

INSPECTION REPORT

SANDBROOK PRIMARY SCHOOL

Moreton

LEA area: Wirral

Unique reference number: 105003

Headteacher: Mr P Harvey

Reporting inspector: Dr B Blundell
23868

Dates of inspection: 10th – 13th February 2003

Inspection number: 246426

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

© Crown copyright 2003

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Stavordale Road Moreton Wirral
Postcode:	L46 9PS
Telephone number:	(0151) 677 3231
Fax number:	(0151) 678 5478
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr M Cain
Date of previous inspection:	10 th November 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
23868	Dr B Blundell	Registered inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Educational inclusion	What sort of a school is it? How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9921	Mrs P Blackshaw	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents? Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
19386	Mr T Watts	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage Special educational needs Provision for the visually impaired Art and design Design and technology	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
22657	Mr M Madeley	Team inspector	Science Physical education Religious education	
31175	Mr A Allison	Team inspector	English Geography History Music	

The inspection contractor was:

PPI Group Ltd
7 Hill Street
Bristol
BS1 5RW

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Complaints Manager
Inspection Quality Division
The Office for Standards in Education
Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London

WC2B 6SE

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	4 - 7
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	8 - 10
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	10 - 11
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	11 - 13
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	13 - 14
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	14 - 15
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	15 - 16
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	17
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	18 - 22
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	23 - 36

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Sandbrook Community Primary and Nursery School is a school for boys and girls aged 3 to 11, situated in Moreton, Wirral. There are 198 pupils on roll, including 26 children in the Nursery; the proportions of boys and girls are the same. The ethnic background of the pupils is white with United Kingdom heritage. No pupils have English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above average. Both the percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs and the proportion with statements of special needs are above average. The nature of pupils' special needs includes general cognition, visual impairment, emotional, behavioural and physical difficulties and autism. The school has excellent provision for the visually impaired. Pupil turnover is relatively high. Whilst there is a wide range of attainment of on entry, overall, it is well below average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The overall effectiveness of the school is good. Standards for pupils currently aged 11 match national averages in English, mathematics and science. The overall quality of teaching is good. Leadership and management are both very good. The school is providing good value for money.

What the school does well

- By the age of 11, pupils achieve very well, particularly in English and mathematics.
- The school is led and managed very well.
- The overall quality of teaching is good, and a significant proportion is very good.
- Pupils' attitudes are very good and behaviour is good; relationships throughout the school are very good.
- The school provides an excellent range of extra-curricular activities.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- Provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good.
- There is excellent provision for the visually impaired.
- The school has worked hard and effectively to involve parents in pupils' learning.

What could be improved

- The subject co-ordinators are not always sufficiently involved in monitoring standards.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in November 1997. Standards have been maintained in all subjects except physical education, where attainment meets national expectations rather than exceeds them. The overall quality of teaching has improved, with a much greater proportion of very good teaching; the key issue to improve the consistency of teaching in the infant phase has been fully met. Pupils' behaviour has improved appropriately. Strategies have been implemented to avoid a budget deficit. Skills, knowledge and understanding in art have been effectively developed. The school has made good improvement since the last inspection.

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	C	D	C	A
mathematics	D	D	C	A
science	B	C	E	C

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

In the national tests in 2002 for 11-year-olds, pupils' attainment matched national averages in English and in mathematics, but was well below the national average in science. Compared with those of schools of a similar type, pupils' results were well above average in English and in mathematics, and average in science. Over the three years from 2000 to 2002, pupils have left Sandbrook broadly in line with pupils nationally in English and science, and half a term behind in mathematics; boys have performed slightly better than girls overall. The results at the end of the junior phase, up to 2002, rose at a similar rate to results nationally. The school's targets are appropriately ambitious

Standards at the end of the infant phase in 2002 were below the national average in reading, and well below the national averages in writing and mathematics. Compared to that of schools of a similar type, pupils' attainment was well above average in reading, and average in writing and in mathematics. Over the three years from 2000 to 2002, pupils have left the infant phase just behind pupils nationally in reading, nearly one term behind in writing, and half a term behind in mathematics.

In the work seen during the inspection, standards for pupils aged 11 were in line with national expectations in English, mathematics and science. Standards for pupils aged seven matched national averages in reading, writing, mathematics and science. For pupils aged seven and 11, in design and technology, information and communication technology, geography, history, physical education and art and design, standards were in line with national expectations. Standards were above national expectations in music. Pupils aged seven and 11 met the requirements of the local agreed syllabus for religious education. The majority of children aged five, whilst making good progress, are not set to meet the majority of the Early Learning Goals. (The Early Learning Goals are the nationally expected standards for children at the end of the Foundation Stage.)

Pupils' achievement is very good in literacy and numeracy, and good overall in the school. Standards at this school are sufficiently high.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' attitudes to the school are very good. They are enthusiastic and enjoy talking about what they are learning.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils' behaviour, both in and out of the classrooms, is good. There is no bullying in this orderly and friendly community.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' personal development is very good; relationships are very good, both between pupils and with adults.
Attendance	Pupils' attendance is in line with national averages.

A particular strength in pupils' attitudes is their enjoyment of school and their wanting to do well. Pupils love to have their names added to the giant 'Tree of thoughtfulness' in the school hall.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and 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 in English and mathematics is good; the skills of literacy and numeracy are taught well. A particular strength in teaching is the very helpful way in which teachers explain the purpose of their lessons to pupils, and then check at the end of the lesson to see if the class has learned appropriately. Children in the Foundation Stage are managed particularly well, and, at the end of the junior phase, teachers have challengingly high expectations for the oldest pupils. The school meets the needs of all its pupils well. A particular strength in pupils' learning is their interest and concentration.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The quality and range of the curriculum are very good throughout the school.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Pupils are supported well in class.
Provision for pupils with visual impairment	The school makes excellent provision in this area, with high-quality teaching and resources.
Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Provision for pupils' personal development is very good. Provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development is good, and for their moral and social development, it is very good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares for its pupils well. Child protection procedures are good.

The school works very well in partnership with parents. A particular strength in the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils is the excellent range of clubs available after school. All areas of the curriculum meet statutory requirements. Parents' views of the school are very positive.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Leadership and management are both very good. The headteacher believes passionately in the pupils' right to have the best possible experience at school, irrespective of their backgrounds. The headteacher and deputy headteacher ensure the smooth and purposeful running of the school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors' fulfilment of their responsibilities is good. They are committed to the school and bring a wide range of expertise.
The school's	The school's evaluation of its performance is good. It analyses its national test

evaluation of its performance	results rigorously, and ensures that all staff know which areas of learning to target in light of these findings.
The strategic use of resources	The school's strategic use of resources is good.

The adequacy of staffing, accommodation and learning resources is good. The accommodation is well maintained by diligent cleaning staff and the caretaker. Midday assistants ensure the smooth running of the lunchtime break. Canteen staff prepare and serve nutritious meals. The school secretary is efficient and competent. The school ensures that its money is spent wisely.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teaching is good. Their children are making good progress and like school. School expects their children to work hard and keeps parents well informed about their progress. The school works closely with parents. The school is well led and managed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some parents would like to see a greater range of extra-curricular activities. Some parents would like to see more homework set.

The inspection team agrees with parents' positive views, but finds that formal reporting could be improved. It finds the range of extra-curricular activities to be excellent, and the level of homework overall to be appropriate.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. **The majority of children enter the school in the Nursery.** Standards on entry are well below average.
2. **Baseline tests carried out in the Reception class show standards to be below average.** An analysis of previous intakes shows that those for 2000 and 2001 scored at slightly lower levels.
3. **By the age of five, near to the end of their time in Reception,** children are again assessed against national standards known as the Early Learning Goals. The majority of the children currently in Reception, whilst making good progress, are not on course to attain the majority of these goals.
4. **At the age of seven, close to the end of their time in Year 2,** pupils take the end-of-infant phase national tests in reading, writing and mathematics. The pupils who sat these tests in 2002 obtained levels that were below the national average in reading, and well below the national averages in writing and mathematics. In the teacher assessments in science, standards were below average overall. When compared to that of schools of a similar type, pupils' attainment was well above average in reading, and average in writing and in mathematics. Those who took the tests in 2001 attained standards that were average in reading and mathematics, and below average in writing. Taking the results over the last three years from 2000 to 2002, averaged together, pupils' performance has been only marginally below the national average in reading, nearly one term below in writing and half a term below average in mathematics. In all three subject areas, boys have performed similarly to girls.
5. **The pupils currently in Year 2, who will take their national tests in May, 2003, are reaching average standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science.** Standards in information and communication technology, art and design, geography, history, design and technology and physical education meet national expectations. Standards in music are above national expectations. In religious education, standards meet the requirements of the local agreed syllabus.
6. **By the age of 11, near to the end of Year 6,** pupils take the end-of-junior-phase national tests in English, science and mathematics. Pupils' performance in the 2002 tests in terms of national curriculum points scores matched the national averages in English and mathematics, but was well below average in science. It was well above average in English and in mathematics, compared to that of schools of a similar type, and average in science. Taking the three years from 2000 to 2002 together, pupils have left the junior phase broadly in line with pupils nationally in English and science, and half a term behind in mathematics. A comparison of the performance of the group of pupils who took their national tests at the age of 11 in 2002 with their performance when they were seven finds their progress to be well above average in English and mathematics, and average in science. Boys generally perform better than girls by the time they leave the school. This is at odds with trends nationally. Unlike many primary schools, Sandbrook benefits from a number of male role models on the staff.
7. **The pupils currently in Year 6** are working at average standards in English, mathematics and science. The quality and quantity of work in their books show that they have made good progress over the last twelve months in all three subjects. As with pupils in the infant phase, standards in information and communication technology, physical education, design and technology, art and design, history and geography meet national expectations. Standards in music are above national expectations. In religious education, standards meet the requirements of the local agreed syllabus.

8. **Since the last inspection**, standards have been maintained in all subjects except physical education, where they meet national expectations rather than exceeding them.
9. **Pupils with special educational needs.** The progress made by pupils with special educational needs is good. This is because their teaching is good, and often very good, and the support that they receive is closely targeted to meet their particular needs. Pupils' progress in reading is especially good because it is the main focus throughout the school in different ways. Some pupils who have difficulties with their behaviour or social skills, especially in the younger part of the school, also make very good progress in this area of their development. Their problems are focused on very well, with a set of individual targets drawn up each term. Teachers and support staff are consistently mindful of these targets in the course of lessons. The pupils' progress is checked each term, and targets effectively adjusted to maintain an appropriate level of challenge.
10. **Pupils are generally achieving well**, considering their prior attainments. This is a result of the good-quality teaching that pupils receive.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. Pupils' attitudes and the values the school promotes are a strength of the school. The school provides a very welcoming and positive environment for learning. As a result, pupils of all ages, including those with special educational needs, enjoy school and have very good attitudes to their work. Behaviour is good, and often very good, although there are just a few pupils who are restless and find it difficult to concentrate in some lessons. In most cases, teachers deal with this effectively, so there is minimum distraction to other pupils' learning. Relationships are very good. When pupils were asked what they liked best about the school, the most frequent replies were 'the staff' and 'other pupils'. This represents an improvement since the last inspection. Behaviour around school, not consistently good at the last inspection, is now very good. Levels of attendance and punctuality remain satisfactory, as at the previous inspection.
12. Pupils have a very mature attitude to school and why they are there. They value the hard work put in by the staff, and are keen to respond by working hard and doing the best they can. In most lessons, the pupils settle down quickly and time is used effectively for maximum learning. In a creative music class for Reception, for example, all the children settled well, responding enthusiastically and with rapt attention, joining in readily and appropriately. Where pupils are given challenging work and expectations are high, pupils listen attentively, are enthusiastic and participate well. They work well together and make good progress. In a very productive English lesson for older pupils, they carried out research into famous people, such as Martin Luther King, effectively learning how to organise their own notes. In a small minority of lessons where the teacher does not manage to settle the pupils, learning time is lost, with a few pupils causing ongoing minor disruption.
13. However, parents are correct in thinking that the great majority of pupils behave well in lessons and around school. Pupils share in the school's high expectations and the ethos set out in the effective code of conduct and school charter. They are keen to achieve the awards given for good behaviour. They are attentive and eager to learn, and as a result, they concentrate well and good progress is made in most lessons. In the playground, pupils play happily with the normal noisy and boisterous activities, channelling their energies into organising their own games and making good use of the extensive play areas. They are looking forward with great excitement to the additional activities they have been involved in planning, which will significantly enhance play opportunities outside. They are careful and look out for each other, sharing resources well. Pupils automatically hold doors open, keep the school clean and tidy, and offer help without being asked. Older people living locally welcome visits from the pupils, commenting on their good behaviour, politeness and consideration.
14. Personal development and relationships throughout the school are very good. Very effective confidence- and self-esteem-building initiatives encourage a positive approach to learning and to the development of the trusting relationships evident in the school. The extensive extra-curricular activities are highly valued by pupils; they are well attended and make an important and useful

contribution to their personal development. The inclusive nature of the school results in a successfully integrated community, and pupils with special educational needs are well assimilated in class and in friendship groups. Pupils respond readily to opportunities to take responsibility. The Eco school council is a very good example of this; some excellent work by pupils, staff, governors and parents has provided high-quality learning, both socially and academically.

15. Attendance at school is in line with national averages, as it was at the previous inspection. Most pupils arrive on time but there are a few pupils who regularly arrive after the start of school, so they miss valuable social interaction.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

16. The overall quality of teaching is good, with a much higher proportion of very good teaching than was found at the time of the last inspection; indeed, every teacher in the school, including part-time staff, taught at least one very good or better lesson. This school has a dedicated team of teachers. Teaching in the lessons seen was good overall in the Foundation Stage, the infants and the juniors. In all lessons observed, teaching was at least satisfactory. It was satisfactory in 21 per cent of lessons, good in 45 per cent, very good in 29 per cent and excellent in five per cent. Excellent lessons were seen in Year 6 and in the Reception class.
17. The biggest strengths in teaching include the helpful manner in which teachers often share the learning objectives for lessons with their pupils, especially in literacy and numeracy lessons, the way in which they manage their pupils, which is good throughout the school, and very good for the under-fives, and the teachers' high expectations, particularly in the juniors.
18. Teachers work very hard and know their pupils well. Pupils are aware of what is expected from them in terms of behaviour, and respond appropriately. In a very good numeracy lesson for Year 6 pupils, in which the teacher showed excellent class management, the pupils' response was first class and they showed clear enjoyment of the subject; these pupils made very good progress in their knowledge and understanding of interpreting data. In a very good lesson for children in the Nursery, comprising a mixture of activities, the children responded very well to the excellent class management. Classroom support assistants through the school make a useful contribution to pupils' learning.
19. The pace of lessons is good through the school overall. In the best lessons, pupils are reminded of the time limits on an exercise, as in an excellent literacy lesson in the Reception class.
20. Literacy and numeracy are well taught throughout the school. Lessons generally start with effective question-and-answer sessions, to revise previous work and set pupils thinking. For example, in the excellent literacy lesson for pupils in the Reception class, the teacher asked questions that thoroughly but pleasantly assessed pupils' level of understanding on "ch" words.
21. Teachers' knowledge and understanding are generally good in all subject areas. The teacher of one of the Year 6 classes has particular expertise in information and communication technology, and by spreading this to other staff, has made a positive impact on pupils' learning in this subject through the school.
22. The day-to-day marking of pupils' work is generally good, although it does not always help pupils' further learning. For example, in English, questions or comments written by the teacher at the end of an exercise could be used more extensively to prompt the pupil to reflect further.
23. Lessons usually have clear learning objectives and these are generally looked at again at the end of lessons, to see how far they have been met. Many lessons end with a worthwhile oral question-and-answer session, as in the majority of literacy and numeracy lessons. The use of homework is good overall and satisfactory in the Foundation Stage.
24. The teaching of children with special needs is good. Class teachers plan their lessons well to take the learning of the lower-attaining pupils into account. Some effective resources, such as tabletop

games and simple reading schemes, are used well to help their learning. Pupils have a series of constructive written targets for the areas in which they are having difficulties, such as reading, number, spelling or behaviour. Teachers incorporate these very well when planning and teaching their lessons. The classroom assistants offer very good support. All staff are good at explaining, demonstrating and guiding the pupils with special needs. The teacher of the visually impaired pupils is exemplary in the way her lessons are prepared and carried out. She gives excellent support, both to individuals in the designated resource room, and alongside pupils in their main class lessons.

25. Standards of teaching have improved considerably since the last inspection. At that time, just over one in ten lessons were judged to be very good or better; that has now risen to over three lessons in ten.

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

26. The school offers a very good range of learning experiences to the pupils. This represents an improvement since the time of the last inspection, when the curriculum was considered to be satisfactorily broad and balanced. The provision of excellent additional activities and visits has been maintained.
27. In each year, the pupils are taught a wide range of subjects, with a good emphasis on English and mathematics in the mornings, and the other subjects mainly in the afternoons. Statutory requirements are met in all respects, often with a good level of stimulating and imaginative activities built into the planning and the teaching. Senior staff check planning regularly, and the school is in the process of putting subject planning onto computers, so that it can be shared by all staff, and can easily be updated in the future. Assemblies make a valuable contribution to pupils' knowledge, with a good variety of themes. They include stories about and from different religions around the world.
28. Pupils improve their literacy skills well in many lessons other than English. In religious education, for instance, pupils are encouraged to read clearly to the rest of the class; in physical education, teachers ensure that they listen attentively to instructions. In many subjects, such as geography, history and science, pupils write accounts of what they have been learning, and add explanations to their diagrams, maps, designs and experiments. In computing, pupils access the Internet and CD ROMs for information that they have to read and interpret for their studies in other subjects. In almost all lessons, teachers encourage pupils to join in discussions, especially during the 'reminder' activities at the start and end of lessons.
29. In many lessons, pupils improve their numeracy skills well. In information and communication technology, for example, they program the "Roamer" robot to move across the floor, and the interactive whiteboard is used to enhance the curriculum in many areas. In geography, pupils learn the compass directions, and angles; they practice finding places on maps using co-ordinates, and they study the weather, including the temperature and rainfall figures for different places. Art lessons develop awareness of different geometric shapes, as pupils make pictures and patterns. Precise measurements are taken and recorded in science lessons, such as temperatures and weights, and in design and technology, pupils measure accurately when creating their designs and when making their models.
30. An excellent range of opportunities is provided outside of the school's normal day. Many pupils attend these activities. There is a vibrant 'morning club' for breakfast, and a pre-school computing session. Other clubs take place at lunchtimes and after school, and they include: more computing sessions; tennis coaching; netball, football, athletics and/or rugby, depending on the season; a German club; a games session for the younger pupils, art for the older ones and drama. A six-week course, 'Keeping up with the Children', is also run regularly for parents, and is very popular. It covers a range of different aspects of education, including literacy and numeracy. The current programme is for raising awareness of computing in school. Many pupils also have the opportunity

to attend residential centres away from the school. These have included a farm, where pupils go for walks in the woods and undertake environmental studies. The longer residential activity is at a more distant outdoor centre, and the activities include climbing, hill walking, orienteering and teamwork challenges.

31. The school provides very good personal, social and health education. In physical education lessons, pupils learn about healthy eating and the value of exercise. In design and technology lessons, when pupils are making snacks to eat, they learn that some foods are healthier to eat than others, and that it is important to keep kitchen surfaces and equipment clean. Science lessons provide well-planned and well-taught lessons in sex education and in raising awareness that some drugs are harmful while others are beneficial to use. The school has been awarded Eco School Green Flag Award status for being an environmentally friendly organisation and there have been visits to develop pupils' understanding of other people, including visits to a blind artist, a dentist, and a councillor. The school provides well for teaching pupils about bullying; how destructive it is; and what to do if it happens. They discuss the nature of relationships with other pupils in the class, with their families and with other people. They consider what it might be like to be disabled, for instance, or to be a parent. Lessons about citizenship are also being included, such as how we are governed, and what our own role is in our society. Throughout the school, teachers and other staff set very good examples of how to behave, and they provide many good opportunities for pupils to play and work together in lessons.
32. Links with the community are a very positive aspect of pupils' learning. There have been frequent visitors into the school, such as artists and storytellers, theatre groups and sports coaches, each to make a specific contribution. The local vicar comes in to talk to the pupils regularly, and to take some assemblies. Another visitor is from a nearby mission for homeless people and drug addicts, to talk to the pupils about the life and problems of the people he encounters. The pupils help by donating gifts at harvest festival time. As well as the two residential visits each year, pupils also have many shorter local visits, such as to see the seals at Hilbre Island, or to the Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, museums and art galleries, and to the theatre, to see the pantomime that was part of their literacy lessons.
33. Other educational establishments provide a good enhancement to the school's curriculum. Student teachers come from three colleges and universities, and they make a very valuable contribution to the teaching of the pupils in groups or individually. There has also been a student from Japan who has spent time in the school, and this is being followed up in a positive way with students from France and Germany. Several nursery nurses have training time at the school, and their assistance with the pupils is also good. Some older pupils from the nearby comprehensive secondary school come to Sandbrook for work experience placements each year. Sandbrook pupils have visited and worked at a computer suite at a nearby school that has particularly good facilities. Some pupils with special needs have spent time at other special schools in the area, including one pupil whose days are shared between the two schools. Pupils have visited a German fair at the local education centre as part of their language studies, which are mainly through the after-school club. When pupils are about to leave the school at the age of 11, they make an appropriate preparatory visit to their secondary school for a day.
34. A good range of subjects is taught to pupils who have special needs. The pupils go to all the same lessons as other pupils, unless they need special support on their own. On these occasions, the teachers and support staff generally make sure that the lessons cover the same areas as the rest of the class. Sometimes, however, when groups of pupils are out of their main lessons for additional support in reading, they miss some of their science lessons, a subject in which pupils have not reached the same levels of attainment as English and mathematics. Pupils with special needs are encouraged to attend the out-of-school clubs, such as computers, art and football, so helping to enrich and broaden their experience. The school does well in identifying those pupils who have particular gifts or talents, such as in sports, reading, drama, dance or computing, as early as the Reception class. Extra provision is put into place for them, and their particular needs are well met, often with additional lessons in their particular interest or skill. Clubs have also been set up so that they can extend their development further, including a poetry club, tennis coaching and computer clubs before and after school.

35. The overall provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is very good and builds successfully on the sound basis reported at the previous inspection. The high standards of moral and social learning are a strength of the school. All staff value each individual pupil, and help them understand acceptable ways of conducting themselves. Parents are pleased with what the school does and feel the staff establish good values for pupils.
36. The opportunities to gain insight into values and beliefs and to develop spiritual awareness are good. Each day provides a valuable opportunity to come together as a community in assembly, to share moral and social themes and recognise the achievement of others. The stimulating environment is rich in colour, with displays of nature, poetry, artwork and artefacts throughout the school. In lessons, pupils are encouraged to reflect on feelings. There was a tangible feeling of sadness and horror as pupils in a stimulating personal and social education lesson responded to a story about an attack on a young person in a wheelchair. In an effective Year 5 and 6 history lesson, pupils expressed amazement and wonder trying to imagine a transistor a million times smaller than a grain of sand. Other similar thought-provoking opportunities were observed during the inspection, giving the pupils a valuable sense of their potential impact on others and of their position in the wider scheme of things.
37. The school's provision for moral development is very good. Moral values are seen as very important and are successfully promoted. Informative posters about how to behave and the effects of bullying on others help set a strong moral tone. The school's simple and uncomplicated first principle, 'Helping Each Other Achieve', is known by all pupils and is effectively practised in the school every day. Most pupils listen well to each other and respond spontaneously to celebrate other pupils' achievements. Pupils respond positively to the clear values expected, which results in higher standards of work and behaviour. This approach leads pupils to develop a clear awareness of the difference between right and wrong and recognise their own responsibility for their behaviour. An imaginative and effective programme of codes of conduct and commendation for structuring behaviour encourages pupils to recognise the values of fairness, honesty and respect for others. A very good personal, social and health education programme, with moral themes promoted in assemblies and religious education lessons, makes an effective vehicle to teach ethical principles.
38. Provision for social development is very good. Pupils work and play together co-operatively and, on numerous occasions during the inspection, demonstrated care and tolerance for others. Pupils regularly attend an excellent range of after school clubs. In addition, they enjoy visits into the surrounding areas and for older pupils, very successful residential visits further afield to Arrowe park and Edale. These not only extend academic learning, but also give valuable opportunities for the development of social skills, in team activities and shared living. The excellent Early Morning club offers toast and a drink, and the chance to take part in chess or other board games where mature competition and skilful play takes place in a safe and friendly environment. Unfortunately, this is only offered to older pupils. Everywhere in the school, there is impressive evidence of the shared commitment by pupils, staff, parents, governors and the community to the Eco schools award, which is a particularly effective way of developing pupils' social responsibility. An active school council has developed as a result of this award, so that all pupils can contribute and help to monitor and update the impressive environmental action plan. This is having a very positive effect on the development of social and co-operative skills. This involvement by pupils has not been extended, however, to other aspects of policy development, and opportunities to give pupils responsibilities around school are not exploited.
39. The provision for cultural development is good. Pupils start to understand their own cultural background through nursery rhymes, poetry, stories, music and historical studies, including the Victorian era and the Roman Empire. Artwork is displayed in such a way as to raise pupils' cultural awareness. Work by such artists as Van Gogh and Matisse are successfully interspersed with celebrations of the school's awards and creative work by pupils themselves. Opportunities are offered through art, religious education, history and geography to explore other cultures. Religious education lessons teach pupils about other faiths and festivals, although there is little opportunity to visit other places of worship or talk to leaders of other faiths. Visits to the music centre in Birkenhead by Year 3 and 4 pupils to listen to African musicians provided a wealth of opportunities

to research and learn about traditional musical instruments and clothing, and to participate in culturally relevant workshops.

40. The school quickly picks up on opportunities that arise to help pupils understand and learn about different cultures, as when Japanese children were in school, and pupils learned about numbers, food, dress and cultural traditions in Japan.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

41. The provision for maintaining the health and safety of pupils, incorporating procedures for child protection, has improved since the last inspection and is now good. Procedures for encouraging good behaviour and preventing bullying are very good. Pupils feel very well supported and cared for by the staff and within the whole school environment. Staff recognise the importance of their pastoral role, and provide very good support to help pupils achieve the very best they can. As a result, pupils are confident and self-assured, becoming effective learners.
42. Child protection procedures are satisfactory. Staff are aware of who has responsibility in this area, and of the procedures to be followed, should they have any worries about a child's safety. Training is planned for this year so all staff, including lunchtime supervisors, will be fully updated on relevant issues related to child protection. At present, child protection procedures are not detailed in the induction booklet for new teachers, although the contact person is identified. Health and safety procedures and risk assessment are very good, forming a very good structure to support the caring practice in the school.
43. Attendance at the school is satisfactory. The teachers mark registers efficiently and systems are in place to contact parents, although there is no arrangement for first-day contact if a child is not in school. Good relationships and regular visits by the educational welfare officer ensure effective monitoring of attendance. However, no member of staff has overall responsibility for monitoring attendance, to identify patterns of absence amongst pupils when the educational welfare officer is not available. Productive reminders of the importance of regular attendance are included in the school newsletter, sent to all parents and carers.
44. The school has very effective procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and for identifying and reducing bullying. This has a major input into supporting and improving standards in the school and individual achievement. The school has achieved a high level of consistency amongst staff in its successful approach to behaviour, implementing very effective and innovative techniques for recognising pupils' successes. Pupils know clearly what is expected of them, but there is sufficient flexibility in procedures and practice to enable individual needs to be met. Pupils respond very positively to the challenge of achieving 'Golden Time' or 'Proud Moments' and are thrilled when they are nominated for the 'Tree of Thoughtfulness', all of which contribute significantly to purposeful work in the classroom and the system of rewards.
45. Staff apply positive strategies to create a caring environment, where teaching and learning can take place in a safe and happy atmosphere. Staff are sensitive and aware, quickly picking up and responding to incidents that arise, with skilful negotiation to help pupils recognise the consequences of their actions. Pupils with special educational needs remain in the classroom in most cases, and with good support, are well integrated into the lesson without disruption to the quality of learning. The visual impairment unit provides excellent support for children.
46. Procedures for monitoring and supporting personal development are good overall, and are very good for pupils who have special educational needs, who all have individual programmes that are effectively monitored and evaluated. The school provides a very good personal, social and health education programme, but pupils' progress is not at present systematically monitored as part of the curriculum. Because staff know their pupils very well, they are aware of changing patterns of behaviour and can relate this to learning and achievement, and make changes in support as appropriate. Personal as well as academic achievements are enthusiastically celebrated in school assemblies.

47. The assessment of pupils' work and its use to plan future work is satisfactory overall, but could be better in the foundation subjects. In particular. Whilst progress in this area has been made since the last inspection, and some tracking of pupils' progress is taking place, especially in the core subjects, assessment is not consistently implemented through the school. The school uses the optional national tests appropriately in Years 3, 4 and 5. It sets ambitious targets for improvement of two sub levels per year. (Nationally, pupils are expected to rise by three sub-levels every two years.) However, the tracking of pupils' academic progress, particularly in the foundation subjects, could be better in order to further improve pupils' learning.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

48. The school has continued to build on the good partnership reported at the time of the last inspection. This is now very good and is a strength of the school. Information provided for parents is satisfactory, as it was at the previous inspection. Parents' views of the school are very positive. They consider the educational provision to be very good. They have a high regard for staff and feel their children are taught well and are expected to work hard so that they achieve the best they can. Almost all parents responding to the questionnaire said they felt the school worked closely with parents and they appreciate the welcome they receive in school and the approachability of the staff. Parents are happy with the progress their children are making, and feel the school helps them grow in maturity and responsibility.
49. There is good evidence of improvement in pupils' learning, behaviour and personal development as a result of parental involvement. The school has a very good range of productive and consistent links with parents that make an important contribution to pupils' learning. Parents regularly listen to their children read at home, signing their diary and frequently adding comments, acknowledging a crucial link with school. Equally successful are the shared activities where parents and children regularly work at home on open-ended small research projects, which they both evaluate in the booklet provided. Parents expressed great enthusiasm for the very successful and well-attended courses provided in school along with the Basic Skills Agency. 'Keeping up With The Children', hugely successful, helps parents understand and become more effective partners in supporting their children's learning. A number of parents, grandparents and friends of the school give very good reading support in school, adding value to the learning and progress of the pupils. The very active and dedicated contribution of the parent-teacher association has a significant impact on the work of the school.
50. Parents appreciate the regular and informative letters and newsletters that keep them updated about the everyday life of the school. Both the Nursery and Reception provide helpful and reassuring information leaflets for parents. Useful curricular information is provided in the prospectus, along with other essential and encouraging information to forge an early link with parents. Further information is planned to be included on the school website, providing a worthwhile electronic source of information and an excellent means of communication for parents with access to a computer.
51. The provision of two formal evenings for parents to meet the teacher provides a very good opportunity for parents to be fully updated on their progress of their children. They are well attended and greatly appreciated by parents, who feel secure in the knowledge that concerns will be picked up early. A valuable third evening keeps parents informed of changes that affect learning. Annual reports are informative and personal to each child, with information on each subject. There are, however, no separate comments on design and technology and information and communication technology. The information provided is good, but is inconsistent from year to year in telling parents specifically what their child has achieved and what they need to do to improve. Comments are not related to national curriculum levels, to help parents understand their child's ability in relation to other children nationally. Pupils are usefully encouraged to reflect and comment on their year's work, but there is no comment box for parents.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

52. The headteacher provides very effective leadership for the school in both academic and pastoral spheres. The headteacher is hard working, committed and able, and knows just how he wants the school to develop. His leadership ensures very clear educational direction for the school, and he is fully backed by a competent governing body. The headteacher wants the best for his pupils. The school's aims and values are easily seen in the daily routines of the school, and the school's aims are re-drafted annually, following discussions with staff, governors and parents. The school has an appropriate motto: 'Helping Each Other Achieve'. The deputy headteacher, who is a very competent Year 2 teacher, shares responsibility for behaviour through the school.
53. The school is managed very well by the headteacher, strongly backed by the deputy headteacher. The subject co-ordinators manage their subjects adequately, monitoring planning and marking, although they are not yet involved in the monitoring of teaching in their subjects, and some have an insufficient over-view of standards.
54. The governing body's fulfilment of its statutory responsibilities is good. The governors want the best for the school and are determined that it should continue to succeed. Their contribution in helping to shape the educational direction of the school is good. Governors visit the school regularly, and have monitored the implementation of some of the curriculum appropriately, particularly numeracy and literacy. The governing body has a good understanding of the main strengths and weaknesses of the school. Between them, the governors bring a wide range of expertise to the running of this school.
55. Whilst the headteacher and deputy headteacher have monitored teaching of literacy and numeracy in all classes, this has not yet spread to specific monitoring of teaching by curriculum co-ordinators, in order to further improve standards. The headteacher has provided all staff with both verbal and detailed written feedback. Co-ordinators monitor the planning of their subjects and marking across the school.
56. The school's targets are appropriate and sufficiently ambitious. Pupil turnover has had an adverse effect on recent results, but inspection evidence and provisional test results suggest that the targets for 2003 in English, mathematics and science will be met. The school's targets for 2004 also look on course to be met. The school has a very good capacity to succeed.
57. Procedures for the induction of new staff are good. Newly appointed teachers are appropriately mentored by the leader of the relevant section of the school. Appropriate policies and plans are in place for performance management. The school is very committed to self-evaluation and this is successfully helping to raise standards in teaching.
58. The co-ordination, management and overall provision for pupils who have special educational needs are very good. The co-ordinator has very good knowledge of the pupils' needs, and has ensured the full cooperation of teachers and support staff throughout the school. The new Code of Practice for the education of children with special needs is very well in place, and staff have had training in how to help their pupils. Effective use is made of grants that come in for different purposes, and the co-ordinator has very clear ideas for how to develop the support in the future. Pupils who have special needs are identified soon after they arrive in school, and effective steps are promptly taken to meet their needs. The continuing support they are given reflects their changing needs, and staff are specifically deployed to work with individual pupils who have difficulties such as autism or visual impairment. The support given by these members of staff is very effective, and often excellent. There is a well-equipped room for visually impaired pupils, which is very well used for some of their lessons, as well as for groups of other pupils. Many pupils have good additional help for some activities, such as 'booster' groups for reading and mathematics. There are also good 'reading recovery' and other programmes aimed at improving the reading of the lower-attaining pupils. Two pupils' learning has been well boosted by attending special schools locally on part-time basis; one is spending mornings at the special school, and the afternoons at Sandbrook.
59. The match of teachers and support staff to the demands of the curriculum is currently good. The accommodation is good overall, and is very well maintained. Classrooms have attractive displays.

Resources are generally good in quality and quantity, but pupils are disadvantaged by the fact that the computers in the ICT suite are not networked to each other, nor to the computers in the classrooms.

60. The effectiveness of the school's use of new technology for administrative purposes is good. Finances are handled well, and the school applies the principles of best value very well. The school now has appropriate strategies to avoid a deficit budget. Specific grants are used appropriately. The school development plan is a most useful working document that clearly prioritises the school's needs.
61. At the time of the last inspection, the headteacher's management was described as strong and purposeful; his calm leadership remains a force behind the school's success.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

62. In order to further improve the school, the headteacher, senior management team and governing body should:

- ensure that subject co-ordinators are sufficiently involved in monitoring standards.

(Paragraphs 55, 87, 98)

PROVISION FOR THE VISUALLY IMPAIRED

63. This was said to be a strength of the school in the previous report, and it is now a sphere of excellence. At that time, there were eight pupils in the unit, and now there are fewer. The teacher's attention is not divided between so many pupils, the equipment does not have to be shared, and pupils do not have to take turns. The attention that each pupil now receives is superb.

64. When pupils are taught in full class lessons, the specialist teacher is able to give them very good attention without having to go round several different classes during the day. Pupils fit into their classes extremely well, with the class teacher very well aware of their needs, and the specialist teacher on hand, anticipating difficulties, and ready with specially adapted work or equipment.

65. Sometimes, a pupil is taught individually in the specially equipped base, and this teaching is excellent. The teacher is very well qualified, and has a very warm and positive approach to the pupils. She is very challenging, and insists on pupils doing their very best, whilst still having a laugh and a joke with them. Her lessons are extremely well planned and prepared for, and she uses a superb range of equipment as well as having a very imaginative variety of activities and approaches.

66. Pupils respond very positively, trying extremely hard, concentrating on what is being said to the class in general, or to them in particular. This degree of effort and concentration, however, does not prevent them from being very lively, positive and happy. They find their way around the classes very well, and take part in all lessons, including gymnastics and information and communication technology

67. It is difficult to see how this provision could be improved.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	76
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	15

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
Number	4	22	34	16	0	0	0
Percentage	5	29	45	21	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.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	14	182
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/a	79

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	5
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	3	43

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	13
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	12

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.3

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0

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

National comparative data	0.5
---------------------------	-----

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2002	16	13

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	12	15
	Girls	12	12	12
	Total	25	24	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	86 (90)	83 (94)	93 (100)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	14	14
	Girls	12	12	12
	Total	25	26	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	86 (90)	90 (84)	90 (100)
	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	21	15

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	18	18	18
	Girls	9	11	12
	Total	27	29	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	75 (78)	81(64)	83 (94)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	18	20	19
	Girls	11	12	12
	Total	29	32	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	81 (81)	89 (75)	86 (92)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

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

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	198	2	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	11.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18.1
Average class size	18

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	101

Qualified teachers and support staff: Nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	34
Number of pupils per FTE adult	13.5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	3.5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001-2002
----------------	-----------

	£
Total income	592,581
Total expenditure	587,257
Expenditure per pupil	2,935
Balance brought forward from previous year	51,658
Balance carried forward to next year	37,463

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	180
Number of questionnaires returned	107

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	60	27	2	1	10
My child is making good progress in school.	51	41	4	4	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	47	40	4	0	9
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	31	31	14	5	20
The teaching is good.	61	27	5	1	6
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	61	28	5	3	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	58	29	4	4	5
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	53	33	4	4	6
The school works closely with parents.	57	40	1	1	1
The school is well led and managed.	54	44	0	1	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	55	40	2	2	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	45	35	12	3	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

68. The school provides well for children in the Foundation Stage. There has been a good improvement in this part of the school since the last inspection, which reported satisfactory teaching and progress, with some weaknesses. These classes provide a strong foundation for the children's education through the rest of the school. When they first arrive in the Nursery, many children are quiet and withdrawn. They do not play with other children, or listen to adults, or know what many things are. Standards are well below average on intake. During their time in the Nursery (which they attend for mornings or afternoons), the teaching is mainly aimed at improving their social behaviour and their ability to listen and to speak so that they can be readily understood. The Nursery is very successful in these areas of development. At the end of their time in the Nursery, the school loses a number of higher-attaining children to a local church school that does not benefit from Nursery provision. Later, in the Reception class, where the children attend full-time, the teaching aims broaden well, and the children's development, including that of children with special educational needs, takes off just as successfully in other areas. These include mathematics, where many opportunities are made each day to count and learn numbers, and physical development, where structured teaching of physical education begins. The children make good progress in both the Nursery class and the Reception class. But, because of their low starting points, most are unlikely to reach the expected standards in all the areas of learning by the end of the Foundation Stage.
69. Good progress is made in developing personal and social skills. The lower-attaining children soon make friends, and begin to overcome their shyness. They learn to sit and listen to the teachers, share things with other children, and take turns very well. At snack times the children hand the milk to each other, talk to each other and the staff, and help to tidy up afterwards. Becoming more independent, they go to find their classmates to come and join the next activity, or to take the register to the office. In the "shops" in each class, the children develop in social skills, as well as in holding conversations and handling goods and money.
70. The children develop well in speaking and listening skills. Many of the children who come into the Nursery have very little to say for themselves, even when prompted by adults, or when sitting or playing alongside their classmates. Good progress is made, however, in learning to listen to staff, and in saying what they want. The children go from a blank stare in some cases to a nod, smile, and single words, then on to speaking in short sentences. Eventually, they will ask for things without having to be prompted. With their friends, they will chatter about the sand or the water, or will use the telephones in the classrooms. They take their turns to give answers or give their ideas, such as when all the class are looking at a book. Less good progress is made in the other aspects of communication: the children know what books are, and they point at the pictures and talk about them. Most children, however, cannot read anything by the time they are ready to enter the main school, other than, for instance, to recognise their own name. The majority of children cannot form any letters on paper; they tend to make marks in sand, or on paper, such as lines and circles. A few of the higher-attaining children write over the letters of their names, but the writing is often large and very irregular.
71. Children's progress in mathematical skills is good. The lower-attaining children learn that numbers exist, and that things can be counted. Some children make very good progress, going from recognising "one" object, to adding numbers up to ten, in the first year, for instance. They learn the days of the week, and begin to know that there are different times for special activities, such as assemblies or lunchtimes. The higher-attaining children recognise and name the main colours, and sort toys according to their colour or size, for example.
72. Children's development in their physical skills is good. Most are active when they arrive in the Nursery, but some do not know how to play with each other or with balls, beanbags and trikes when they are outdoors. Soon, however, they learn to play in pairs and groups, such as pulling

each other round on a trolley, playing on a seesaw, dancing at the Christmas party, or kicking balls into the goal area. By the time they leave the Reception class, the children have learned to run, jump, bounce, skip with a rope, and balance on the benches. They move a ball or beanbag all around their bodies, clockwise and anticlockwise, and they roll balls, hoops and quoits to each other. These physical activities develop the children's confidence very well; the children enjoy them very much in both classes.

73. Good progress is also made in the children's creative skills. They learn to paint and print with brushes, rollers, alphabet letters, blocks, and their hands and feet, making attractive pictures and patterns for display. Clay, playdough and several different kinds of construction kits are used to make models. The children's enjoyment of music – both singing and playing instruments – is a joy to see. From being completely baffled in one lesson that involved both classes, one new Nursery child was very well encouraged by a support assistant to sing, do the actions and play her shaker instrument. She began to make the sounds and actions herself, and was really enjoying the session when it had to end.
74. Children's knowledge of the objects and places around them develops well. They explore the textures of things around them, and learn that there are different animals, including the tiny "minibeasts" such as butterflies, spiders and snails. Bulbs are grown as part of learning about things that grow, and the children learn to make a fruit salad and other simple snacks such as flapjacks, pancakes and chocolate chip hands. Several children learn to use a computer, with good control of the mouse to select, click and drag items on the screen.
75. The children are taught well in all areas of learning. The teaching is good in the Nursery and very good in the Reception class. The teachers have very good knowledge of the children and the subjects that are taught. This helps them to plan some effective lessons and activities that encourage good learning. Their warm and positive approach helps the children to feel secure and well motivated to learn. Teachers use the equipment very well to help learning, such as the apparatus in the physical development lessons, the outdoor equipment, the books in the literacy sessions, the sand and water activities, and the sock and shoe shops.
76. The children learn best when the lessons are well structured, and when the teachers have planned the activities carefully. This mainly happens in groups of perhaps six children, where there is a very clear aim to the activity. Unfortunately, however, it leaves other children to wander around the rooms and explore the many other attractions on offer. These are very stimulating, and they allow the children to get along with each other very well. They also, however, encourage them to "flit" from one thing to another, without their activities being checked on by staff. Also, some children will concentrate on one resource all the time, such as one child who spent over an hour and a half at a computer, with no adult coming near him during his "activities time" in the Nursery. The days start best with all the children coming together for a little activity such as greeting each other, and deciding what day it is, who is present and who is missing, what the weather is like, and so on. This settles the children, and gets them to remember who is who among the staff and the other children. What happens in the Nursery, particularly, however, is that the children wander in, often late, and simply go to different activities with no feeling for being part of a social community.
77. All of the staff, teachers and support assistants, are very enthusiastic and dedicated, whether planning and preparing the activities, working with groups or individuals, or talking things over with parents. For example, the Reception teacher led an excellent music session with all forty or more children present, well supported by all the other staff. The children were extremely well behaved and enthusiastic; they took turns without fuss, sang the songs and followed the actions, played their different instruments loudly or softly, quickly or slowly, and some pupils conducted the others for some of the tunes.
78. The Foundation Stage is well managed by the teachers, although there is overall leadership responsibility. The range of what is taught is very good. Teachers' planning is very well carried out, and lessons and activities are well prepared by the teachers with their assistants. The teachers co-operate very well, and teach some lessons jointly; they assess how well pupils are progressing satisfactorily. They do not, however, have a defined aim or agreed ideas for developing the

Foundation Stage, nor do they share a budget with which they can plan ahead. The resources for both classes are very good, and the accommodation is also very good, allowing the children's learning to be very well encouraged. Reception children attend the main school assemblies each week, and have their own spiritual times as well. The rooms are particularly bright and attractively decorated with children's work, and they are divided into good theme areas and corners that allow the children to focus on different aspects of their learning at different times of the day. Each class has its own good secure outdoor area to use for play, and for lessons in the summer.

ENGLISH

79. Attainment in English matches the standards expected nationally at the ages of seven and 11. Standards are similar to those found in the previous inspection. The national test results for 2002 showed that attainment was below the national average at the age of seven in reading, and well below average in writing. No pupils attained the higher Level three in the national tests, and this contributed to standards in writing being identified as well below average. However, when standards were compared with those attained by pupils in similar schools, they were found to be well above average in reading and similar in writing. Standards of 11 year-olds were similar to those found nationally, and well above those found in similar schools. Their test results showed that their standard had improved much more than their peers in other similar schools since they were aged seven. Over the past three years, boys have performed better than girls at the age of 11. Teachers are aware of this and ensure that girls are included, for example, in question-and-answer activities. There was no evidence to indicate that this is a continuing trend.
80. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in their learning in Years 1 and 2 and maintain this progress in Years 3 to 6. Given the level of attainment on entry to the school and the standards attained when compared with similar schools, all pupils achieve very well.
81. The attainment of seven-year olds is similar to those expected nationally in speaking and listening. Pupils demonstrate interest in whole-class activities, as when Year 2 pupils listened closely to a traditional story, *Jack and the Beanstalk*, to identify key features such as main character, bad character, the problem and the solution. They also respond appropriately to questions in the literacy hour and in other subjects. By the age of 11, all pupils have developed their skills and have grown in confidence in speaking and listening. Year 6 pupils give reasons for their answers; when analysing persuasive writing, a girl began her answer, *'This makes me agree with the writer because of the strong words'* and went on to identify those powerful words. The attainment of all pupils reflects the good progress made since they were admitted to the school because of the many opportunities to talk with teachers and support staff. Pupils extend their range of vocabulary during discussions with the teacher and other pupils, and by tasks, as in a Year 4 class, where pupils used a thesaurus to find alternative words to adjectives such as *'dark'*. There are also displays of vocabulary lists to prompt pupils, as seen in literacy, mathematics and science. Pupils listen very closely to the teacher, during the literacy hour and in all other lessons. The views and opinions of other pupils are treated with respect, as shown in a Year 5-6 history lesson when the class listened attentively to a visually impaired pupil.
82. Standards of seven-year-olds and 11-year-olds in reading are similar to those found in most schools. By the age of seven, pupils enjoy reading. Higher-attaining pupils read above the level expected nationally. Average-attaining pupils generally read confidently and accurately, but with occasional errors. They talk about the main characters and retell the story. They try to use their knowledge of sounds of letters or groups of letters to help with words they do not recognise, but are not always successful. Lower-attaining pupils read less confidently. They sometimes apply their knowledge of sounds of letters or groups of letters successfully to help with words they do not recognise. The progress of the lowest-attaining pupils is boosted by the very good use of a support teacher working individually with pupils using the Reading Recovery strategies. By the age of 11, higher-attaining pupils read above the level expected nationally. Higher-attaining and average-attaining pupils discuss their choice of books well, and have good strategies for tackling new words. One pupil explained *'inference'* as *'Like reading between the lines'*. Lower-attaining

pupils also read confidently and with understanding, as when explaining 'on his say-so' as 'with his permission'. Most pupils enjoy reading and younger pupils take books home regularly to read to parents, who add comments to their reading record of pupils. Older pupils sometimes add comments of their own. For example, a Year 6 pupil had written 'I have read this book before and I love it so much I can't not read it again.' In lessons, teachers set good examples of how to read fluently and with good expression.

83. Standards in writing are similar to those expected nationally at the ages of both seven and 11. The school has identified a need to provide all pupils with more opportunities to tackle writing tasks, not only in the literacy hour, but also in other subjects, to help pupils achieve at the higher levels. All pupils apply themselves well to writing tasks. The wide range of writing tasks includes poetry, as when pupils in Year 6 write their version of 'If'. Younger pupils write instructions such as 'How to make a snowman', and label drawings of a bicycle. They retell stories and review books such as *Little Red Riding Hood*. By the age of 11, pupils research and write reports, for example, about birds. They analyse persuasive writing to separate fact from opinion and then practise persuasive writing when writing about fox-hunting. When writing letters they use words and phrases that capture the attention of the reader as in, 'We even visited the Duke of Devonshire's house'. Biographical writing is based on authors such as J K Rowling and William Shakespeare. The presentation of work is good across the school. The skills of handwriting are taught systematically, resulting in skills appropriate for pupils' age and in neat and tidy books.
84. Good opportunities are provided to promote literacy skills in other subjects. In a Year 3 geography lesson, speaking and listening skills were fostered well, particularly during the final part of the lesson when pupils explained to their peers how they would improve the local environment. In Year 6, pupils research information about famous people, make notes and then organise the notes into sections to support learning in history. Some writing tasks support learning in other subjects, for example, when pupils write about the artists Seurat and Dali.
85. The use of information and communication technology to foster learning is promoted well. Teachers use overhead projectors very effectively during lessons. They also use an interactive screen well, as in a Year 4 literacy hour. In this lesson, a girl consolidated the skills learned in information and communication technology lessons, by scrolling the text on the screen and closing the file at the end of the lesson. In this lesson also, pupils used a well-chosen computer program in the classroom to extend their vocabulary by replacing verbs in given sentences from an alternative list.
86. The quality of teaching and learning is good. It is never less than satisfactory and is very good overall in Years 5 and 6. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the National Literacy Strategy. Standards are rising because all pupils concentrate well and apply themselves to the task in hand, because of the very high expectations of pace of work and the support of the teacher and the learning support assistants when these are present. The relationships between teachers and pupils are of a high order. Tasks are chosen that interest and challenge. Questioning is targeted very well to enable all pupils to succeed, but also challenges them. In a Year 6 literacy lesson, the teacher asked pupils to identify words or phrases in the text that dare the reader not to disagree, and pupils responded with 'The time has surely come'. Lessons are planned well. Teaching is usually brisk and with the oldest pupils, very good use made of well-chosen texts and other resources. In most lessons, pupils are made aware at the outset of what it is they are expected to learn during the lesson. They are reminded of this during the lesson and during the review session at the end of the lesson. As a result, both teachers and pupils have a sound knowledge of their learning and the progress they are making. All pupils have individual targets so that they know what they have to do to improve their work. This is a recent innovation and as yet pupils do not have ownership of these targets. The school recognises the need to promote this. The curriculum is enriched by visits from theatre groups and storytellers. Teachers use the good resources for English well. The quantity and quality of texts are good and motivate pupils to learn. Some of the texts foster well pupils' understanding of cultures other than their own. Year 5 read alternative versions of 'Cinderella' from China and Italy. The high expectations of behaviour and of how pupils will work in

pairs and small groups exemplify the school's provision for moral and social growth. Spiritual development is fostered by encouraging a love of literature.

87. Marking is satisfactory overall, but there are shortcomings. Marking is inconsistent and not fully in line with the school's marking policy. Comments are often encouraging, but there are insufficient comments that will help pupils to make progress in their learning by setting short-term targets. Key spelling errors such as '*writing*' and '*habitat*' are not always corrected. This is an area for development. Homework makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' learning. The subject is managed soundly by the subject leader within the context of her role, although this is underdeveloped. However, the contribution of the headteacher in analysing test results and monitoring the development of teaching ensures that overall the subject is led and managed well. Test results are analysed carefully for strengths and weaknesses, to identify aspects of the subject that need to be fostered. One outcome is that writing has been targeted as a key area for improvement. Especially in Year 1-2, the pupils' writing is not always marked in line with the stated school policy, particularly with comments that will help all pupils to make progress in their learning. Pupils do not have sufficient ownership of their individual targets, or realise that they can achieve these when writing in any subject, nor do they have opportunities to point out to the teacher that they are achieving their targets. By improving marking and extending target setting, teachers will be in a better position to use assessment to inform short-term planning so that tasks are matched better to previous learning. This will put the school in a good position to raise standards further.

MATHEMATICS

88. The 2002 national test results based on average national curriculum points scores showed that attainment was well below the national average at the end of the infant phase. The percentage of pupils obtaining Level 2, the expected Level, was average; the proportion obtaining the higher level 3 at the end of the infant phase was well below the national average. Pupils' performance in the 2002 mathematics test was average in comparison with schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. The average attainment of pupils in the three years 2000 to 2002 was below the national average in the Key Stage 1 tests. On average, pupils leave the infant phase half a term behind pupils nationally. The performance of girls was similar to that of boys.
89. In the 2002 national tests at the end of the junior phase, pupils' attainment in terms of points scores was in line with the national average. The proportion of pupils obtaining Level 4, the expected Level nationally, was above average but the proportion reaching the higher level five was average. When compared with pupils from schools of a similar type, standards were well above average. Whilst there was no discernible difference in the performance of girls and boys in the lessons seen, boys have tended to perform better than girls by the age of 11. This school has three male teachers (including the headteacher and Year 6 teacher) and this may have a bearing on boys' attainment.
90. For the current groups of pupils, evidence from the lessons observed, scrutiny of pupils' work and discussions with pupils indicate that attainment matches national expectations by the age of seven and by the age of 11. Within the range of mathematics work seen during the inspection, pupils in the infant phase demonstrate a satisfactory level of attainment related to investigative mathematics and number. Pupils in the juniors generally do not have sufficiently good and instant knowledge of their multiplication tables, because they are not practised in every class with sufficient regularity. Furthermore, when practised, they are not always said in the same way from class to class. This hinders attainment in other areas of mathematics. Higher-attaining pupils reach high standards, with a number of pupils entered for Level six each year, with a good degree of success. This year, because Level six is no longer available, four pupils are being taught GCSE mathematics. Pupils aged 11 estimate the size of acute, obtuse and reflex angles with a high degree of accuracy. They work out, mentally, quite challenging problems such as, "What number is one hundred times smaller than 1.38?" Pupils use correct mathematical vocabulary throughout the school, and this greatly helps their learning; it is a strength of teaching at this school. Pupils aged seven are appropriately familiar with different types of graphs. They understand that whilst

numbers can be added in any order, if carrying this out mentally, it is often worth “putting the largest number in the head first”, and then counting on. Standards in mathematics currently match those at the time of the last inspection for pupils at the age of seven and 11. To raise standards of attainment further in both key stages, there is a need to continue the work of building up a coherent mathematical vocabulary, and to ensure that all pupils have instant recall of their multiplication tables, taught preferably by the same method.

91. Overall learning of pupils in mathematics is good in both the infant and junior phases; this includes those pupils having special educational needs. Factors aiding progress include the positive attitudes and behaviour of the pupils, and the overall good standard of teaching. The teaching observed was excellent in one of the seven lessons seen, very good in three lessons and good in the other three. The features that made the best lesson excellent, and contributed to a very high rate of learning, were a very high level of challenge on the part of the teacher, coupled with a brisk and purposeful pace in which the teacher set time targets for pupils and made excellent use of key mathematics vocabulary. Such lessons clearly explained what the learning objectives were at the outset, and re-visited these at the end of the session to see how far they had been achieved. Teachers in most numeracy lessons begin with effective question-and-answer sessions, to revise previous work and set pupils thinking. In numeracy lessons, the likeliest time for pupils to lessen their rate of working is in the “independent learning” sessions. In the best lessons, however, teachers are aware of this and set appropriate time targets, as in, for example, an excellent Year 6 lesson on angles. A factor militating against progress is a lack of pupils’ instant recall of multiplication tables. Pupils’ achievements are very good as a result of their positive attitudes and the good-quality teaching. Information and communication technology is used well in this subject, and resources are of good quality.
92. The co-ordinator for the subject, who is the deputy headteacher, is keen and competent and has monitored standards of teaching throughout the school, along with the headteacher. She has built up a useful portfolio of pupils’ work so that teachers can have an over-view of how pupils’ knowledge and understanding of each topic develop as pupils move up the school. Assessment procedures are satisfactory, with pupils expected to improve their standard by two sub-levels each year. Teachers throughout the school are fully and appropriately aware of how much improvement is required of each pupil each year.

SCIENCE

93. Standards in science match national expectations for pupils aged seven and 11. They are the same as at the last inspection. National tests results from previous years confirm that many pupils are reaching the average grade for their age (Level 2 for Year 2 and Level 4 for Year 6) but higher-attaining pupils in Year 6 are not achieving as well in science as they are in English and mathematics. Part of the reason for this is that the curriculum is set up for mixed-age classes, and does not challenge higher-attaining pupils sufficiently. The curriculum will change from September 2003, when the school is likely to have single-age classes throughout.
94. Pupils in Year 2 have a good understanding of pushing and pulling forces and have started to develop an understanding of how to organise an experiment. They know that sweets will change if water is poured on them and learn to predict what will happen before they pour the water. Their recording is underdeveloped because too much is copied from the board. Pupils understand about the dangers of electricity, and successfully build a simple circuit with a bulb or a buzzer.
95. Pupils in Year 6 have a good knowledge of how to organise their experiment because teachers and pupils make good use of their planning ‘board’. They also predict outcomes well and are starting to evaluate their experiment. They understand well the effects of heating and cooling on materials and recognise that sometimes change is reversible, as with water, and sometimes it is not, as with bread dough. All pupils understand electrical circuits and draw diagrams of quite complex circuits well. They use the technical vocabulary of growth, such as chlorophyll and photosynthesis, accurately and are developing confidence in this skill through the use of some good word games.

96. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress through the school. Higher-attaining pupils in Year 2 last year achieved well, particularly when the school's results are compared with those of similar schools; however, they did not do as well in Year 6, when compared to their progress in English and mathematics.
97. Teaching and learning are good. Examples of very good teaching and learning were observed in both the infant and junior classes, and no unsatisfactory teaching was observed. When teaching is strongest, teachers involve pupils in 'hands-on' learning. A Year 1 teacher adopted this method, and pupils speedily expanded their understanding of electrical circuits to a remarkable level. They worked quickly and with a growing understanding on complex ideas. In fact, they were allowed to take their understanding of circuits beyond that of Year 2 pupils, who, in a similar lesson, recorded first and experimented second. Teachers also help pupils to understand how to organise a 'fair' test through the use of a good planning 'board', and give clear explanations using appropriate technical vocabulary. Resources are often used very well to help pupils understand difficult concepts, as in Years 5/6, when they grow seeds and place them in different environments in order to see what effect this will have on growth. Teachers help build positive attitudes in their pupils by creating imaginative displays which have both information about the topic being studied and pupils' own work. A particularly good example is the plants display in Year 5/6 classes, where seeds the pupils had planted are combined with books and pupils' written work. Teachers mark pupils' work conscientiously, giving praise appropriately, but they do not show how pupils can improve their work or their understanding.
98. The management of the subject is good. Appropriate and useful policies and schemes of work are in place to guide teachers' lesson planning. However, the subject co-ordinator does not have sufficient over-view of standards in each year through the school. Nonetheless, the results of national tests in Years 2 and 6 are analysed thoroughly and future teaching is modified to improve pupils' understanding. A very useful portfolio of examples of pupils' work will help teachers understand what their pupils are aiming to achieve. Further work on individual pupil targets and the modification of the current curriculum would benefit most pupils, and especially higher-attaining ones. Resources and the use of information and communication technology are both satisfactory.

ART AND DESIGN

99. Since the last inspection, this subject has maintained pupils' attainments at the level expected nationally, and has improved the standard of teaching and the rate of pupils' progress.
100. Pupils begin with a low level of skills in art, but by the age of seven, they have improved well through making a wide variety of pictures, patterns and models. They understand that colours are mixed to make new colours, and they do this with paints, felt tips, paints in dot painting, cellophane paper, and with a variety of fabrics mixed together to get an effect, such as cold raindrops using blue and silver materials in the shape of a raindrop. Rubbings are made of bark, leaves and metal grids, and pupils make these into pictures or patterns on themes such as autumn or fantasy vehicles. Pupils make pictures and patterns on different scales, including large paintings for the walls, involving perhaps a whole class of pupils working co-operatively. Their use of a range of tools and materials is becoming increasingly accurate and sure, including printing blocks, collage materials, computers, brushes, pens and pencils.
101. By the time pupils are 11 years old, they have learned how to paint carefully, using colours they have mixed themselves, such as when painting portraits of each other or the wives of Henry VIII. They paint chequerboard patterns and Celtic knot patterns, as well as patterns in which the shapes fit together perfectly, and Egyptian designs and Greek masks. Their sketches are increasingly accurate, whether of leaves, trees and buildings, or small items within the classroom such as bowls, a dance shoe, latticework boxes and CD cases. The work of other artists has been studied, and pupils have learned to paint, or make cut-out pictures, in the style of other artists such as Henri Matisse, Edgar Degas and Pablo Picasso.

102. The teaching and learning of art are good. Teachers plan their lessons to build well on what pupils have learned previously, and they give clear explanations of what is expected. Sometimes, however, these explanations are too long, at the expense of the pupils' time in actually painting. In most lessons, the tasks are challenging to the pupils, and they respond well, sometimes experimenting well with colours and shapes. Good use is made of the pupils' work to demonstrate some techniques, and this helps the pupils' learning well, in addition to making the chosen pupils more proud of their work. Pupils are managed well, and teachers have positive relationships with them, so helping their learning to be more effective. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to their peers', and the classroom assistants are effective in their support of individual pupils' learning, as they go around a class, helping and guiding well. Good use is made of information and communication technology where appropriate. There are times when the pace of lessons slackens, and pupils continue for too long on a simple task. This is often when the pupils are being led through a series of exercises, or concentrating for a long time on one aspect of a painting, rather than being allowed more free expression, creativity and imagination in some of their work.
103. This subject is led and managed soundly. There is a satisfactory plan of what should be taught in the long term, and class teachers check their pupils' progress appropriately. The co-ordinator is keen, and has a budget that she manages well. She has built up good resources that are well organised and available throughout the school. Good use is made of outside people and places, including having a professional artist coming into school. The art club is well attended, and the pupils' work from this (such as a totem pole and Chinese pictures) adds greatly to the good art displays around the whole school. However, the co-ordinator does not have any time to see how well other teachers are teaching, and does not check how well pupils are making progress all through the school. This means that plans to develop the subject are not based on accurate and up-to-date information.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

104. Pupils are attaining in line with national expectations by the time they are seven and 11 years old. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress throughout the school, improving upon the low level of attainment identified when they entered Sandbrook. The school has maintained this level of performance since the last inspection, and has improved the quality of teaching and the rate of pupils' progress. At that time, it was thought that pupils spent too much time on construction, at the expense of design and evaluation. The school has to be careful that the emphasis does not now overbalance in the other direction!
105. By the age of seven, pupils have learned to design simple projects and models such as vehicles, purses and plant-pot holders. They use a range of materials appropriately, including cardboard and paper, different fabrics and wool. When making snacks and drinks, they plan what they want, such as when designing a party drink, like a cocktail with all the trimmings. In planning their work, they list the materials they will need, and the order in which they have to do things, often making a drawing with labels to show what they intend to do, such as when designing equipment for a playground project. Pupils learn basic techniques soundly, such as fixing materials together in different ways, using, for instance, split pins, paperclips, Sellotape, glue and Velcro. They practise with these techniques when making things like cats' faces with moving eyes, or elephants with flapping ears.
106. By the age of 11, pupils have gained satisfactory skills across a range of construction activities, as well as developing their skills well in designing their work projects. They are careful when assembling card, paper and fabrics together to make models. Pupils create a range of moving models using construction kits of various kinds and sizes, such as when making fairground rides recently. The higher-attaining pupils design pneumatic and hydraulic systems, as well as belts and pulleys, to carry power from the battery-powered motors to the moving parts of the machines and rides they are designing. Some major projects show good skills in design work, such as building a bridge across the Wirral peninsula. Pupils have also learned how to evaluate several different aspects of commercial goods, including various makes and kinds of biscuits.

107. This subject is taught well and the quality of learning is equally good. Lessons are planned clearly, and are prepared for thoroughly. Sometimes, the explanations are too long, and pupils can become restless when they then become bored. Their rate of learning then falls, as the teachers may not be able to get them fully back on the task in hand. Teachers are good at using the work of the higher-attaining pupils as examples of how to do things well, and to look at the problems these pupils have met, and considering how they might be overcome. Pupils are encouraged to use sketch books for their early design ideas, much the same as in art lessons. When the pupils are making their models, teachers and support assistants are good at giving them guidance and asking them questions that prompt the pupils to think more carefully about what they are planning and doing. They have positive relationships with the pupils that help to motivate their learning. Occasionally, staff help pupils too soon, such as when choosing materials, drawing shapes for them, or stapling pieces of material together.
108. The leadership and management of this subject are satisfactory. The co-ordinator is quite new to the school, and does not have any time for observing other teachers to check the standard of their teaching, and nor is he able to check closely on how well pupils are progressing throughout the school. He is keen, and has produced a good portfolio of pupils' work. The plan of what is to be taught in the long term is sound, and is being updated well, and so is the system for checking pupils' progress. Good use is made of computers, and resources are good, although no use is made of outside people and places to enhance the pupils' learning. The subject budget is well managed, and the co-ordinator has good plans and ideas for developing design and technology in the future.

GEOGRAPHY

109. Standards of attainment match the standards expected of pupils nationally at the age of seven and 11. The school has maintained the standards expected of seven- and 11-year-olds identified in the previous report. This is because the school has rectified the shortcomings in resources for the subject, the teaching is good and the school ensures that all requirements of the National Curriculum are met. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in their learning in Year 1-2 and maintain this progress in Year 3-6. They achieve well.
110. By the age of seven, pupils have an appropriate understanding of place. They know about different types of buildings and identify streets and buildings on a plan. They know that when travelling to another country you need a passport and a boarding card. They compare their own locality with other places through the journeys of 'Barnaby Bear'. This was shown in a Year 2 lesson where the teacher read about Barnaby Bear's visit to Dublin. Pupils also know the countries that comprise Great Britain and locate these countries on a map and identify the capital cities. By the age of 11, pupils compare and contrast Moreton with several different localities including Edale, Lorient in France and the island of St Lucia. They know about different regions of the world, such as the rain forests of South America, and locate them on a map of the world. Pupils know that features of the landscape have to be identified in order to decide, for example, the best place to site a village. When studying the local area, pupils draw plans, with a key, showing how the area might be improved to the advantage of the local community. Through the school's involvement in the Eco project, pupils have first-hand experience of decision making to improve the school environment. Learning is promoted well through visits, for example, to Arrowe Park Study Centre and to Edale, and the use of secondary sources such as books, maps, aerial and other photographs, the use of CD-ROMS and the Internet.
111. Teaching and learning are good in Year 1-2. There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement about teaching in Years 3-6. The good teaching in Year 1-2 has a positive effect on learning. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils compared Dublin with Moreton. The teacher captured the imagination of all pupils by reading 'Barnaby Bear Goes to Dublin'. As a result, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, were keen to participate, contribute their ideas and answer thought-provoking questions. One pupil asked why the post-boxes were not red and the response from other pupils – that it was because it was a different country – showed how they had an

understanding of how places are different. The task – to write a postcard home about Dublin – also fired their imagination and they maintained a high level of concentration throughout the lesson. The task also enabled the teacher to make an accurate assessment of their learning, not only in geography, but also in writing skills learned during the literacy hour. The expectations of the teacher and the interest of the task contributed to the good behaviour of all pupils. In the one lesson seen in Years 3-6, a Year 3 lesson, teaching and learning were satisfactory. This was because of the sound knowledge and understanding of the teacher and a task that was interesting, allied to the good use of learning support assistants that enabled all pupils, including the high percentage of pupils with special educational needs, to make satisfactory progress in the lesson, despite the occasional unsatisfactory behaviour of a small minority of pupils.

112. The marking of books is inconsistent and not fully in line with school policy. For example, there was very little evidence in the books of comments that would help to promote learning. Key words are not always corrected when misspelt and some work, usually that of lower-attaining pupils, was not completed. This restricts further learning. There was little evidence in the books seen of tasks that are matched to pupils with different levels of prior attainment. This also restricts further learning.
113. Information and communication technology is used satisfactorily to support learning. In addition to CD-ROMs, the pupils are able to access the Internet to find information, for example, about other countries. Videos, for example, about a village in India, are also used to make a good contribution to pupils' learning.
114. The subject is managed satisfactorily. However, the role of the subject leader is under-developed and there have been no opportunities to monitor teaching and learning. The scheme of work is carefully planned so that all National Curriculum requirements are met. The school makes effective use of the latest national guidance to ensure that there is continuity and progression in the teaching of skills as well as knowledge and understanding. Resources are now good, better than at the time of the previous inspection because the resources for local studies have been strengthened and other resources have been purchased to ensure effective teaching of the units of study.

HISTORY

115. Standards of attainment by the ages of seven and 11 are broadly similar to those expected nationally. The school has maintained the standards identified in the previous inspection. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in Years 1-2 and maintain this progress in Years 3-6. They achieve well.
116. By the age of seven, pupils have begun to develop a sense of the past and of changes over time. Through their study of families, homes, the seaside and famous people such as Guy Fawkes and James Watt, they learn key vocabulary including 'then', 'now', 'old', 'new', 'chronological order' and 'time-line'. They are also beginning to understand the importance of Remembrance Day. By the age of 11, pupils have extended their skills, knowledge and understanding through studies of invaders and settlements, the Romans, the Tudors and Britain since 1948. Skills are promoted through careful observation of objects of historical interest and by using secondary sources such as books, photographs and information and communication technology to research information.
117. There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement about teaching and learning in Year 1-2, as no lessons were seen. Teaching and learning are good overall in Years 3-6, ranging from satisfactory to good, with two out of three lessons being good. This is an improvement since the previous inspection, when teaching in Years 3-6 was judged to be satisfactory. Teaching and learning are good because teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of the subject, and use this knowledge well to plan interesting lessons that make good use of skills pupils learn in the literacy hour to promote learning. In lessons, pupils have many opportunities to speak and listen and to practise their writing skills, such as when labelling drawings, making lists using bullet points and making notes when researching information. Clear planning, good choice and use of resources,

including other adults, a brisk pace, good relationships and effective teaching methods such as searching questions that make pupils think carefully are features of the good teaching. Teachers also make clear to pupils at the beginning of a lesson what it is they should know or be able to do by the end of the lesson. Towards the end of the session, learning is reviewed effectively so that both teachers and pupils know the extent of their learning. In a good Year 5-6 lesson, in which the teacher provided a very good selection of telephones dating from the late 1940s to the present day, all pupils were keen to answer challenging questions and complete tasks, for example, when asked to arrange the telephones in chronological order and justify their decisions. All were enthusiastic. Questions such as *'Why do you think the emergency dialling code in the United States of America, 911, might be a better choice for telephones with dials than our 999?'* made pupils look closely at the dial telephones before volunteering an answer. In this lesson also, a visually impaired pupil was enabled to participate fully because of the support he was given. When asked, he demonstrated and explained articulately how he could more easily dial using a keypad in which the 5 key had a raised dot on it. All the other pupils listened very closely. Their response and the praise of the teacher raised his confidence and self-esteem. Because the teachers capture the interest of pupils and expect high standards of behaviour, conduct is good and pupils learn well.

118. Books are marked regularly and often the comments are encouraging. However, marking rarely includes comments that foster history skills or knowledge and understanding. This is an area for development.
119. The subject is soundly managed by the subject leader. However, the role of the subject leader is under-developed and there have been no opportunities to monitor teaching and learning. The scheme of work is based on the latest national guidance, and ensures continuity and progression in knowledge and understanding as well as skills. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Resources are good for the teaching needed to meet National Curriculum requirements. Good use is made of information and communication technology such as videos and CD-ROMs, as well as the Internet. Year 6 pupils research famous people such as Martin Luther King and Yuri Gagarin in additional literacy lessons. This extends their knowledge of other cultures. The curriculum is enriched by visits to museums, art galleries and places of interest such as, when studying the Romans, Chester.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

120. Attainment at the age of both seven and 11 meets national expectations. By the end of the infant phase, pupils use information and communication technology (ICT) to enter, store and retrieve information. Their work is often, appropriately, linked to other subjects such as history and literacy. They are able to generate text in a variety of styles and insert appropriate pictures. By the end of the junior phase, pupils are able to sample sounds using their own device and handle spreadsheets well. They can present information in different forms and are aware of their audience and the need for quality in their presentations. Pupils routinely use ICT as a tool to help their work in other areas of the curriculum.
121. Teaching and learning are good in both the infant and junior phases, for all pupils, including those having special educational needs. It was possible to see five lessons in this subject. In three lessons, teaching was very good, in one it was good and in the other, it was satisfactory. The school makes efficient use of its ICT suite; all classes are timetabled for two sessions per week there, but the computers are not networked to each other or to the computers in the classrooms; this restricts further work to be carried out in class. The pupils' learning benefits from the use of an interactive whiteboard. Assessment is not yet used effectively to monitor pupils' progress in this subject.
122. Pupils' response is very good indeed. They show great eagerness for, and interest in, this subject. Pupils work hard in practising their skills and work co-operatively very well. They are not afraid to volunteer their own suggestions; relationships are very good.

123. The co-ordinator for this subject is knowledgeable and keen to spread her skills through the school. Whilst she has already provided in-service training for colleagues, she has not yet had time to monitor and evaluate the work of colleagues. She has produced a very useful portfolio of pupils' work through the school, although this has yet to be related to National Curriculum levels. There is an appropriate range of cross-curricular software. Great improvements have been made since the last inspection in terms of the hardware available; standards remain in line with national expectations.

MUSIC

124. Standards in music of seven year-olds and 11-year-olds are above those expected nationally. This is similar to the findings of the previous inspection. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make very good progress in this subject in Years 1-2 and maintain this progress in Years 3-6.
125. Pupils in Years 1-2 sing well in collective worship. Year 2 pupils sing simple songs from memory, with enjoyment and expression, and most pupils are in tune, as when singing *'Sing One Big Family'*. They listen carefully to the introduction and join in at the appropriate time and clap rhythmically. All listen carefully to music, for example, to Debussy's *'La Mer'*. When performing *'Hello, Baby Bear. How are you?'* they vary the pitch of their voices so that they are more expressive and the performance, therefore, is more dramatic, particularly after they have considered how they might improve the performance. Older pupils also sing confidently, with enthusiasm and enjoyment, in collective worship. They sing more rhythmically, with clear diction and accurate pitch. Older pupils also identify how different instruments in the orchestra can represent moods and characters, as when they listen to and write about Prokofiev's *'Peter and the Wolf'*. Pupils in Years 5-6 extend their knowledge and understanding of how rhythmic patterns can be created and how music can be influenced by place such as when studying a unit of work entitled *'Import / Export'*.
126. Teaching and learning are good overall in Years 1-2 and Years 3-6. Teaching ranges from satisfactory to very good. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Where teaching is good, the lessons are planned well, with interesting resources and tasks that encourage all pupils to be interested. Teachers also have high expectations of behaviour and of what pupils should know or be able to do, making sure all pupils know what they should achieve during the lesson. They use effective questioning that extends the thinking of pupils and use opportunities to assess learning well. In a good Year 2 lesson, all the activities were chosen well to check on what pupils had learned over the past few lessons. Whilst the lesson was fun for the pupils, for example, when testing their ability to identify the sounds made by different instruments and naming the instruments, the result was that both teacher and pupils knew what progress had been made in pupils' learning. In a very good lesson with Year 5-6 pupils, the teacher had very high expectations and used very challenging questions to extend pupils' learning. For example, when pupils listened to an excerpt (the Wedding) from the opera, *'Koanga'*, pupils had to listen very closely to identify the instrument and rhythm that featured throughout in the background. Afterwards, pupils discussed how the composer had used different dynamics and other techniques to illustrate different parts of the wedding. This was a very demanding activity, but because of the interest and enthusiasm of the pupils, most demonstrated that they understood how the composer had achieved his effects. To consolidate learning about the use of rhythms to achieve desired effects, the teacher challenged all pupils to compose, using words of their own choosing, rhythms that included at least one contrasting rhythm. Groups applied themselves successfully with a great degree of concentration to this task and their subsequent performances, in front of their peers, enabled the teacher to assess their learning.
127. The curriculum is enriched in several ways. Pupils have opportunities to sing for celebrations such as harvest time and at Christmas. They perform in groups in the local community. Younger pupils participate in a singing afternoon with other local schools. Older pupils have visited a multicultural centre where they participated in music-making with musicians from Africa, playing traditional instruments. Year 5-6 pupils attend a concert given by the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic

orchestra, preceded by a unit of study that is closely linked to the performance. Visiting musicians also enrich the learning opportunities. There are also opportunities to learn to play orchestral instruments through the peripatetic service, although this is no longer free. Pupils who choose to learn instruments concentrate well in their lessons. They enjoy the challenges set by the teacher, for example, in clarinet lessons, and try hard to do what is asked of them.

128. The subject leader manages the subject satisfactorily, although the role is underdeveloped. The school has a scheme of work that incorporates the latest national and local guidance that ensures the requirements of the National Curriculum are fully met for all pupils. A new assessment system being developed by the local education authority is about to be implemented and this will enable teachers to keep track of pupils' progress better and use that information more effectively to inform planning. Resources for teaching music are good. There are sufficient tape recorders and CD players to enable pupils to listen to different types of music and to record their own compositions. The use of computers to consolidate and promote learning, for example, when composing music, is being developed by the school. This will enrich the learning opportunities currently available to pupils.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

129. During the inspection, only gymnastics, dance, games and swimming were observed, because of the way the school organises its teaching units. Standards at the age of seven and 11 in these areas are in line with national expectations. They are enhanced for lots of, mostly junior, pupils by the high-quality provision for extra-curricular sports' activities and inter-school team games. Both athletics and outdoor and adventurous activities are taught during the summer term to junior-aged pupils. Whilst standards in Year 2 are similar to those at the last inspection, standards in Year 6 are slightly lower.
130. In Year 2, only dance and gymnastics lessons were seen. These pupils moved with skill and appropriate control whilst running in space. They reacted in different ways to the stimulus of music or tambourine and rehearsed and improved a long sequence of movements in a dance about a dragon. They knew that their heart rate increases during exercise and are starting to understand the importance of 'warm up' and 'warm down'.
131. In Year 6, in games lessons, most pupils had reasonable control over a racquet and ball and higher-attaining pupils, most often boys, had particularly good skills, sometimes successfully hitting the ball across a net ten or more times. This is partly because they have extra coaching in an after-school club. All pupils co-operated well with partners in game situations, taking alternate turns where appropriate. In gymnastics, most pupils linked movements in a satisfactory way. Higher-attaining pupils, mainly girls, performed gracefully and built a series of complex movements, which included copying partner's movements, into an impressive sequence. All pupils are encouraged to review and comment on the performance of other members of the class, but their comments lacked the usual technical vocabulary. All pupils knew about the effects of exercise on their bodies and understood that sensible exercise is good for health.
132. In Years 3 and 4, pupils make good progress in their swimming lessons because they often have three teachers per class. Most pupils leave Year 4 able to swim, using a known stroke, at least 25 metres.
133. All pupils make good progress through the school. Pupils with special educational needs are encouraged to take a full part in lessons. For instance, teachers put white tape on a gymnastic box so that visually impaired pupils can see it clearly.
134. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed. Where teaching was strong, teachers improve pupils' performance through the use of skilful coaching. This was particularly noticeable in a Year 5/6 gymnastics lesson, where some groups were prompted to develop very good movement sequences, and in Year 1, where the teacher used higher-attaining pupils to demonstrate for others. In both classes, pupils responded very positively and worked hard

to improve the quality of their movements. Teachers are generally well organised and have equipment close at hand for different parts of the lesson. They are also appropriately conscious of health and safety issues, always providing pupils with 'warm ups' and 'cool downs', as well as teaching them how to handle and move equipment safely. In swimming lessons, the good teacher / pupil ratio enables the class to be split into small groups and this enabled pupils to receive more intensive tuition. Pupils are sometimes very excited to take part in lessons and occasionally do not pay close enough attention to the teacher's instructions.

135. The subject supports the pupils' personal development well. Pupils with a high degree of special educational needs are very well integrated into lessons. They learn to work within the rules during games and have good opportunities to make up their own rules. All pupils have good opportunities to learn to co-operate in pairs and groups, as in gymnastics in Year 5/6 or in dance in Year 2.
136. The management of the subject is good. The school has done a great deal of work to achieve the 'Active Mark' and has organised training for teachers which has improved their subject knowledge. Teachers' planning is checked and a worthwhile photograph album of pupils working in lessons has been started. The school has built well on its previous assessment programme, and is currently using a second scheme, which should provide teachers, pupils and parents with more information on pupils' achievement.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

137. Standards by the age of seven and 11 are similar to those at the last inspection, being in line with those anticipated by the locally agreed syllabus. In Year 2, pupils have a growing understanding of the Christmas story and of its importance to Christians. Higher-attaining pupils write at length about being considerate to others, but lower-attaining pupils find this difficult and write briefly and without punctuation. They appreciate God's world and select their four best examples. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress, because most work is oral rather than written.
138. In Year 6, pupils know about the major world faiths, their deities, important books, ceremonies and the objects used in these ceremonies. They have had little contact with people who follow these faiths and thus are unable to appreciate their viewpoints in any depth. Pupils have considered things that are precious to them and why they are important. One higher-attaining pupil wrote in a very emotive way about friendship and why this was precious. They have all considered the importance of 'promises' and keeping them. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, ably supported by their teachers, make sound progress through the junior years.
139. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. No unsatisfactory lessons were seen. Where teaching and learning are strong, such as in Year 1, there are very positive relationships between adults and pupils, which allow effective learning to take place. Teachers build well on pupils' knowledge of local pastors, in Year 4, to consider why these people worked with local homeless people. Teachers in Year 5 and 6 use the good resources well to make the subject interesting and real for their pupils.
140. The management of the subject is satisfactory. The subject policy is well written and has been presented to the governing body. The school has modified the locally agreed syllabus to meet the needs of its pupils appropriately. Whilst a new assessment sheet has recently been devised, it is not yet being used and, at present, assessment is unsatisfactory. Teachers' planning and pupils' work are not monitored closely enough, although the school conducted a very good evaluation exercise connected to the Christmas story recently. Good-quality resources, like Jewish Seder plates and videos, are used well by teachers to help pupils understand world religions. Teachers also make regular use of the Internet to gather further information on faiths.