. The school does not have a written policy for the safe use of the Internet but unsuitable material is screened and filtered.
31. Procedures for monitoring and assisting pupils' personal development are satisfactory. Members of staff have a good knowledge of individual pupils and give them good personal support. The school recognises and rewards individual achievements and successes and these are celebrated in a weekly assembly. Pupils are not supported well enough to make sure that they can swim the recommended 25 metres unaided by the time they leave the school.
32. The school is successful in promoting good standards of behaviour. The clear, sensible school rules and the consistency of the behaviour management throughout the school form a firm foundation for pupils to learn quickly what is expected of them. The teachers and other staff are very good role models and expect high standards of behaviour. Pupils say they like receiving rewards and certificates which helps them to try hard to improve their work and behaviour. The promotion of the school's aims and values is reflected in the good behaviour of the pupils which makes a good contribution to their levels of attainment and achievement. Procedures for eliminating bullying and oppressive behaviour are very good and based firmly on the respect and care pupils show towards each other. Parents and pupils say there are very few instances of bullying and that, if they do occur, teachers deal with them quickly and fairly. The school rarely needs to exclude pupils and works very closely with parents to try and avoid this but exercises its right to do so in exceptional circumstances.
33. The procedures for monitoring pupils' attendance are unsatisfactory. The school has high levels of attendance and it is keen to make sure this continues by ensuring that pupils enjoy coming to

school. The school uses a computerised registration system but does not make a printout of the attendance register as regulations require and this makes it difficult to see emerging patterns of absence at an early stage. The administrative assistant works hard to maintain the system and is becoming more aware of the full range of useful data that it can provide. The educational welfare officer works closely with school to monitor those children whose attendance is a concern. These children are picked up easily because this is a small school and the majority of children attend regularly. Parents understand their responsibility to inform the school of the reasons for absences and usually do so on the first day. The reasons for absence are promptly recorded and any unexplained absence is quickly followed up.

34. In the reception class the checking of children's progress is good in all the areas of learning and provides clear information of children's attainments by the end of the reception year. In Years 1 to 6 the procedures for checking and recording pupils' attainment and progress, including those of pupils with special educational needs, are good in English, mathematics, and science. The school has developed an effective system for recording regularly what pupils' know and understand in order to measure their progress to sub-divisions of the levels of the national curriculum. The school uses a range of tests, including the national tests, to gain detailed and accurate information on pupils' attainment and progress. Teachers set pupils specific targets for improvement and these are regularly reviewed. The information gained from analysing pupils' results is used well to identify how teachers can plan the next steps of learning to address weaknesses in pupils' attainment. There are various initiatives to support those pupils whose attainment falls below the average to help them achieve the nationally expected standards. The school analyses closely data to check the progress and attainment of differing groups, for example, groups of different gender, socio-economic backgrounds and special educational needs.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

35. Parents have a high regard for the school. A good partnership has been built with parents since the last inspection and this enables them to make an effective contribution to the life of the school. Parents now have very positive views about the school and can see that pupils' standards of attainment are improving. They recognise that more work is still to be done but appreciate how hard the staff are working in order to improve the quality of education for their children.
36. The quality and range of information provided for parents are satisfactory. The prospectus and governors' annual report are produced as a single document and although it is generally well presented there are several important statutory omissions that the school is now aware of. Day-to-day communication is good and the newsletters provided each term are of particularly high quality with lots of useful information about school life. At the beginning of the year, parents receive a useful summary of diary dates and topics to be taught. The annual reports are satisfactory and parents are offered suitable opportunities to attend meetings with class teachers to discuss their children's work and progress. The reports give a satisfactory summary of what pupils have achieved but do not indicate clearly how well they are progressing or how they are performing in relation to national standards. The targets for future learning are not always written in a way that parents would readily understand or find useful in helping their children at home. Throughout the school, there are opportunities for parents to talk to staff informally at the start or end of the day. The school holds curricular meetings and workshops for parents to demonstrate what their children are learning in class. The school keeps parents well informed about the progress of pupils with special educational needs.
37. Parental involvement has a good impact on the work of the school. Parents find staff approachable and feel genuinely welcome in school. Owing to work commitments, only a small number of parents are able to help regularly in class but many offer help with specific activities, such as running extra-curricular activities and accompanying children on visits out of school. Special assemblies and school performances involving the children are extremely well attended. Parents support the school strongly through the parent and friends' association and help raise considerable amounts of money for the school. They have contributed a very generous sum of money for the school's building project. Parents are satisfactorily involved in supporting their child's learning at home. Many parents listen to their younger children read at home and ensure that homework is completed and returned but this level of support is not as good for the older children. Attendance at curricular meetings and workshops is variable; for example, meetings about the tests at the end of

Year 2 and Year 6 are very well attended but only a very small number of parents attended a useful workshop on reading.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

38. The leadership and management of the headteacher have improved significantly since the last inspection. Parents agree that the school is now led and managed well. The headteacher, ably assisted by the deputy headteacher, has steered the school through a difficult period. As a result of much effort by the leadership, standards are improving well over time and weaknesses in teaching have been resolved through effective help and training for staff. A high-performing team of teachers has been established which is capable of improving standards further. The headteacher has led by example to inspire, motivate and influence staff and governors to effect school improvement.
39. Delegation to subject managers is increasingly benefiting pupils. The very good leadership of English and good leadership of mathematics, history, information and communication technology and music help pupils to achieve well in these subjects. The subject managers understand their roles and responsibilities to raise standards further. Because of staffing changes, the leadership and management of physical education are unsatisfactory; however, the senior staff has identified this weakness and appropriate action has been taken. At the last inspection, the provision for special educational needs was unsatisfactory; the headteacher is now the special educational needs co-ordinator and pupils with special educational needs now make good progress.
40. The Christian values and aims of the school's Mission Statement are reflected well in the day-to-day activities of the school, both in the classrooms and elsewhere. The school's mission statement, 'We are here to learn, to love, and to help one another in friendship', is fulfilled well in practice. The staff and governors are committed to promoting the personal development of all pupils well through a broad curriculum for all pupils; however, they have not yet agreed a policy for race equality.
41. The governing body works well with the headteacher. The membership of the governing body is stable and has not changed since the last inspection. Together with the headteacher, the governors have moved the school forward positively and ensured that the areas for development at the last inspection have been acted upon well. The governing body is confident in its role. It has worked effectively with the archdiocese and local education authority to obtain funding for improvements to the accommodation. It is very aware of the strengths of the school and areas for improvement. Governors meet frequently; they are assigned to monitor different aspects of the school's work, such as through links with subject managers and by taking responsibility for health and safety. The records of meetings of the governing body are systematically maintained. The governing body questions well and acts upon advice in the headteacher's clear and informative reports. It has not ensured that all statutory requirements are met in respect of information in the prospectus and annual governor's report, recording of attendance and by provision of guidance on racial equality.
42. The school improvement plan is built up through contributions from staff, governors and parents. It is detailed for the current year but longer-term planning is very brief. Areas for improvement identified at the last inspection have been, rightly, the main focus of the recent planning and the initiatives taken have been successful. The professional development of staff is linked well to performance management. The procedures to monitor and support teaching and pupils' learning have been very effective, as seen by the quality of teaching, which is now good, and pupils achieve well. The tracking of pupils' progress established recently is thorough and provides clear guidance to the management of how well pupils are progressing in each class and over time.
43. The number of staff and the expertise of senior teachers and teaching assistants are good. The number of pupils in classes is generally small which enables teachers and teaching assistants to provide effective help to pupils. The senior teachers are experienced and include two teachers identified by the local education authority as leading teachers of mathematics, one of whom is an advanced skills teacher. Because of the strengths of senior staff, teachers who are new to the school are provided with effective help and guidance.
44. The headteacher and governors manage the budget well with a strong emphasis on using funding well to assist pupils' learning. Emphasis is placed on ensuring a good level of staffing resulting in a low contingency fund for future years. Additional funding is used well to provide additional help for pupils with special educational needs and pupils in Years 2 and 6, and to enable subject leaders to

have time to monitor pupils' learning. Day-to-day financial management by the administration staff is good which ensures that the head can focus on educational matters.

45. The accommodation is unsatisfactory and has not improved significantly since the last inspection; however, planning to provide improved accommodation is complete and building work is due to commence immediately. The quality and range of resources to assist pupils' learning are good in English and adequate in all other areas of subjects.
46. The governors apply the principles of ensuring best value soundly. The governing body considers satisfactorily the standards the school achieves in national tests and compares the school's performance with other similar schools. The governing body is mindful to use its funding to improve standards. It checks quotations for services carefully and consults, when appropriate, with parents and staff.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

47. The headteacher, staff and governors should take the following action:
 - raise standards by the end of Year 6 in science* and physical education by:
 - providing more opportunities for scientific investigation;
 - ensuring consistency of approach to the recording of investigations in science;
 - reviewing the time allocation for the teaching of science and swimming;
 - identifying pupils who need extra swimming tuition in Years 5 and 6.

Paragraphs: 1, 13, 19, 31, 70, 108 and 109

The following less important areas for development should be included in the action plan:

- the governing body should fulfil its statutory responsibilities in regard to these areas:
 - information in the prospectus and governors' annual report to parents;
 - computerised registration procedures;
 - the implementation of a racial equality policy.

Paragraphs: 33, 36, 40 and 41
- agree and implement a policy for Internet access.

Paragraph: 30

** Staff and governors have already identified this area for development*

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

| | |
|--|----|
| Number of lessons observed | 46 |
| Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils | 38 |

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

| | Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|------------|-----------|-----------|------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| Number | 2 | 10 | 18 | 16 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Percentage | 4 | 22 | 39 | 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 more than two percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

| Pupils on the school's roll | YR – Y6 |
|---|---------|
| Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils) | 156 |
| Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals | 36 |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

| Special educational needs | YR – Y6 |
|---|---------|
| Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs | 1 |
| Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register | 40 |

| English as an additional language | No of pupils |
|---|--------------|
| Number of pupils with English as an additional language | 1 |

| Pupil mobility in the last school year | No of pupils |
|--|--------------|
| Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission | 9 |
| Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving | 2 |

Attendance

Authorised absence

| | % |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data | 5.0 |
| National comparative data | 5.4 |

Unauthorised absence

| | % |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data | 0.0 |
| National comparative data | 0.5 |

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

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

| Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year | Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
|--|------|------|-------|-------|
| | 2002 | 11 | 16 | 27 |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results | | Reading | Writing | Mathematics |
|---|----------|---------|---------|-------------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above | Boys | 10 | 10 | 10 |
| | Girls | 16 | 15 | 15 |
| | Total | 26 | 25 | 25 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School | 96 (95) | 93 (95) | 93 (95) |
| | National | 84 (84) | 86 (86) | 90 (91) |

| Teachers' Assessments | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above | Boys | 10 | 10 | 10 |
| | Girls | 15 | 15 | 15 |
| | Total | 25 | 25 | 25 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School | 93 (95) | 93 (95) | 93 (91) |
| | 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 | 15 | 15 | 30 |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above | Boys | 11 | 11 | 12 |
| | Girls | 13 | 9 | 12 |
| | Total | 24 | 20 | 24 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above | School | 80 (70) | 67 (60) | 80 (93) |
| | National | 75 (75) | 73 (71) | 86 (87) |

| Teachers' Assessments | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above | Boys | 13 | 13 | 13 |
| | Girls | 14 | 9 | 12 |
| | Total | 27 | 22 | 25 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above | School | 90 (67) | 73 (63) | 83 (83) |
| | National | 73 (72) | 74 (74) | 82 (82) |

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

Ethnic background of pupils

| Categories used in the Annual School Census |
|---|
| White – British |
| White – Irish |
| White – any other White background |
| Mixed – White and Black Caribbean |
| Mixed – White and Black African |
| Mixed – White and Asian |
| Mixed – any other mixed background |
| Asian or Asian British - Indian |
| Asian or Asian British - Pakistani |
| Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi |
| Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background |
| Black or Black British – Caribbean |
| Black or Black British – African |
| Black or Black British – any other Black background |
| Chinese |
| Any other ethnic group |
| No ethnic group recorded |

Exclusions in the last school year

| No of pupils on roll | Number of fixed period exclusions | Number of permanent exclusions |
|----------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 133 | 2 | 0 |
| 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 2 | 0 | 0 |
| 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 1 | 0 | 0 |
| 2 | 0 | 0 |
| 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 1 | 0 | 0 |
| 0 | 0 | 0 |

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

| | |
|--|------|
| Total number of qualified teachers (FTE) | 8.8 |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher | 25.5 |
| Average class size | 22.5 |

Education support staff: YR – Y6

| | |
|---|----|
| Total number of education support staff | 4 |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week | 75 |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Financial year | 2001/2002 |
| | £ |
| Total income | 429813 |
| Total expenditure | 428571 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 2582 |
| Balance brought forward from previous year | 1805 |
| Balance carried forward to next year | 3047 |

Recruitment of teachers

| | |
|--|---|
| Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years | 4 |
| 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.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-----|
| Number of questionnaires sent out | 156 |
| Number of questionnaires returned | 41 |

Percentage of responses in each category

| | Strongly agree | Tend to agree | Tend to disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know |
|--|----------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|------------|
| My child likes school. | 49 | 46 | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| My child is making good progress in school. | 49 | 39 | 12 | 0 | 0 |
| Behaviour in the school is good. | 56 | 41 | 0 | 2 | 0 |
| My child gets the right amount of work to do at home. | 41 | 32 | 20 | 7 | 0 |
| The teaching is good. | 49 | 46 | 2 | 2 | 0 |
| I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on. | 44 | 51 | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem. | 59 | 37 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best. | 63 | 34 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| The school works closely with parents. | 41 | 54 | 2 | 0 | 2 |
| The school is well led and managed. | 44 | 44 | 5 | 2 | 5 |
| The school is helping my child become mature and responsible. | 49 | 46 | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons. | 27 | 39 | 24 | 5 | 5 |

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

48. Children enter the school with below average attainment and achieve well in all the areas of learning because the quality of teaching is good. The good progress of children in the reception class has been maintained since the last inspection. Most children achieve the level expected nationally by the end of the reception year in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development.

Personal social and emotional development

49. Good teaching ensures that the children achieve well, enabling them to become increasingly independent, acquire more confidence, co-operate with each other and behave well. The children are set to achieve the nationally expected levels by the end of the reception year. The children leave their parents confidently at the start of the school day and register their attendance using their name card on a special board devised by the teachers. They enjoy working with other children and can be trusted to work as part of a group with the minimum of supervision. The teaching ensures that children have a clear understanding of behavioural expectations, resulting in a good standard of behaviour which helps the children to make good progress in all areas of learning. Specific teaching of personal and social development assists the good progress children make; for example, in a lesson to help children to become sensitive to the needs and feelings of others, the teacher explained what they should learn. The planning of the lesson was good and resources showing 'happy' and 'sad' faces were used effectively. The children were interested and took turns to pass around the group smiles and frowns. The teaching used a story well to develop reflection of feelings. The teaching, by both the teacher and the teaching assistant, helped children to realise how individuals or groups of children can make others happy or sad.

Communication, language and literacy

50. The quality of teaching is good and the children make good progress in their learning because lessons are planned well to develop children's reading, writing, speaking and listening skills. The children are set to achieve the nationally expected levels by the end of the reception year. The teaching promotes plenty of discussion through careful questioning which gives children plenty of practice of speaking in front of others. Higher attainers are confident speakers and enjoy talking to staff and other children in well-constructed sentences. Teachers give lower attainers ample opportunities to express their views in whole class teaching and small groups.
51. The systems to help children learn to read are thorough. There is a strong emphasis on the discussion of books as well as working with parents to encourage their children to learn words and to read regularly at home. Higher attainers read confidently a range of simple texts. They can give reasons for the choice of books. They talk confidently about the pictures and predict what might happen next. Most pupils know the sounds letters make and can read words such as 'stop' and 'dad'. They are proud of their achievements. Lower attainers lack concentration when reading, although are interested in pictures in books. They know a few words and know most of the initial sounds of words.
52. The children are helped to form letters correctly and teachers ensure that children hold pencils correctly and, where necessary, provide tri-pod pencil grips to help children improve their writing. Higher attainers can write simple sentences unaided and generally use upper and lower case letters appropriately. Most children write their names correctly, unaided. Teachers work productively with lower attainers to push on their learning; for example, a teacher worked alongside lower attainers well to encourage the children to select the correct letter to continue the alphabet pattern to complete a jigsaw.

Mathematical development

53. The quality of teaching is good and the children achieve well. The children are set to achieve the nationally expected levels by the end of the reception year. The teaching is planned carefully to assist children at each level of attainment to make good progress. Rhymes and songs provide effective ways to consolidate learning; for example, when learning about shapes, the children sang 'I'm a little circle' which helped them remember the characteristics of the shape. Children count with the teachers forward and backwards from a given number and gain an increased understanding of the order of numbers up to ten. They develop, through discussion and experimentation, basic subject language, such as 'full', 'empty', 'less' and 'more'.
54. Teachers use the outdoor environment well to provide interesting activities to enhance learning; for example, in the playground, children were challenged by the teacher to make circular shapes from different lengths of skipping ropes and to estimate the size of the shape in comparison to a hoop. Through good questioning, the children gained a better understanding of the shape of a circle as well as having experience of solving a mathematical problem.
55. Learning resources are used well and children are encouraged to help each other in their learning; for example, the teacher grouped pupils in pairs of differing attainment levels to develop recognition of coins. Fans with pictures of different coins on each spine of the fan helped pupils to have plenty of practice in the recognition of coins from 1p to £2. Higher attaining children worked well with lower attaining children to question, challenge and check each other and, as a result, the children made good progress.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

56. The quality of teaching is good and children make brisk progress in their learning. The children are set to achieve the nationally expected levels by the end of the reception year. A particular strength is the good use of the school grounds and surrounding locality to assist children's learning; for example, a trip to the local park was organised. Very good learning resources were prepared by the teacher to enable children to mark on a map the location of different features of the local environment as they walked to the park, such as 'the school', 'houses', 'trees' and 'the park'. Teachers challenged children to draw a plan of the park and label the playground equipment. The children drew objects they saw in the park and labelled drawings with words, such as 'bin' and 'swing'. Teachers organised the children effectively and the children listened and followed instructions well.
57. Children gained an increased understanding of the lives of children in other cultures, by studying a South African counting book, 'One Child One Seed'. The teacher linked the work very well with an investigation of growth of seeds. A microscope connected to a computer helped pupils to examine a range of different seeds. By the good questioning of the teachers, the children developed a better understanding of the shapes and colours of different seeds. They recorded their observations and labelled their drawings with the names of the seeds.

Physical development

58. The children are on course to meet the national expectations by the end of the reception class. They make good progress, as the teaching is effective. The children co-ordinate and control their movements successfully. This was seen in a dance lesson when, following good instructions from the teacher, the children moved rhythmically in response to music and performed a Celidh dance well. The teaching is well planned and teachers and teaching assistants work well in partnership, through effective implementation of the planning, to improve children's performance in all aspects of physical development both in the classroom, in the hall and in the playground. The children know that physical activity has effects on their bodies and teachers ensure appropriate 'warm up' activities at the start of physical education lessons as well as 'cool down' activities at the end of each session. Children are given ample opportunities to work in malleable materials and practise cutting, safely, with scissors. Most undress and dress independently, though a few need help fastening buttons on clothing. Pupils are proficient at controlling the mouse on a computer.

Creative development

59. Children achieve well, helped by the good quality of teaching. The children are likely to meet the national expectations by the end of the reception class. Children have a broad range of experiences during their time in the reception class because the planning is good and teachers ensure that skills are developed well. Teachers provide suitable opportunities for children to explore colour and shapes in two- and three-dimensional representations. They developed skills and experience of using paints and pastels when they produced pictures in the style of an artist. Information and communication technology is used effectively to assist learning; for example, the children used the Internet to experience a 'virtual' tour of Liverpool. They created interpretations of selected landmarks using a variety of media. The Cathedral and Albert Dock were represented in plastic interlocking blocks, the Liverpool waterfront was depicted in wooden blocks and children painted a picture of the Chinese Gateway.
60. Often, lessons are introduced by the reading of a story, which helps to develop children's literacy skills; for example, before making Mothers' Day cards, the teacher read and discussed well a story entitled '5 Minutes Peace'. This stimulated children's interest and they shared willingly their views about the care their mothers give to them, before beginning to produce paintings, collages and models on the theme. The children made delightful finger paintings of a flower for the cover of the card and worked with the teacher to write a verse for the card. The three-dimensional models gave the children opportunities to learn sticking skills by rolling a glued tube over fabric. Different colours of woollen yarn were used to represent their mother's hair. The children work well with each other and their teachers. The children were impressed with the resultant models being keen to take them home to their mothers.
61. The children enjoy singing and know a good range of songs. In specific music lessons, they gain an elementary understanding of musical notation by tapping out words together, such as, 'frog, frog, tadpole, frog'. The teacher claps the words and the children say the words in response. Well-prepared cards with the words and the standard musical notation help the children well to produce their own series of words and sounds which they then perform for others.

ENGLISH

62. By the end of Year 6, standards in speaking and listening, and in reading and writing, are average. All Year 6 pupils, except those with special educational needs in language, are set to reach the national average standard by the time they leave school. By the end of Year 2, standards in writing are above average. Standards in reading and in speaking and listening are average.
63. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Pupils' attitudes to work and their behaviour are good. Teachers use recommended literacy strategies well. This is one of the main reasons for pupils' good achievements. Other important strengths of teaching are very good relationships which encourage pupils of all abilities and backgrounds to contribute well to learning in class, very good modelling by teachers of clear speech and expressive reading, the good match of work to pupils' varied abilities and good quality resources which hold pupils' interest. The main areas for the further development of teaching and learning are more careful planning to develop speech, drama and library skills and improved ongoing assessment of pupils' progress in speech. Information and communication technology helps pupils to improve their learning in English; for example, pupils have good opportunities to present their work well using word processing. They use computer programs to practise spellings.
64. Very good leadership and management during the last year have made big improvements in the quality of teaching, learning and resources. Although these initiatives have not yet had enough time to raise standards substantially, pupils are now making good progress throughout the school. The school has also maintained good standards of writing in Years 1 and 2. The co-ordinator has a very clear view of present and future needs. Teachers show good teamwork and commitment to ensuring all pupils do as well as they can. The school is, therefore, well placed to improve standards further in speech, reading and writing.
65. Speaking and listening skills improve steadily in Years 1 and 2, after a good start in the reception class. Nearly all pupils are good listeners. This is because teachers talk and read to them very clearly and expressively, listen very carefully to them and make sure everyone concentrates. As a result they quickly take in a lot of new words and ideas. Pupils with special educational needs

make good progress because of good quality individual discussion of their work with teachers and teaching assistants. Higher attaining pupils make good progress because teachers give them good opportunities to take the lead in discussion. Nearly all pupils make good gains in confidence so as to explain what they think, notice, feel, see and want to ask.

66. Year 6 pupils speak accurately and in the detail expected for their ages; for example, they described clearly to visitors different ways of finding out about the past, and reasons for studying it. Higher and average attaining pupils also spoke at length and with interest about their reading. In a Year 4 literacy lesson pupils listened intently as the teacher showed how to write explanatory text. Some of the weaknesses in speech noted at the last inspection persist. This is partly because teachers do not always make enough opportunities for pupils to read aloud with or after them; or for pupils to talk about their new learning in pairs and groups; for example, older pupils commonly lack the expected levels of confidence and awareness of audience. This was evident in Year 6 pupils' presentations to their class of their designs for newspaper front pages. Pupils kept well to their subject but did not find it easy to open up to questions or use formal English. In a Year 6 mathematics lesson many pupils did not speak clearly enough to be heard easily by the whole class when replying to the teacher. The school has already taken steps to address these shortcomings through work with a local Beacon school focusing on speech and drama. However, there is no overall plan to develop speech and drama skills in each year of pupils' time at school.
67. Pupils make good progress in reading in Years 1 and 2. This is because high quality literacy lessons and reading schemes build on the good start that they make in learning letter sounds in the reception class. Teachers also hear all pupils read individually at least once a week. A few higher attaining pupils read by themselves by the end of Year 1. Average and lower attaining pupils also make good progress. This is because teachers develop their interest in reading through well-chosen stories and provide attractive reading books. However, teachers do not generally make the most of opportunities for pupils to practise whole class reading aloud in the initial part of literacy lessons. By the end of Year 2, pupils' skills in finding information using dictionaries, indexes and contents pages are as expected for their ages. Higher attaining pupils read fluently. Average and lower attaining pupils read accurately with satisfactory understanding and appropriate expression. Pupils begin to read back their own writing so as to check and correct it.
68. Reading standards are average in Year 3. Most pupils reach the expected standard by the end of Year 6, and over a quarter reach the level above. Because teachers use literacy lessons well, pupils of all abilities gradually improve their reading skills. Nearly all pupils read their own writing accurately by the end of Year 6, and use dictionaries and thesauruses effectively to improve the quality of their expression. The school has already taken further effective steps to improve the development of individual reading in Years 3 to 6. Reading-journals in Year 6 encourage pupils' creative responses to reading, for example they make thoughtful pictures to interpret characters and settings. Good guidance on book reviews also increases pupils' understanding of their reading as they move through the school. However, library skills, such as the use of book numbering systems, are not secure because the school does not develop them enough; for example, pupils do not know how to use catalogues to find non-fiction books. The use and development of reading to support learning in other subjects are satisfactory; for example, in a history lesson, Year 3 pupils studied eyewitness accounts, notes made in class and textbooks to discover what Henry VIII did each day.
69. In Years 1 and 2, pupils make good progress in writing. Standards of handwriting, presentation and rates of writing are above average. This is because of skilled use of the National Literacy Strategy and high expectations of what pupils can achieve. Thorough practice and marking improve spelling and handwriting standards. Lower attaining pupils make very good progress and most reach the standard expected for their age by the end of Year 2. Higher attainers write at length in fluent joined up handwriting. Pupils enjoy writing because teachers show them how to improve and succeed.
70. In Years 3 to 6 teachers use literacy lessons well to build up pupils' experience of different types of writing; for example, they write newspaper articles, stories, letters, brochures, drama scripts, book reviews, character studies and poems. Standards of spelling, handwriting and presentation are as expected for pupils' ages. Pupils increase the types of sentences they use and move successfully from pencil to ink handwriting. They also gain satisfactory experience of using writing to support learning in most subjects; for example, they practise skimming and scanning in English lessons; make up and write out division problems in mathematics; and use computers effectively to develop

writing skills in Year 2. However, teachers do not do enough to encourage confident writing up of investigations in science.

71. In the very best lessons, teachers ensure that all pupils are fully involved all the time in many speaking, reading and writing activities; for example, in an excellent Year 1 literacy lesson, pupils listened to a poem about a grizzly bear, read it enthusiastically with the teacher, collected words beginning with 'gr' sounds, described the dangers they saw in a picture, suggested rules for safe play and created warning posters. Learning was both rapid and thorough because the teacher spoke quickly and very clearly, used a simple poem as a starter, modelled writing well, gave pupils a lot of opportunities to contribute and discuss their work and gave them lots of individual help. In an effective Year 6 lesson on discussion text, pupils worked in six groups with tasks to match their skills to sort out arguments for and against mobile phones, television and hunting. This lesson worked well because of pupils' interest and very effective individual support for all pupils as they developed their ideas. Enjoyment of learning was the secret of success in a good Year 3 writing lesson, when the teacher strongly encouraged pupils to use their imaginations and work hard. At the end of the lesson, almost all wanted to share their work with the class, and cheered when they heard they would continue writing their myths next day.
72. Learning is less successful when pupils have to spend too long listening to the teacher and do not have enough opportunity to practise new skills or give their ideas to the class. Such over direction of learning often occurs in the first half of lessons when teachers want to make sure pupils understand everything before they start independent work. Pupils also achieve less than they might when teachers do not tell them often enough how much time they have for written work and how much they have to do.
73. Skilled and experienced teachers and teaching assistants improve significantly the standards of pupils with special educational needs or particular language difficulties, in small groups and individually; for example, the teaching provides special support groups for pupils who need to catch up in Years 1 and 3 to 6. The effectiveness of this work shows in the good progress and achievement of many lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs.

MATHEMATICS

74. Standards by the end of both Year 2 and Year 6 are average. Pupils achieve well because the quality of teaching is good. Pupils are interested in their work and behave well. Improvement since the last inspection is good because there is now no unsatisfactory teaching and the leadership and management of the subject are now good. Thorough systems are in place to monitor the quality of teaching and of pupils' work. The checking of all pupils' progress is good and the information enables teachers to plan appropriate opportunities to push on pupils' learning. Members of staff are strongly committed to, and capable of, improving standards further so that the school is well placed to improve pupils' achievements. The leading mathematics' teachers are providing strong support for other colleagues, together with the subject manager.
75. The quality of teaching is good in Years 1 and 2, with particular strengths in Year 1. In an outstanding lesson in Year 1, pupils made excellent progress because the lesson was planned extremely well resulting in a fast pace of learning of the features of familiar three-dimensional shapes. Pupils were interested and keen to participate in counting up and down to 20 in twos. Pupils with special educational needs were fully involved and assisted very well by the teacher and teaching assistants. Higher attainers practised productively counting in multiples of five and ten. Learning resources were of a high standard and used most effectively to develop pupils' understanding of mathematical language. Pupils wanted to learn because the activities were interesting. They wanted to succeed and they were helpful to each other as well as being tolerant of those pupils experiencing difficulties. The teacher assessed very carefully pupils' learning and gave pupils, who were experiencing difficulties sorting cubes and cuboids additional help and practice.
76. In Year 2, the teaching picked up effectively on previously identified weaknesses, such as in interpreting bar graphs, through questioning, although the teacher often did not ask questions directly to individuals and this resulted in most answers being given by higher attaining pupils. The planning of activities for pupils at different levels of attainment is good; for example, in one lesson

lower attainers, with the help of a teaching assistant, investigated combinations of numbers to make five whilst average attainers used confidently computers to practise additions up to twenty. Higher attainers sought the number of combinations possible using three shirts and four skirts. In the 2002 national tests for pupils, at the end of Year 2, the proportion of pupils achieving the higher levels was well below average; however, with the greater emphasis this year on teaching pupils according to their level of attainment, this is no longer a weakness and an average proportion of pupils are on course to achieve the higher levels.

77. In Years 3 to 6, the quality of teaching is good. Weaknesses in teaching in Years 3 and 4, identified at the last inspection, are no longer apparent. In Year 3, pupils build well on their previous learning, including those pupils with special educational needs. The teaching is good. The pace of learning is steady when new work is carefully introduced so that pupils understand the new learning. The good rapport between teacher and pupils gives pupils confidence to express their view of what they understand and where they are having difficulties. In Year 4, the pupils are motivated well and engrossed fully in their learning; however, at times, the pace of learning slows and pupils become fidgety. The teaching checks effectively which pupils need more practice. Lesson planning is appropriate though the teaching does not clearly identify what pupils should learn. Time at the end of the lesson is used well to evaluate pupils' learning and how they can improve.
78. In Years 5 and 6, the organisation of grouping of pupils in Year 5 and 6 into separate classes according to their level of attainment is beneficial and is helping to push up standards. Pupils at each level of attainment, including gifted and talented pupils, are given challenging work to speed their progress. Teachers spend time productively ensuring that pupils understand terms, such as 'multiple', 'factor' and 'product'. This assisted average attaining pupils in Year 6 to find the lowest common multiple of three numbers. Lower attainers were helped by a teaching assistant to identify multiples of 2 and 5. Overlapping circles enabled pupils to sort multiples of a given number and higher attainers understood the relationship of numbers in the intersecting section. Higher attainers and talented pupils are given very challenging activities, though, occasionally, teachers do not explain clearly enough how they should approach the investigations. In Year 6, a significant proportion of pupils do not speak out clearly in whole-class situations and this is not picked up sufficiently by teachers, resulting in discussions between the teacher and individual pupil rather than discussion to benefit the whole class. Information and communication technology assists pupils' learning well; for example, pupils gained a good understanding of spreadsheets using a computer program. The pupils appreciated the usefulness of the program in calculating accurately when data was changed.

SCIENCE

79. Standards, of the present group of pupils, in Year 2 are average but below average in Year 6. Taking into account the high proportion of pupils who are new to the school, pupils achieve satisfactorily by the end of Year 6. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall; it is good in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory in Years 3 to 6. Pupils' attitudes to learning and their behaviour are good. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The improvement of the teaching of scientific investigation in Years 3 to 6, which is the main area for development, has been identified and steps have already been taken to remedy the situation. The local education adviser has been consulted and a scheme of work that gives good help for teachers on planning for investigational work is being incorporated in the school's guidance for teachers. The subject promotes literacy satisfactorily. The subject manager has a good overview of the subject and monitors effectively teachers' planning and the work pupils do. Improvements since the last inspection are good because standards by the end of Year 6 were low and pupils made unsatisfactory progress. Information and communication technology is used well to help pupils to present results of their investigations in the form of graphs.
80. In Years 1 and 2, the teaching is good. Investigational work, such as observing, predicting and recording ideas about the changes made to bread that is toasted, is well handled. Teachers use question and answer very well to probe and extend understanding and, importantly, to give pupils ownership of their learning by responding well to their suggestions and valuing their contributions. Lessons are better structured than in Years 3 to 6, where the two-hour sessions are too long. Teachers do not manage this time well enough and, as a consequence, some lessons lack pace, and some pupils lose interest.

81. In Years 1 and 2 teachers develop pupils' observational skills well. Teachers promote this through investigational work and events such as the autumn walk through a park when pupils are encouraged to look about them and to observe and record the natural world. Teachers make good links with other subjects, such as art, which helps to broaden pupils' understanding of what they see. Year 1 pupils make good progress in learning how to record their investigational work into, for example, the waterproof qualities of materials that are suggested for use in the construction of model umbrellas.
82. In Years 3 to 6, teachers do not always make sure that experiments are written up and conclusions reached; there is not a consistent approach to the recording of investigations. The simple pattern, as is seen in Years 1 and 2, is not carried on with increasing sophistication through to Year 6. However, teachers develop pupils' understanding of science satisfactorily by the end of Year 6; for example, pupils gain a basic understanding of insulation and conduction in relation to simple electrical circuits. They made predictions and explored what would happen when the teacher gave them an array of circuit diagrams, some of which would work and others that would not. Pupils recorded their findings using conventional diagrammatic forms. They investigate a limited range of materials to produce a simple switch. Pupils make best progress in the shorter lessons taking place in the week.
83. Relationships between pupils and between pupils and teachers are good and help promote good learning. Lessons feature good, productive dialogue between teacher and pupil. Teaching starts well with lesson objectives shared, giving pupils a clear view of what they are learning. Activities are prepared for well, so little time for learning is lost. Teachers make sure that pupils are clear about the ways in which they will be working, whether in groups or individually. Introductions feature good use of question and answer that probes and extends knowledge and understanding. Teachers look for creative ways in which to interest pupils; for example, a Chilean visitor demonstrated a Chilean miner's lamp to show a chemical reaction. Pupils behaved well, listening with good concentration and interest.

ART AND DESIGN

84. Pupils reach national expectations by the end of Year 6 and achieve well relative to their prior attainment. There was insufficient evidence to make a secure judgment on the quality of teaching and learning. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. There has been improvement in standards in Years 3 to 6 since the last inspection. This is largely due to the successful introduction of national planning guidelines that have extended the range of pupils' work.
85. Teachers stimulate pupils' interest well by encouraging them to experience use of a broad range of media: for example, in Year 2, the teaching inspired and guided pupils to make a very attractive 'teddy bear' quilt, using a wide range of different materials. The teaching identifies pupils' good achievement and makes sure that pupils realise how well they are doing through attractive displays of work in the 'Art Gallery'. The 'Art Gallery' celebrates successfully the achievement of pupils as well as laying down a good level of challenge to pupils by providing exemplars of particularly good work by their peers. Information and communication technology assists learning in art and design satisfactorily; for example, pupils used a graphics program to produce interesting pictures using a variety of colours.
86. The teaching develops pupils' skills well; for example, pupils, in Year 2, made interesting pencil drawings of natural objects that often showed good attention to detail and that made sound use of shading. Pupils built interesting mosaic representations of landscapes using felt. The teaching presents pupils with varied and interesting challenges such as the drawings they made from digitally captured images of the school railings. In addition, pupils cut out scraps of photographs from newspapers and magazines and extended the image using line and colour to good effect.
87. In Years 3 to 6, the teaching builds on previous learning soundly. In Year 3 pupils made satisfactory observations of people in groups, producing bright and lively pastel drawings that communicated the interrelationships of the folk they had chosen. In Year 4, pupils appropriately designed and made three-dimensional representations of chairs. The teaching of older pupils helps them to develop a critical appreciation of what they have created as well as improving their

understanding of composition; for example, Year 5 pupils drew still life representations and then used a card frame to explore and capture sectors of the image that were particularly interesting. Teachers plan well to encourage an appreciation of artists' work in order to help pupils to improve their own work. This happened when Year 6 pupils studied the work of well-known artists creating individual interpretations of the artist's style that helped them appreciate aspects of the application of colour and layout.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

88. Pupils reach national expectations by the end of Year 6 and achieve well relative to their prior attainment. This is an improvement on the findings of the last inspection as pupils now achieve well. There were insufficient opportunities to observe lessons in order to make a secure judgement on the quality of teaching and learning. The management of the subject is satisfactory.
89. The teaching in Years 1 and 2 provides sound opportunities to make appropriate progress in designing and making. Teachers plan interesting activities to capture pupils' interest; for example, a puppet-making project enthused pupils to develop their designing skills: they drew well to communicate their designs, added labels to clarify their ideas and learnt how templates could be used to ensure accuracy in making. Teachers provide satisfactory opportunities for pupils to study existing products which helps them to understand simple construction techniques. The teaching helps pupils to gain a sound understanding of the properties of a narrow range of materials and to practise different ways of fixing fabric together. Information and communication technology is used satisfactorily to assist learning; for example, in Year 1 pupils word processed clear sequencing of activities combining text and graphics.
90. The teaching in Years 3 to 6 provides pupils with an appropriate range of learning opportunities. Teachers assist pupils to make appropriate records of their designs; for example in Year 6, the teacher explained satisfactorily and pupils drew plans for the design of a shelter to keep out the rain and sun. The designs of the shelters to keep off the elements showed a satisfactory understanding of the properties of materials. The teaching builds on previous work appropriately; for example, pupils' experience of making shelters was used in a project to design and make slippers and they gained a better understanding of which materials were hardwearing, comfortable and waterproof. In addition, they learnt the importance of modelling to test designs. Occasionally, pupils spend too long drawing than actually designing. The school uses the expertise of other educational institutions and local industries well to provide additional learning opportunities for pupils; for example, the local education business partnership ran a project to enable pupils to experience working together under pressure. The pupils responded very well to the challenge.

GEOGRAPHY

91. Pupils reach national expectations by the end of Year 6 and achieve well relative to their prior attainment. There were insufficient opportunities to observe lessons in order to make a secure judgement on the quality of teaching and learning. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. Teachers provide a sound range of visits that promote deeper understanding of the topics studied. These include trips to the docks, to a local environmental centre and to Wales. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory.
92. The teaching ensures that pupils have an appropriate knowledge and understanding of different places. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 work successfully on plans of the area around the school. They begin to use techniques to communicate findings when they generate bar charts concerned with the ways in which they come to school. They are challenged satisfactorily by the teaching to develop their observational skills, such as in a task that directs them to record their likes and dislikes of the local area. The teaching encourages pupils to ask questions to find out more about their environment.
93. In Years 3 to 6, the teaching is planned well to develop pupils' understanding of the impact of people on the environment. As a result, pupils in Year 6 can offer descriptions of some of the effects of pollution including global warming and holes in the ozone layer. Pupils hold strong views about the environment but understand that people form opinions dependent on their circumstances. They know about a sound range of natural factors that affect the world about them including erosion.

The teaching helps pupils to develop an increasing awareness of the similarities and differences between different areas; for example, Year 5 pupils made perceptive observations of differences between Liverpool and Southport though they spend too long drawing and colouring pictures of both areas. Year 4 pupils gained an increased awareness of different ways of life when they studied life in India. They described and contrasted human features in different localities. In some lengthy lessons, the slowing down of the pace of the lessons inhibits better progress in learning.

94. The Internet is used satisfactorily to encourage pupils to search for information to assist their learning. Teachers develop their literacy skills satisfactorily in the subject; for example, pupils were given opportunities to search for information in books about hurricanes and they created the front page of a newspaper based on their findings.

HISTORY

95. Standards by the end of Years 2 and 6 are at the national expectations, as at the time of the last inspection. Teachers make good use of the latest national planning and guidance. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. Their knowledge and understanding of local history are strengths in their learning. The good leadership and management have maintained standards, brought the curriculum up to date and given pupils a good balance of topics to study, so as to ensure step-by-step development of their skills in the subject. As a result, both pupils and teachers show a lot of enthusiasm the subject. The good teaching is recent, since changes in the curriculum, and has not yet had sufficient time to affect standards by the end of Year 6.
96. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers ensure that pupils gain a good understanding of chronology; for example, the teaching makes effective timelines such as showing important dates in the life of Florence Nightingale. Pupils also learn how we may find out about the past from eyewitnesses, such as Samuel Pepys, who wrote down or depicted what they saw. Pupils of all abilities discover how to find out about the more recent past by talking to older members of their families. They begin to make notes about what they discover, labelling pictures and writing simple sentences. Understanding of local history develops appropriately through observational drawings of household artefacts such as mangles and irons.
97. The teaching helps pupils to reflect; for example, Year 3 pupils considered how the Nile made life both easy and difficult for the Ancient Egyptians. The quality of learning is good when teachers set challenging tasks based on primary sources; for example, Year 5 pupils learned a lot about historical method as well as the past when they tallied and compared households and inhabitants in a local street, as recorded in two sets of Victorian census returns. Teachers have a good understanding of the subject and plan lessons well; for example, teachers encourage pupils to compare different sources of evidence such as writing, archaeology, pictures, photographs, books, artefacts and the Internet. Pupils regard studying history as important because they feel that discoveries about the past could help to improve life in the future.
98. Teaching is also effective when pupils have varied opportunities to develop art and language skills as they study history; for example, Year 3 pupils carefully coloured in pictures of Henry VIII and then surrounded their pictures with adjectives such as 'fierce', 'ugly', 'cruel' and 'kingly' to give their impressions of his character. Later the teaching encouraged research, so pupils could decide upon and write down how Henry would have used a typical day. When there were differences of opinion, the teacher turned the lesson into a debate in which pupils had to justify their views. Teachers also use opportunities in history well to stimulate and develop pupils' imaginative writing skills; for example, pupils wrote diaries and letters as if they were Victorian child factory workers or evacuees and designed posters for Lord Shaftsbury's campaigns for children and advertisements for a Victorian toy shop. Information and communication technology is used well to extend pupils' learning; for example, in use of the Internet to search for information and spreadsheets to analyse data.
99. Teachers enliven pupils' understanding of the past through well-planned use of visits. Trips to places, such as local museums improve pupils' opportunities to learn through observation and direct experiences. Resources are adequate to meet the requirements of the topics studied. Parents help by welcoming classes into local Victorian houses and lending artefacts and mementoes for displays.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

100. Standards, by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, are on course to be in line with national expectations. Pupils achieve well relative to their prior attainment because the quality of teaching is good. Improvement since the last inspection is very good because standards of pupils' attainment, the quality of teaching, the guidance for teachers and training of teachers have improved significantly. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The subject manager, together with the help of an advanced skills teacher from another school and additional subject training, has improved staff confidence and expertise to benefit pupils' learning. Members of staff are keen to raise standards further.

101. The teaching is of good quality and develops pupils' skills well because of the good planning and effective use of the computer suite. Teachers' explanations are hampered occasionally by the lack of an interactive whiteboard because pupils have to gather around a small computer monitor, with many pupils having difficulty seeing the screen clearly. This slows down pupils' rate of learning. Teachers compensate for these initial problems when pupils work in pairs on the computers; however, the efficient use of teachers' time is reduced. The recently introduced word-processed lesson plans have improved the guidance for teachers. The rigour in the planning and its implementation have enabled pupils to grasp quickly new skills in the subject. Teachers have high expectation of pupils' work and behaviour resulting in pupils working hard and behaving well; for example, in a lesson in Year 2, the teacher questioned pupils well and spent time productively assisting and challenging pupils. As a consequence, pupils were very interested in their work, behaved well and learnt quickly how to operate a program to incorporate text and graphics.
102. Information and communication technology is used well, overall, to assist learning in other subjects; for example, in history, older pupils used their information and communication skills to prepare a presentation using a computer program. The teacher's good understanding of the potential of the program challenged pupils to incorporate census data from a spreadsheet graph of local data for 1851 and 1891 into the presentation using animation and sound. The planning of the activity was linked well to groups of pupils' attainment and built well upon previous learning. The pupils enjoyed the activity and worked productively with high levels of interest and concentration. Higher attainers produced a presentation which ran automatically and incorporated sound and text 'flying into the slide'. At the end of the lesson, good opportunities were given to lower attaining pupils to speak in front of an audience to show, for example, graphs and texts comparing the number of servants in local streets in 1851 and 1891.

MUSIC

103. Standards are in line with national expectations at the end of Years 2 and 6, which is an improvement since the last inspection. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. Good leadership and management have helped to raise standards by the end of Year 6. Sight reading work strengthens pupils' literacy skills and music makes significant contributions to their listening, numeracy, social and cultural development. Limited use is made of information and communication technology to assist learning in music. The school is well placed to continue to improve standards, particularly in singing.
104. The quality of teaching is good. In the most effective lessons, pupils work from music of the highest quality and are fully involved either in making music or listening and evaluating throughout. Teachers time activities effectively so that all pupils have the opportunity to perform; for example, Year 3 pupils made very good progress in composition work based on Vivaldi's 'Four Seasons'. They worked in four groups, with one for each season, and began by thoughtful listening so as to find words to capture the sounds of the season represented in the music. Each pupil had an instrument and the groups worked enthusiastically with high levels of collaboration to create, rehearse and perform their pieces. The teacher valued and praised each performance, but also made suggestions for improvements.
105. Younger pupils benefit from the opportunity to take part each week in a musical workshop with three of their teachers to widen their musical experience; for example, in a good Year 2 lesson, the teacher's high expectations led pupils to make good progress, using a variety of percussion instruments, in creating simple music to represent a storm and then the sun coming out. The good relationships between the pupils ensured that they worked together well, choosing and handling instruments responsibly. The quality of concentration was good. As a result, pupils enjoyed both listening to and making music. Teaching is less effective when lessons give too much emphasis to talking about music at the expense of pupils' musical experiences. Pupils do not always have enough time to practise new skills when lessons last only half an hour.
106. Teachers ensure that pupils in Years 1 and 2 have regular opportunities to sing and play musical instruments. They learn a number of songs by heart and practise and sing them clearly and in time. However significant numbers are often out of tune. This is because teachers do not always give enough attention to getting them all on the right note to start with. Pupils of all abilities also play percussion instruments in groups. By the end of Year 2, pupils create musical patterns using

both a steady beat and variations in volume. They also remember and perform a satisfactory range of children's songs.

107. Pupils in Year 6 enjoy singing. They sing tunefully with satisfactory expression and control of phrasing. Lessons are planned well and, as a result, pupils make good progress in composition using notation and perform using sight-reading from scores they have written. The teaching develops subject language well and by Year 6 pupils understand musical terms such as 'minim', 'crochet' and 'semi-breve'. Higher attaining pupils know the names of the notes on the lines and spaces and use standard notation correctly in simple composition work. Lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress in composing and performing from scores representing rhythmical patterns.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

108. Pupils' attainment is below national expectations because only two out of three pupils, by the end of Year 6, can swim 25 metres. Improvements since the last inspection have been unsatisfactory as most pupils could swim at least 25 metres by the end of Year 6 at that time. Pupils' attainment, in games, is average by the end of Year 6. Insufficient evidence was available to make a judgement on other aspects of the subject.
109. Pupils have good opportunities, in Years 3 and 4, to swim at a local senior school for one hour each week for half of an academic year in each class; however, pupils in Years 5 and 6 are not provided with any swimming lessons. Insufficient use is made of records of pupils' progress to identify pupils who need additional swimming tuition in Years 5 and 6.
110. Not enough evidence was available for a judgement to be possible on the overall quality of teaching; however, in the games lessons seen, the quality of teaching was good in both Years 2 and 6. In Year 2, the planning was thorough. The teacher gave clear details of what pupils were to learn. Pre-determined grouping of pupils resulted in a brisk pace of learning. Pupils worked enthusiastically in small teams and the teacher's good management systems ensured good behaviour was maintained. Pupils were enthusiastic and ran in different ways, such as with knees high. Following the teacher's detailed explanations, pupils dribbled and passed footballs appropriately. The lack of suitable soft play areas limited pupils' opportunities to practise diving to stop a ball when practising football skills.
111. In Year 6, pupils had plenty of practice in throwing and catching balls. Their skills of intercepting and catching a ball were good. They took turns willingly shooting at a netball hoop. In a game of netball, pupils played fairly as well as accurately passing and catching. The pace of the lesson was brisk, although, because of the space and equipment available, only one group could play a competitive game at a time whilst others watched. The teacher skilfully reviewed the play with the pupils and encouraged them to discuss how they could improve their performance.
112. A member of the senior management team is maintaining a watching brief over the subject as there is no subject manager because of staffing changes. The senior managers have identified a teacher to take responsibility for the management of the subject from the beginning of the next academic year.