

# INSPECTION REPORT

**ST ELIZABETH'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY  
SCHOOL**

Wythenshawe

LEA area: Manchester

Unique reference number: 105542

Headteacher: Mrs C Dolan

Reporting inspector: Brian Holmes  
15215

Dates of inspection: 3<sup>rd</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup> February 2003

Inspection number: 246500

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Calve Croft Road Peel Hall Wythenshawe Manchester
Postcode:	M22 5EU
Telephone number:	(0161) 437 3890
Fax number:	(0161) 490 7024
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Father M Gannon
Date of previous inspection:	9 <sup>th</sup> March 1998

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
15215	Brian Holmes	Registered inspector	Science Information and communication technology History Physical education	What sort of school is it? What should the school do to improve further? School's results and pupils' achievement How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
9981	Saleem Hussein	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school work in partnership with parents? How well does the school care for its pupils?
12060	Pat Peaker	Team inspector	English Geography Design and technology Special educational needs Education inclusion	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
4350	Clive Whittington	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage Mathematics Art and design Music	

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

St Elizabeth's Catholic Primary School, Wythenshawe, Manchester, is an average sized primary school with 232 pupils between the ages of 3 and 11. Most of the pupils come from the surrounding locality, although a small minority come from outside the immediate area. The school is situated in the centre of a large council estate in the inner city area of Wythenshawe, to the south-west of Manchester city centre. Children enter the school at the age of four, most having attended the Nursery class based in the Foundation Unit. The number of pupils entitled to free school meals is just above the national average. The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs is slightly below the national average. Most of these pupils have specific learning plans written by the school to address learning difficulties; two pupils have a statement of special educational needs, which is in line with the national average. There are no pupils who have English as an additional language and very few who belong to a different ethnic group. In most cases, pupils' attainment level on entry is just below what is normally expected.

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

St Elizabeth's is a good school, which does well for its pupils. The pupils are very happy at this caring school. They show very good attitudes towards their learning and to school and achieve very good standards of behaviour. Their personal development is very good and their relationships with each other and the adults around them are excellent. Pupils are taught well and achieve standards which are above the average compared with what is achieved in other schools. All pupils make good progress during their time at the school. The school is very well led and managed by the headteacher and staff, supported well by the governing body. As a result, the school gives good value for money.

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

- Pupils achieve well across the school and attain standards better than what is expected for most pupils by the ages of 7 and 11 in English and mathematics.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to school and their learning. They attain very good standards of behaviour and levels of personal development.
- The quality of teaching and learning is very good in the Foundation Stage and good across all other phases of the school.
- The leadership and management of the headteacher and staff are very good, with good support from the governing body.
- There is good provision for pupils' learning through the curriculum, including for children in the Foundation Stage, and extra-curricular activities.
- There is very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The school achieves good levels of care for its pupils and their welfare, and has a very good partnership with its parents.

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

- Standards of attainment in art and design across the school.
- Consistency in the delivery of information and communication technology across all subject areas.

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

The school was last inspected in March 1998 and has made consistently good improvement in its standards and provision since then. Very good progress has been made in improving provision in information and communication technology, and in improving pupils' rates of progress in the subject. Good progress has also been made in improving pupils' rates of progress in design and technology. Very good progress has been made in improving assessment procedures and the use of assessment information to inform and plan for pupils' future learning. Good progress has been made in improving the curriculum for lower attaining pupils. Very good progress has been made in developing appraisal procedures and the arrangements for performance management are a central element in the school's arrangements for teachers' professional development. In addition, both pupils' standards of attainment and the quality of teaching and learning have shown a consistent improvement. There has been a positive improvement in pupils' attitudes to learning and to school, which reflects the improved levels of care and welfare developed by the school along with its

partnership with parents. However, improvement in pupils' rate of progress in art and design has not been sufficiently maintained since the previous inspection.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

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

Key	
very high	A*
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E
very low	E*

The results of the 2002 National tests for pupils aged eleven show that, when compared with schools with pupils from a similar background, standards are well above the average in English, above the average in science, but below the average in mathematics. When compared with schools nationally, standards in English and science were in line with the average, while standards in mathematics were well below average. Whilst over a third of pupils attained the higher level (Level 5) in English and science, this figure was well below average in mathematics. Inspection findings confirm that standards of attainment in English are above average in the current Year 6, with standards of attainment in science in line with the levels expected. They also show that significant improvement has taken place in pupils' attainment in mathematics with inspectors finding the attainment of the current Year 6 group of pupils to be above average. In the 2002 national tests for 7 year olds results were above average in comparison with national averages in writing and mathematics and just below the average in reading. When the school's results are compared with similar schools, they are well above average in writing and mathematics and above average in reading. Inspection evidence shows that standards are above average in all three areas – reading, writing and mathematics, as well as in science. Pupils make good progress from their below average levels of attainment on entry to the school by the age of 11 and achieve well. In information and communication technology, pupils' attainment is in line with national averages at the age of 11. Across the school, pupils achieve well in most subjects, which shows that standards have generally improved since the previous inspection. In the Foundation Stage most children make good progress from a below average point of entry and attain the Early Learning Schools by the time they enter Year 1. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards their targets over time. Pupils identified as being gifted and talented also make good progress over time.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' attitudes to school and to their learning are very good. They are keen to learn and show good levels of interest in their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour in lessons and in and around the school is very good.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships at all levels are excellent and are a strength of the school. Pupils' personal development is very good and they show very good levels of personal responsibility.
Attendance	Attendance has been maintained and is in line with the national average. The school successfully promotes and monitors pupils' attendance and punctuality.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

The quality of teaching is very good in the Foundation Stage and good in all phases of the school. Teachers successfully meet the needs of their pupils in almost all lessons. Teaching is good or better in eight out of ten lessons, and very good or excellent in over three out of ten lessons. The increased proportion of good or better teaching is consistent across all three phases of the school, and there was very good and excellent teaching in all three phases during the inspection. The quality of teaching and learning in English and mathematics is very good overall, with the skills of literacy and numeracy taught very effectively throughout the school. Teachers have a good knowledge of the subjects they teach and plan well. They set high expectations of what all pupils can achieve and challenge them to improve their standards and achievements. They use a wide range of teaching strategies, make very good use of assessment and sustain a brisk pace of learning. Teachers' management of pupils is good and the relationships they foster with pupils are excellent. Pupils' learning experiences are also enhanced positively by the contribution in lessons of the classroom assistants. Pupils are well motivated in lessons and show high levels of interest and concentration. They work at a good pace in all classes and sustain a good rate of learning. The impact of teaching on pupils' learning is that pupils achieve well in all areas of the school. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs and those who are identified as gifted and talented is good and results in a good quality of learning for those pupils.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The quality and range of learning experiences are good throughout the school, with very good breadth and balance. The curriculum meets statutory requirements.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs and pupils with EAL	Good provision for pupils with special educational needs. Work is well planned to meet all pupils' needs. They are fully included in every aspect of school life. The Code of Practice is fully implemented.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Adults provide excellent role models. Pupils have very good opportunities to take responsibility and show initiative.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school provides a close-knit, secure and happy environment. Child protection procedures are good. Assessment procedures are good, with very good use of assessment information to plan pupils' learning and set targets for improvement.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The leadership and management of the headteacher and staff are very good. There is a strong commitment to the school and desire to improve
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors are very supportive of the school and work well in partnership with the staff. They know the school well and what it needs to do next.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school's evaluation of its performance is very good, with effective procedures to use evaluation and monitoring to raise pupils' standards of attainment.
The strategic use of resources	The school uses the money it receives efficiently and deploys its resources very effectively.



The quality of the school's accommodation is satisfactory overall, with notable improvements in the playground since the previous inspection. The number and quality of appropriately qualified staff, including classroom assistants, are good, and learning resources are good. The school applies the principles of best value well in purchasing equipment and resources.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children like school and they would feel comfortable approaching the school.</li> <li>• The behaviour of the pupils is good.</li> <li>• The quality of teaching is good and children make good progress at the school.</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed.</li> <li>• The expectations of work, which the school successfully promotes.</li> <li>• The school is helping their children to become mature and responsible.</li> <li>• The school works closely with parents and keeps them informed about their children's progress.</li> <li>• Their children get the right amount of homework.</li> <li>• They like the range of activities, which the school offers.</li> </ul>	<p>There were no areas of the school which the parents identified as in need of improvement.</p>

The school's partnership with parents is very good. Their views are extremely supportive of the school. The parents support pupils' learning both in school and at home extremely well, and the quality of information provided to parents is good. Inspection findings support parents' very positive views of the school and show that many of the aspects parents like about the school are its strengths. They show that pupils behave extremely well in different situations and that the quality of teaching and learning is good across the whole school. The school is very well led and managed and sets high expectations of pupils, providing a very good range of extra-curricular activities.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. The results of the 2002 National tests for pupils aged eleven show that, when compared with schools with pupils from a similar background, standards are well above the average in English, above the average in science, but below the average in mathematics. When compared with schools nationally, standards in English and science were in line with the average, while standards in mathematics were well below average. Whilst over a third of pupils attained the higher level (Level 5) in English and science, this figure was well below average in mathematics. Inspection findings are that standards of attainment in English are above average in the current Year 6, with standards of attainment in science in line with the levels expected. They also show that significant improvement has taken place in pupils' attainment in mathematics with inspectors finding the attainment of the current Year 6 group of pupils to be above average. The results of the 2002 national tests for 7 year olds show that results were above average in comparison with national averages in writing and mathematics and just below the average in reading. When the school's results are compared with similar schools, they are well above average in writing and mathematics and above average in reading. Inspection evidence shows that standards are above average in all three areas – reading, writing and mathematics, as well as in science. Pupils make good progress from their below average levels of attainment on entry to the school by the age of 11 and achieve well.
2. Although children enter the nursery class with a wide range of attainment, most are below the national average. During their time in the nursery and reception classes they make very good progress overall and the majority meet the Early Learning Goals by the time they transfer to Year 1 at the age of five. The nursery class in particular is a strength of the school, guaranteeing every child the best possible start to the school.
3. Standards of attainment in English are above the national average in Year 2 and in Year 6. Most pupils make good progress as they move through the school. The majority of pupils who are seven and eleven exceed the expected level in their speaking and listening. They listen attentively to their teachers and to each other and sustain their concentration well. Their responses show that they have a clear understanding of what they have heard. By the time they are seven pupils have good reading skills. Higher attaining pupils read with expression and good intonation paying attention to punctuation. Throughout Years 3 to 6, pupils read with good understanding because teachers are careful to explore both the surface and hidden meanings with pupils of what they read. At the ages of seven and eleven, pupils' attainment in writing is above that expected nationally. In the Year 1 and 2 classes, teachers promote accurate writing by paying careful attention to the spelling of common words and letter blends, with the result that pupils' spelling is better than expected for their age. Pupils in these classes use capital letters, full stops and exclamation marks correctly. By the time they are in Year 6, most pupils have fluent joined up handwriting due to the early emphasis on neatness and presentation. Most pupils have developed well their story structure. Settings are described and characters created. There is some lively writing with a crisp style, particularly from higher attaining pupils.
4. Standards of attainment in mathematics are above the national average in Year 2 and in Year 6. Pupils achieve well in mathematics right across the school. Most pupils enter Year 1 having achieved their early learning goals in mathematical development. Pupils develop the use of accurate mathematical language effectively and work practically to solve problems. Year 2 pupils know their doubles to ten and identify 'near doubles' using their mathematical knowledge. The majority of pupils are confident in explaining the reasons for their answers. They think mathematically, handling number problems in a natural, confident manner. Year 6 pupils investigate recurring numbers and use fractions as operators. Most multiply and divide whole numbers by ten and a hundred. Many use decimal points in their calculations.
5. In science, pupils' attainment is slightly above the national average in Year 2 and in line with it in Year 6. By the end of Year 2, most pupils understand the principle of reversible change, with higher attaining pupils using more specific language to explain what they mean. Most understand the basic

characteristics of healthy eating and the effects of pushes and pulls on an object. They test their ideas against simple hypotheses and use tally charts to observe what is happening. They record their results on simple bar charts and higher attaining pupils draw conclusions about what they have learned. By the end of Year 6, most pupils apply the concept of a fair test, identifying one variable, in their work on magnets and springs and dimming light bulbs. They show an appropriate understanding of forces and gravity in their written work. Higher attaining pupils show a more precise understanding of concepts like upthrust and make better use of their scientific knowledge when drawing conclusions in their investigations.

6. In information and communication technology, in Year 2 and Year 6, pupils achieve well and their attainment matches the expected level. In Year 2, pupils develop skills of writing independently using the keyboard and using the paintbrush and colour tools with ease to draw their own pictures. They use different fonts in their writing. They also program a floor robot to follow a specific route, writing their own programs for the robot to follow. By the time they are in Year 6, most pupils have a sound knowledge and understanding of basic information and communication technology skills. Year 6 pupils know how to search the Internet for information in a topic linked to geography, download the information they need, import it into a Word document and also import and resize an image. They use a desk-top publishing package to produce advertisements and posters and design a living room using a graphics package. They know how to use spreadsheets, calculating totals using a simple formula.
7. By the time they reach Year 2 and Year 6, the standard of work for most pupils is at the level expected in design and technology and geography. In physical education pupils attain standards in line with expectations in Year 2 and above average standards in Year 6, whilst, in art and design, standards are below average in Year 2 and in Year 6, and in need of improvement. There was insufficient evidence seen during the inspection to form a clear judgement about pupils' progress and achievements in either history or music. Overall there has been a satisfactory rate of improvement since the previous inspection. Children in the Foundation Stage achieve well from low attainment on entry to the school, and this progress is consolidated in Years 1 and 2, and in Years 3 – 6. Inspection evidence confirms that in most subjects pupils achieve well and make good progress throughout the school. No significant differences were observed in the progress made by boys and girls. The school has made good progress in achieving the targets it sets itself, which are sufficiently challenging.
8. Pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are developed well in all phases of the school. In literacy, this is in developing and reinforcing reading and writing skills and in providing pupils with a greater number of opportunities to apply literacy skills through other subjects. In science and geography pupils developed their understanding of key terms and increased their use and application of subject-specific language. In numeracy, pupils' problem-solving skills and the mathematical inquisitiveness and enthusiasm required for investigation are well developed. In science, pupils use tally charts to record their observations and graphs and charts to record their results. In information and communication technology, pupils use mathematical knowledge to create shapes using Logo and floor robots, while they use a mathematical formula to calculate the answers to problems using a spread sheet.
9. The standards and achievements of pupils of different levels of attainment are good. The school has made good progress in identifying and making provision for pupils who are gifted and talented. Consequently, the proportion of pupils gaining the higher than expected levels of attainment in national tests has improved in English and science and, if current levels of progress are maintained, are likely to improve in mathematics as well. The good work of teaching assistants enables lower attaining pupils to take part as fully as possible, not only in class but by working with them on initiatives such as the Additional Literacy Strategy (Year 4) and the Further Literacy Strategy (Year 5). They make good progress in relation to their prior attainment. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to their prior attainment and some attain, or come close to, national standards by the time they take the national assessment tests in Year 6. They make good progress towards the targets on their Individual Learning Plans There are no significant differences between the attainments and achievements of these pupils and all other pupils in the school.
10. Standards of attainment and progress have shown good improvement since the previous inspection for pupils in different year groups. Significant factors affecting the improvement in standards of attainment have been the leadership and management of the headteacher and key staff, and the improvements that have taken place in the quality of teaching and learning, especially through the literacy and

numeracy strategies, and in information and communication technology and design and technology. The impact of monitoring and evaluation and the very good use of assessment information for target setting procedures have both developed fully since the previous inspection and have had a positive impact on classroom practice and the effectiveness of pupils' learning experiences. The school has also benefited from the professional development which has resulted from the introduction of performance management and the impact of training and development for staff in key aspects of their role as subject managers and improving their subject knowledge in aspects of the curriculum, for example, information and communication technology.

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

11. Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development have improved from good since the last inspection to be very good. These factors make a very good contribution to pupils' achievements.
12. Attitudes to the school are very good. Pupils show high levels of interest, enthusiasm and involvement in lessons and other school activities. For example, in a Year 1 mathematics lesson, pupils were very keen to answer the teacher's quick-fire questions about additions involving numbers up to 20. Similarly, in a Year 4 lesson on the relationship between different shapes, pupils wanted to show how much they knew and understood and they concentrated on the new work extremely well. During whole school assembly, Year 1 performed a short play about Jesus. All other pupils were spellbound as they watched the performance that reinforced their moral and religious values. Pupils enjoy activities outside of lessons. They are beginning to appreciate other people's attitudes and values. Most pupils are caring and thoughtful, developing a sense of empathy, concern and compassion. Children in the Foundation classes quickly develop very good attitudes to learning. They share toys and learning resources with very good consideration for each other, ask adults for help and listen very carefully to instructions. Their personal development is very good.
13. The school is a very orderly community. Pupils are happy, have very good manners and are polite. Behaviour is very good. Pupils behave very well in lessons, assemblies, break-times and as they move around the school. They are invariably polite, holding open doors for each other and saying, "thank you" Pupils say that bullying is not a problem, but if it occurs they are confident that they can tell staff and they will resolve it. Pupils often discuss school and classroom rules. They understand the school's moral code and accept sanctions given as a result of unacceptable behaviour. Religious and moral stories are very well used to illustrate positive personal qualities and how to behave. For example, in a whole school assembly there was discussion about 'The Good Samaritan' and pupils were asked to behave like the samaritan all week. These factors contribute to pupils' very good understanding of the impact of their actions on others. Exclusion for bad behaviour is extremely rare because good behaviour is promoted so well.
14. Relationships between adults and pupils, and also between pupils, are excellent. This represents very good improvement since the last inspection when relationships were good. Pupils collaborate exceptionally well in tasks with their peers. For example, in a Year 3 dance lesson, pupils worked particularly well as they developed movements for 'The Magician's Spell'. Pupils constructively criticized each other's movements in a most impressive manner. Pupils show very high levels of respect for the feelings, values and beliefs of others.
15. In the Foundation Stage, all activities encourage the children to care for each other. Relationships are excellent and they play and work happily, whether alone or with others. Staff are excellent role models and both the nursery and reception classes are places where all children feel valued and involved.
16. Pupils with special educational needs have very good attitudes to school as they are well integrated within the school community. The level of support and encouragement that they receive has a significant impact on their self-esteem, their confidence to ask for assistance when they are not sure what to do and on their achievements.
17. Personal development is very good. Pupils respond very well to responsibility. They carry out special tasks for their teachers and monitor duties conscientiously. They are open and friendly with adults and each other in lessons, in the playground and in the dinner hall. They work together co-operatively,

supporting and helping each other. At the end of a music lesson in Year 1, pupils identified the pupils' work they particularly liked and why. In a mathematics lesson in Year 2, pupils were highly supportive of each other's efforts, giving help and advice in a very positive way. Older pupils often help with children in the Foundation Stage classes during wet break times. Road safety officers (Year 5 and 6 pupils) have a high level of responsibility in giving talks in assemblies about issues. Pupils are given many opportunities to use their initiative and develop independence in learning. For example, the Peel Hall Moat project enabled many pupils to carry out research about this medieval bridge and this contributed to the success of the community open day at Peel Hall Park.

18. Pupils' cultural development is very good. The religious education curriculum covers non-Christian religions and pupils in Year 5 have a good knowledge of Hinduism and Judaism. Visitors to the school include musicians with a variety of different instruments. Good use is made of the local environment to enrich the pupils' appreciation of where they live.
19. Attendance is sound. This represents a slight improvement since the last inspection when attendance was just in line with national averages. Punctuality is satisfactory.

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

20. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good, which represents a significant improvement since the previous inspection. Almost all teaching observed was satisfactory or better. Teaching is good or better in eight out of ten lessons, and is very good or excellent in more than three out of ten lessons. The increased proportion of good or better teaching is consistent across all three phases of the school – Foundation Stage, Infant classes and Junior classes. There was very good and excellent teaching in all three phases.
21. The quality of teaching and learning for pupils with special educational needs is good and much improved since the previous inspection. Teaching is well focused on pupils' needs and the targets on individual learning plans are clear and realistic. Teachers make good use of these targets when planning lessons. The success in the teaching lies in the way teachers teach new work, carefully getting over the concept, reinforcing the idea through practice and then giving pupils the chance to apply their new learning in group work. Grouping by attainment for literacy works well for these pupils. The careful planning of lessons ensures that they are set appropriate challenges. They are supported well in their work by knowledgeable teaching assistants. The school benefits from the support and advice given by the Primary Learning Support Service, particularly in relation to the individual learning plans.
22. In the Foundation Stage classes, the overall standard of teaching is very good and both the class teachers and nursery nurses play a very effective part in the children's development. The variety of carefully planned activities and the very well planned questioning helps to ensure high quality learning. All lessons have a brisk pace, which keeps the children interested and involved. Ongoing planning and assessment are effective and the nursery nurses too are fully involved in this. Relationships are excellent, with the children keen to contribute to their learning. The way in which all staff ensure that each child feels valued is a strength in all lessons. Records of achievement are kept, annotated with comments by the teachers and nursery nurses which illustrate very effectively the progress made by each child. In the nursery class, each child builds up a personal profile from 'Me on my first day at school' through to the end of the book, when they transfer to the reception class.
23. For pupils in Years 1 and 2, the quality of teaching is good overall. In the lessons seen, teaching was good or better in over eight out of ten lessons and very good or excellent in four out of ten lessons. The good quality of teaching provides pupils with good opportunities to apply their intellectual and creative effort in their work and to achieve well. Teachers plan well and use clear lesson structures that include setting pupils high expectations of what is required of them. They sustain a brisk pace of teaching, which results in a sustained pace of learning for pupils. The teaching of basic skills and management of pupils are both very good. An example of excellent teaching was in a numeracy lesson in Year 2 when pupils were learning all the doubles to ten and identifying 'near doubles' using their mathematical knowledge. The teacher conducted the lesson at a very brisk pace, using questions very effectively to reinforce and extend thinking. Questions to pupils were matched to their levels of attainment so that higher attaining pupils were sufficiently challenged, and the teacher used terms such as 'mental

strategies' very effectively in encouraging pupils to think. The lesson had a real 'buzz', stemming partly from the very good relationships between teacher and pupils. This gave all pupils confidence to become involved in the lesson and contribute. They helped each other, were highly motivated and clear about what was expected of them. As a result, pupils enjoyed their lesson thoroughly and made very good progress in reinforcing and extending their knowledge of doubles.

24. In Years 3 to 6 the quality of teaching is good overall, with seven out of ten lessons good or better and one in four lessons very good or excellent. Teachers have good knowledge and understanding and teach basic skills well. They plan effectively and have high expectations of what their pupils should achieve. Their management of pupils and use of time and resources, including support staff, are both good. Teachers use a good range of methods to stimulate their pupils, including collaborative work in numeracy, group work in scientific investigations and peer/ self-assessment in physical education. Overall they make very good use of on-going assessment in the classroom and their comments to pupils are evaluative and helpful in identifying the need for improvement. An example of very good teaching occurred in a science lesson in Year 3 when pupils were investigating magnetic forces. The lesson was extremely well planned and organised. Lesson objectives were challenging and good use was made of subject specific language, such as North-South, attract-repel, magnetic-non-magnetic, to extend pupils' understanding. Very good use was made of on-going assessment to adjust the activities to take account of pupils' interest and progress when a number of them realised that some metals are non-magnetic. The teacher then extended pupils' thinking by asking them to work out why one coin was magnetic and one non-magnetic. Throughout the lesson there were high expectations of pupils and challenging work for all levels of attainment. The result was that pupils were highly stimulated and completely engaged in their work, sustaining a brisk pace of learning throughout and making very good gains in their understanding of magnetism.
25. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach, especially in English, mathematics, science and physical education. Subject knowledge in art is lacking by comparison and is in need of improvement and development. The school makes good use of the specialist expertise at its disposal for teaching physical education and also in using specialist subject expertise from outside to enrich pupils' learning experiences, for example, in music, Italian and information and communication technology. Teachers use and apply their subject knowledge well. They plan well and set high expectations. They challenge pupils to improve their standards and achievements, and each class has identified its 'gifted' pupils so that pupils of all levels of attainment are properly challenged to achieve of their best. They use a wide range of teaching strategies, make very good use of assessment and sustain a brisk pace of learning in lessons. Teachers' management of pupils is good and they foster excellent relationships with them. Pupils' learning experiences are also enhanced positively by the contribution in lessons of the classroom assistants. They are well motivated in lessons and show high levels of interest and concentration. They work at a good pace in all classes and sustain a good rate of learning. The impact of teaching on pupils' learning is that pupils achieve well in all areas of the school.
26. The successful introduction of the National Literacy Strategy has helped to improve the teaching of English through the use of a wider range of teaching strategies, which include whole-class work, paired, individual and group work, with the impact of these developments being evident right across the school. The teaching of basic numeracy skills is very good and teachers make good use of the National Numeracy Strategy. Lessons follow closely the recommended structure, with appropriate amounts of time allocated to the different sections of the lesson. These developments have had a significant impact on the quality of pupils' learning experiences and, consequently, on improving their standards of attainment and progress in numeracy.
27. The day-to-day assessment of pupils' work is very good in all parts of the school. Teachers review learning regularly and in writing and mathematics use the information gained to set pupils targets. Teachers make good use of plenary sessions to review pupils' learning against the set objectives. The quality of marking and feedback to pupils is good in most subjects.
28. Homework is used satisfactorily to support the work in classrooms. It is effective in promoting the development of reading and mathematics and is also used in some classes for following up class work. Most parents are happy with the amount of homework given and the findings of the inspection are that pupils are set appropriate amounts of homework.

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

29. The quality and range of the curriculum are good. All statutory requirements are met. The school has worked hard since the previous inspection to produce a well-balanced and relevant curriculum which meets the needs of all its pupils. Provision for personal, social and health education is mainly addressed through religious education lessons. The school's very positive and inclusive atmosphere reflects the good provision in this area. Sex education, which was not taught when the school was previously inspected, will begin later in the Spring term.
30. Appropriate and relevant schemes of work are in place for all subjects. The school has made good progress since the previous inspection to revise the curriculum to meet new national requirements and to ensure that it carefully builds on pupils' learning from year to year. Good use has been made of national guidelines to help develop planning. The effective development in policies and planning has successfully addressed the weaknesses in design and technology and information and communication technology identified in the previous report. The latter still needs to be fully developed in all curriculum areas and the school still needs to improve the quality of the curriculum and teachers' subject knowledge in art and design. There is a good focus on developing basic skills in literacy and numeracy, with the school having adopted the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies with considerable success. They have increased teachers' knowledge and understanding and have had a positive effect on raising standards. The introduction of guided reading has helped to raise standards in reading. All pupils have time for writing at some length each week. Opportunities are provided for pupils to develop their reading and writing skills across other subject areas and there are plans for this good practice, already strong in geography, to be extended into other subjects.
31. Children under the age of five enjoy a wide and rich curriculum, which meets national recommendations and is planned very well to ensure that all make very good progress in their early development. Children of different ages are given tasks appropriate to their needs and levels of attainment. This is based on careful on-going assessment. Children with special educational needs and the gifted and talented are also given appropriate tasks. There is a strong 'team' ethos within both classes and the children are confident and happy in their learning.
32. The good quality of teachers' curriculum planning helps to ensure the effective development of pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills. Planning makes allowance for the various needs of pupils including those identified as gifted and talented or having special educational needs. This too is an improvement since the previous inspection.
33. Curricular provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and greatly improved since the previous inspection when there were weaknesses in the appropriateness of tasks they were given. Now pupils' individual targets are well thought out and their progress is reviewed regularly. The needs of pupils with statements of special educational needs are met well and their annual reviews provide a good focus for further improvement. The Code of Practice for pupils with special educational needs is fully in place. The school benefits from the involvement of the Primary Learning Support Service. Individual Learning Plans set out clear targets showing how these will be achieved and evaluated.
34. The school also makes good provision for pupils identified as being gifted and talented. Gifted pupils are identified in each class and are challenged through extension work in their subjects. Part of the school's extra-curricular provision is aimed at gifted pupils, for example, the lunchtime maths club. The Education Action Zone is also involved in this provision and arranges a 'summer school' for gifted and talented pupils in conjunction with the local high school. Talented pupils are channelled into activities that will develop their talents further, for example, through working with an artist in residence or through specialist music teaching and competitive sports activities against other schools.
35. The curriculum is enriched for pupils age seven to eleven by the provision of weekly Italian lessons. The school has links with a school in Bologna and there have been exchange visits to families. In the Summer Term 2002, four pupils took part in an international opera project for gifted and talented pupils. Along with other pupils from the Wythenshawe area, they performed in Bologna and at the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester.

36. The school provides a very good range of activities outside lessons, including educational visits which enrich and support the pupils' learning experiences. Pupils gain valuable historical, geographical, musical and cultural experiences as a result. These include visits to historic houses such as Ordsall Hall where Year 4 pupils took part in a Tudor day. Year 6 pupils visit Styal in relation to their work on rivers and the Industrial Revolution. These pupils also have the experience of an outdoor pursuits residential visit in Shropshire. There is a comprehensive range of after school activities. These include recorder, science, maths, computer, cross country and football. The school also has very good links with neighbouring high schools. Pupils from year four upwards attend after school sessions in which they learn to play a range of instruments including the balalaika. Other musical experiences include a visit by Year 6 to a schools' concert at the Bridgewater Hall and attendance at a rehearsal of the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra at their Manchester base.
37. The school has established good links with the local community and its contribution to pupils' learning is good. The pupils have worked alongside Peel Hall Park committee and planted bulbs in the park. This is an area which is being regenerated and provides a focus for geography in Year 1. There are pupils who play in the Wythenshawe Youth Orchestra and pupils joined in with other schools for the local Christmas concert. The school has links with Business in the Community and this led to older pupils doing practical maths activities in a supermarket.

### **Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

38. Overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social and cultural education is very good. There is no overall policy or means of monitoring this provision, although this area has a high priority within the school and is largely responsible for the school's rich, supportive ethos and climate for learning.
39. Provision for spiritual education is very good. This area is considered central to the philosophy and practice of St Elizabeth's. Opportunities are provided in both assemblies and lessons for the pupils to develop spirituality. In assemblies the pupils are led to develop their feelings through the stories told and the opportunities provided for them to respond. In most lessons, relationships are very strong and pupils feel free to show their appreciation of others' efforts, sometimes breaking into spontaneous applause at something a fellow pupil has achieved. This happened, for example, in a literacy lesson in Year 3 and a Year 4 physical education lesson. In lessons teachers provide pupils with opportunities to reflect, either through prayer or in the plenary sessions towards the end of lessons.
40. Provision for pupils' moral education is very good. Staff are excellent role models, pupils are helped to understand the difference between right and wrong and most understand the consequences of this. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on choices and, for example, to consider how they might have behaved differently. In most classroom areas rules for behaviour are displayed: these are learned at an early age, are reinforced in each class and, as a result, the norm of good behaviour is accepted by most pupils. Those who misbehave are quickly and quietly corrected and the pupils respond very well to this approach.
41. Provision for pupils' social education is also very good. Pupils are given numerous opportunities to work and play together, in pairs and small groups. These are fully inclusive, with no problems caused by either race or gender and this is a strength of St Elizabeth's. Pupils in all classes are given responsibilities, such as acting as monitors, and the oldest pupils help the younger ones at play and dinner times. All adults working in the school value the pupils and relationships are excellent. Pupils collect for a wide variety of charities.
42. Provision for pupils' cultural education is very good. Pupils study their own culture and compare this with life in other areas, such as an imaginary village in Scotland and an actual one in India. They visit a wide range of museums and places of interest, including Manchester's Science Museum and Styal Mill. Pupils from different cultural backgrounds are valued for what they bring to the school and, at times, their parents are involved, as in a Year 2 lesson where a Zimbabwean parent brought in some traditional food for the pupils to try – which they did very enthusiastically. Pupils are introduced to a variety of other religions in religious education. The Chinese New Year was celebrated in the nursery and reception classes and the imaginative play area in the nursery is now a Chinese Restaurant.



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

43. This is a caring school, with a warm family atmosphere and excellent relationships at all levels. The educational and personal support and advice given to pupils is good. As a result, pupils are confident in their learning and feel very well supported by the school.
44. Arrangements for inducting the youngest children into the school are good. They are gradually and sensitively introduced to school routines and consequently they settle in quickly. At the other end of the school, Year 5 and 6 pupils are appropriately introduced to high school life through good links with St Paul's RC High School.
45. As at the last inspection, arrangements for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare are good. The designated officer for child protection is appropriately trained and deals with any issues effectively. There are good arrangements to inform staff about the school's policy and procedures. General risk assessments are carried out regularly, including school trips. Accident and emergency procedures are effective in dealing with problems, including arrangements for giving first aid. Fire drills are carried out each school term. The school works very closely and effectively with many external agencies in raising awareness of health and safety matters. For example, visitors include the police, fire service and school nurse. They regularly give talks to pupils on issues such as 'Stranger Danger' fireworks and road safety. Drugs education is well supported by Manchester City FC whose staff give talks and advice to pupils on a regular basis. Year 5 pupils take part in the 'Crucial Crew' project each year and this provides good opportunities to learn about basic safety issues. Year 6 pupils are offered safe cycling training each year.
46. The care and support for pupils with special educational needs is good. Teachers and teaching assistants know the pupils they work with well. The school's values are well reflected in the way that pupils with special educational needs are given opportunities to take part in all school activities. Their contributions are valued highly and their achievements recognised. Teachers keep good records of pupils' progress as they move through the school. There is good liaison with outside agencies, which provide valuable support.
47. The staff know pupils and families well and there are good procedures to monitor and support personal development. Pupils' records include information about attendance, behaviour, relationships and individual issues. This information is used well to give advice and support to pupils and families where necessary.
48. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are very good. This represents good improvement since the last inspection. Any problems relating to behaviour below the standard expected are closely monitored to ensure that improvement takes place. The school actively promotes good behaviour through its policy, circle time and assembly themes. Very good use is made of rewards such as stickers, certificates and treats each week at assembly including a 'gold award'.
49. Procedures to monitor and improve attendance are very good. The school has maintained this area of its work since the last inspection. A computer-based system of recording attendance is very well used to identify any issues. The headteacher monitors attendance very closely. The school does all it can to discourage holidays during term times. It makes telephone calls to parents on the first day regarding any unexplained absence. It also gives rewards for the best attending class each week and certificates each term for pupils achieving one hundred per cent attendance.
50. There are good procedures in place for assessing and recording the progress of pupils and very good use of the information gained from assessment to plan for pupils' future learning and set targets for improvement. There are clear teacher assessment procedures in English, mathematics and science as well as in most of the non-core subjects. There is regular assessment of pupils' progress in writing, reading, numeracy and investigations in science, all against agreed learning outcomes. Throughout the school, there is also an end of year assessment through baseline assessment in the Foundation Stage, National Curriculum tests in Year 2 and Year 6 and optional SAT tests in Year 3, 4 and 5. In other subjects, pupils are given levels of attainment based on their work in class. These levels are based on agreed standards through portfolios of work in most of the non-core subjects. There are

portfolios in information and communication technology, design and technology, history and geography. They have yet to be developed in art and music.

51. The assessment procedures are used extremely well to inform pupils' future learning in the short, medium and long-term. Test papers and optional test papers are analysed by the head teacher and senior management team to identify areas for whole school development in teaching and learning. The headteacher monitors pupils' progress in writing and tracks pupils' performance in subjects throughout the whole school. The school is beginning to use pupils' average points score to predict their performance at the end of Year 6 and this is helping in the identification of target groups of pupils in initiatives like the Further Literacy Strategy and Springboard Maths Project. Each pupil has an individual target in writing and in mathematics, which forms the basis of assessment for short-term improvement and development. Their progress is evaluated against the weekly plan and higher/ lower achievement recorded. In the Foundation Stage, ongoing assessment is used very effectively and is based on the small steps towards the Early Learning Goals. All adults who work with the nursery and reception children are fully involved in this process. Throughout the school, the process of analysing and forecasting pupils' performance together with setting targets for improvement and achievement is having a positive impact on pupils' learning experiences and their standards of achievement and progress.

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

52. The school's partnership with parents has improved well from the good partnership found at the last inspection and is now very good. Links with parents are now very effective and their involvement has a very good impact on the work of the school. The contribution of parents to children's learning, at school and at home, is also now very good.
53. Parents have an excellent opinion of the school. This is because it has established outstanding relationships between parents and staff and created a truly welcoming ethos. These features are especially evident at the start of the day as parents drop their children at school and also at parent assemblies.
54. Replies to the inspection questionnaire and responses given at the parents' meeting show that parents have great confidence in the school, its headteacher and staff. All parents replying to the questionnaire are pleased with leadership and management, teaching, the school's expectations for their children to work hard and achieve their best, behaviour and how the school helps their children become mature and responsible. They are equally pleased at how their children like school, information about their children's progress and how closely the school works with them as parents. The vast majority feel comfortable about approaching the school with any problems. They are also pleased about the provision of activities outside lessons and arrangements for homework. The parents' meeting was equally supportive of the school.
55. As at the last inspection, the quality of information to parents, especially about pupils' progress is good. Pupils' annual reports generally provide much detail about what pupils, know, can do and understand. Strong aspects of reports include target setting for future learning. The school prospectus and governors' annual reports are well presented and contain much detail about the school's policies and procedures. The school provides very useful curriculum information for each year group. Several leaflets and booklets give very good advice to parents about how to help with their children's learning at home. Informative newsletters are sent home frequently concerning both religious and educational matters. A good feature of the school is the provision of parents' workshops that serve to inform them about the teaching in school and also how they can get further involved in their children's learning.
56. In the Foundation Stage, parents are encouraged to bring their children into the classrooms at the beginning of the day and to stay to share an activity with them. This is very effective in helping all children to settle easily and in valuing the importance of what parents have to offer. Parents also help with specific tasks within these classes, once again making a very important contribution to their children's learning.
57. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are informed as soon as the school has concerns and they are consulted in all procedures. They are kept aware of the targets for their child and attend

the reviews.

58. The school has a strong home/school agreement. It clearly sets out the responsibilities of pupils, parents and the school. The 'Parents and Friends Association' is very supportive of the school. The group is highly successful in organizing social and fundraising events. Their financial support has enabled the school to provide better facilities and learning resources such as books and computer equipment. Many parents help with school activities on a regular basis. A simple but very effective 'parent helpers' timetable invites parental support each week. These parents give their time very generously in supporting pupils in classrooms, listening to readers and with activities outside of lessons.

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

59. The school is very well led and managed. The headteacher has a very clear vision for the school, based on maximising the achievement of every pupil and developing the whole child. Her aim is to create an inclusive environment where every pupil is valued for the contribution they make to school life, whether it is academic, sporting or musical achievement. She has developed a collegiate style of management focused on developing the school as a self-evaluating institution and the staff as reflective practitioners, with herself as a role model and example to others. At the meeting for parents, her coaching of the school cross-country team at weekends was cited by parents as an example of her dedication and commitment. With the support of a hardworking and efficient senior management team and a supportive, effective governing body, she has created an environment in which the school community share a common purpose. Standards of attainment are rising and the attitudes and behaviour of the pupils are very good.
60. The school's aims reflect its faith background and direct its work and the nature of the relationships. The headteacher successfully ensures that action takes place to implement the school's aims and that it fully lives up to its mission statement. Her focused leadership has been a main factor in the improvements made since the last inspection. She delegates well, particularly to other senior staff, but retains an overview of the success, or otherwise, of school initiatives. She monitors teaching and the quality of pupils' learning and knows what is going on in the classroom and the playground. Planning is regularly monitored and the results of national and school based tests rigorously examined. She knows the school well and from the valuable information gained from her monitoring directs further improvement.
61. The headteacher ensures that there is a high level of consistent practice within the school. Staff, governors, parents and pupils all feel part of a common purpose and are drawn into making the school successful. Pupils, for example, accept willingly the opportunities they are given to take responsibility. The headteacher draws on sources of support from within the wider community which benefit the school, for example, the Wythenshawe Education Action Zone which has provided the school with in-class expertise in the development of literacy and numeracy. The headteacher also places an appropriate emphasis on training and development for staff, including governors, and uses outside consultants very effectively in a number of aspects of development – information and communication technology, subject leadership. Much of the headteacher's efforts are aimed at enabling staff to become increasingly effective in the classroom. Performance management processes are fully in place and support the development of the school through the development of the teachers.
62. The school improvement plan is a detailed document and provides a clear focus for the forthcoming work of the school. It takes a three-year view of school development, with key priorities identified, analysed and reviewed each year. The main aim of the school improvement plan is to raise standards and it is underpinned by a detailed knowledge of how well the school is doing in key areas based on analysis of data, including the PANDA document and National Curriculum test results. The plan is carefully costed with agreed success criteria in each priority area. These form the basis of evaluating the plan and reflecting on its progress. The plan is drawn up by the headteacher and senior management team and is subject to consultation by remaining staff and the governing body. The work of co-ordinators is directed by yearly action plans. The school therefore moves forward not just by

addressing whole-school issues but also through the work of each member of staff in many different areas.

63. The senior management team, which is made up of the deputy headteacher and other experienced staff, including the co-ordinators for literacy, numeracy and science, contribute effectively to school development. They spend a day together each term to undertake the strategic planning for the school and evaluate progress in key areas of priority. Part of the management team's monitoring of the school is to analyse the PANDA document, as well as National Curriculum test results, in order to identify strengths and areas for development and inclusion on the school improvement plan. Members of the management team monitor teaching and learning within their subject area and also as team leader within the performance management cycle. They are, therefore, well placed to bring this detailed knowledge to bear when writing the school improvement plan.
64. Subject co-ordinators fulfil their duties well. The approach taken to monitoring and evaluation, and the opportunities for release afforded by the curriculum support teacher, means that all subject coordinators have the opportunity to monitor provision in their subject areas, identify strengths/ areas for development, and work to address any issues identified. Their monitoring may include observation of lessons, but it also includes working alongside colleagues, sampling pupils' work, reviewing and developing schemes of work and developing portfolios of work as samples of evidence and the standards achieved. In addition, all subject coordinators receive the planning for their subject areas from each class. They produce a yearly action plan which successfully directs their work for the next academic year. Although much of the work of the school focuses on developing the key skills of literacy and numeracy, the effective work of many co-ordinators ensures that other subjects also develop, for example, physical education, information and communication technology.
65. The governing body is an effective partner and is involved in the life of the school. The governors fulfil all their duties well and all statutory duties are met. They support well the school's mission and the headteachers' vision, encouraging pupils' wider achievement as well as their academic attainment. They have an accurate picture of strengths and areas for development, as well as where they themselves need to improve in their role in becoming more informed and involved. Their picture of the school is built up, partially through reports received through the various committees, but also by direct involvement in its daily life. They have increasingly become involved and informed about what goes on in school, largely through liaising with subject coordinators. The governor with responsibility for special educational needs, for example, regularly visits the school and works with pupils, listening to them read. Governors play a full part in finalising the development plan and monitoring its progress. The chair and vice-chair of governors have a clear view of what the school should do in the future. They recognise its many strengths, particularly the role played by the headteacher, as well as areas in need of continual development.
66. The school has a good range of aims and policies, which are consistently and very effectively implemented. These provide guidance on all aspects of its life and are well known to all who work there, as well as parents and pupils. The parents' were fulsome in their praise for the school's work. It continues to improve over time and is well placed to improve further.
67. The management of provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. The co-ordinator carries out her responsibilities effectively and efficiently. She has helped to address the issues from the previous report very well. She has ensured training and guidance for teachers which have led to significant improvements in the assessment of pupils, the formation of their individual learning plans and the check on their progress. The school fully meets the requirements of the code of practice for special educational needs. Good teaching assistants have a significant role to play in pupils' progress. There is a good range of resources to support the learning of these pupils.
68. The Foundation Stage co-ordinator provides strong leadership and is very ably supported by a strong team of teachers and nursery nurses. These good relationships significantly enhance the good progress made by the children. Although the reception teacher has overall responsibility for planning for this age group, all the adults involved work closely together. This is very effective in ensuring that all the areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage are covered imaginatively and thoroughly.

69. The school uses its resources efficiently. It plans and manages the budget well to meet its educational objectives. The quality of the financial planning linked to the improvement plan is good. The plan is carefully costed and is monitored and reviewed regularly to ensure that spending is achieving good value and is cost effective. The school has, through its effective finance committee, reviewed cost effectiveness and made savings wherever possible. Budget expenditure is monitored each term and reconciled each month. Best value principles are applied constantly.
70. The school has been carrying a large surplus in its budget, which is the result of increased funding and strict controls in place at the time of the previous inspection to turn around a large budget deficit. In the last financial year, a significant amount of this surplus has been put to good use for educational improvement, notably to employ an additional teacher as a curriculum support teacher, thus enabling every subject coordinator to have regular release time in their role as subject manager. It has also allowed repairs to the building and projects such as the developments in the playgrounds. Effective use has also been made of the grants the school has had for specific use. For example, the school has benefited from its involvement with the Wythenshawe Education Action Zone in the form of equipment for information and communication technology and classroom input from Quality Development teachers in literacy and numeracy. Very good use is made of new technology in the financial management of the school.
71. The school secretary efficiently administers the day-to-day spending and provides valuable expertise to ensure the smooth running of the school. She liaises closely with the headteacher and educational welfare officer in relation to pupils' attendance and regularly inputs data for monitoring. She reconciles monthly bank statements with cost centre summaries and ensures that all records are kept up to date.
72. Staffing has improved since the last inspection. For example, there is now a better ratio of teachers to pupils. The match of teachers and support staff to the demands of the curriculum is good. There are enough qualified teachers and teaching assistants to meet the needs of all the pupils on roll, including those with Special Educational Needs. There are good arrangements to induct new staff, including newly qualified teachers. This includes mentoring arrangements. The school is aware that its staff handbook is now a little outdated and is about to review this.
73. As at the last inspection, accommodation is satisfactory. All classrooms allow pupils enough space for their work in each subject. Other rooms and areas are well used for group work including those with special educational needs. The large grass playing field supports pupils' physical development well, allowing them to engage in many sports. Play facilities for children in the Foundation Stage have improved since the last inspection as they now have separate play arrangements from the older pupils. Although there is no separate library, this does not hinder learning in any way. Displays of pupils' work are effective in stimulating enquiry and supporting learning. For example, there are good displays of work in information and communication technology where pupils can see different lettering and graphics used. The whole accommodation is used well and kept clean and tidy.
74. Learning resources are good overall. This represents good improvement since the last inspection as the school has fully addressed the shortfalls. It now has a good range of books for English and good resources for mathematics, information and communication technology, music and art and design. Other resources are satisfactory and are used well to support learning.
75. The overall effectiveness of the school is good. All pupils achieve well and make good progress, attaining standards above the average expected nationally by the end of Year 6. Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development are very good and the school's ethos has a positive impact on pupils' learning. Taking into account the low attainment of pupils on entry, the below average income per pupil, the good quality of teaching and learning and the very good levels of leadership and management, the school provides good value for money.

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

76. In order to continue to improve the performance of the school and raise standards of attainment further, the governors, headteacher and staff of the school should:
  - I. raise standards of attainment and improve pupils' progress in art further by:

- professional development to improve the quality of the curriculum;
- developing teachers' subject knowledge in all areas of the subject;

*(paragraphs 126 - 128)*

II. further developing information and communication technology across all subjects by:

- developing pupils' information and communication technology skills in subject areas;
- matching the units in the current scheme of work with topics in subject areas;
- developing software to enable the ICT curriculum to be embedded into subject areas;

*(paragraphs 108, 114, 123, 146 & 147)*

## **OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL**

The inspection team did not identify any minor areas of improvement for the school to address.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	49
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	31

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
Number	3	14	22	9	1	0	0
Percentage	6	29	45	18	2	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

#### Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR - Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	28	190
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/a	48

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR - Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	1	24

#### 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	6
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	8

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.7
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
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	12	28
National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics	
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	14	14	
	Girls	11	12	9	
	Total	25	26	23	
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	89 (94)	93 (97)	82 (94)	
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)	
Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science	
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	14	15	
	Girls	12	11	12	
	Total	26	25	27	
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (94)	89 (90)	96 (97)	
	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	17	11	28
National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science	
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	14	12	16	
	Girls	9	7	10	
	Total	23	19	26	
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	82 (82)	68 (64)	93 (91)	
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)	
Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science	
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	14	12	14	
	Girls	8	8	9	
	Total	22	20	23	
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	79 (85)	71 (76)	82 (94)	
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)	

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



### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

### ***Exclusions in the last school year***

<b>Categories used in the Annual School Census</b>	<b>No of pupils on roll</b>	<b>Number of fixed period exclusions</b>	<b>Number of permanent exclusions</b>
White – British	181	1	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	3	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	3	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	1	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	2	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)	10
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21
Average class size	27

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

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	114

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	30
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	19
Number of pupils per FTE adult	15

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	2002/2003
	£
Total income	509,483
Total expenditure	544,749
Expenditure per pupil	2,410.00
Balance brought forward from previous year	108,000
Balance carried forward to next year	72,734

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

**Recruitment of teachers**

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

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

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

**Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	240
Number of questionnaires returned	39

**Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	77	23	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	72	26	0	3	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	79	18	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	54	28	5	0	3
The teaching is good.	74	26	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	62	38	0	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	87	10	3	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	90	10	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	67	33	0	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	87	13	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	79	21	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	49	38	3	3	3

## **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**

77. The previous inspection stated that sound progress was made by children in the Foundation Stage and that much of the teaching was satisfactory. There was criticism of the use made of structured play activities in the reception class and the lack of a suitable outdoor play area. Very considerable improvements have been made in both of these areas. The children make very good progress as a result of high quality teaching. Play activities greatly enhance learning and there is now a well-planned outdoor play area, which is used very effectively to enhance the children's physical development.
78. Children enter the nursery class with a wide range of attainment. However, levels of attainment are generally below average in all areas except physical development. During their time in the nursery and reception classes they make very good progress overall and most meet all the Early Learning Goals by the time they are ready to transfer to Year 1. The quality of learning and the enjoyment experienced in both the nursery and reception classes give each child a very good start to school life and the nursery, in particular, is a strength of the school. Enjoyment is a priority and all observations in both the nursery and reception classes confirmed the value of this. Details of topics to be covered are displayed and parents refer to these to see what is planned.
79. The overall standard of teaching is very good by both teachers and nursery nurses. The variety of carefully planned activities and the well planned questioning helps to ensure learning and all areas of learning are covered well. All lessons have a brisk pace, which keeps the children interested and involved. Ongoing planning and assessment are effective and the nursery nurses too are fully involved in this. Relationships are excellent, with the children keen to contribute to their learning. The way in which all staff ensure that each child feels valued is a strength in all lessons. Records of achievement are kept, annotated with comments by the teachers and nursery nurses which illustrate very effectively the progress made by each child. In the nursery class, each child builds up a personal profile from 'Me on my first day at school' through to the end of the book, when they transfer to the reception class.
80. Children with special educational needs are identified early and also make very good progress in all areas of learning.

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

81. Many children enter the nursery class with poorly developed personal, social and emotional development. Many lack independence. Very good teaching by all adults ensures that the children develop these necessary skills. By the time they reach Year 1, most children work and play happily together, co-operating, taking turns and sharing as appropriate. They attain in line with the early learning goals. Most children are very friendly, relating well to adults and each other. Resources are used very effectively to promote personal and social skills, and many children are becoming independent and responsible through the tasks provided. Children are given ample opportunities to choose their own activities and resources. Behaviour is invariably very good. The scheme used in religious education is effective in encouraging self-respect, an awareness of rules and supportive relationships. Specific lessons encourage speaking and listening skills and encourage the children to think about caring for each other. Children generally play and work happily, whether alone or with others.
82. Parents are encouraged to bring their children into the classrooms at the beginning of the day, and, when possible, stay to share an activity with them. There is lots of talking and laughter, which is very effective in helping the children to settle easily and in valuing the importance of what parents have to offer. Parents make a very valuable contribution by helping in the classrooms at other times of the day, working in the nursery's Chinese Restaurant, for example.

### **Communications, language and literacy**

83. Speaking skills on entry to the nursery class are generally well below the average for children of this age, and although their listening skills are rather better, they are still below average. Children make very good progress through very good teaching, as they begin to work and play with others, talking about what they are doing. Children enjoy listening to stories and respond enthusiastically to them. On one occasion, children in the reception class who had watched their friends perform a puppet show in the 'theatre' gave excellent critical reviews of what they had seen. Similar high expectations from all staff ensure that children respond well and most show understanding through their questions and comments. Discussion is always encouraged and many children gain confidence and are willing to 'have a go' with tasks which are well planned for their attainment. By the time children are ready to enter Year 1, very good progress has been made and their speaking and listening skills are generally in line with the national average.
84. When they start school, many children have little knowledge of books. Here they improve their knowledge well and most recognise how books 'work', knowing that print carries meaning. Some want to tell the stories themselves, often referring to the pictures. Many children do not have books at home and their knowledge of stories relies very largely on what they learn in school. Books are taken home regularly, as well as small tasks connected to the topic in progress. There are many displays which reinforce language. One above the nursery water tray, for example, includes "drip", "ripple" and "sink".
85. Letter recognition and sounds are taught effectively and are reinforced at every opportunity. Throughout the Foundation Stage, children are given numerous tasks which develop writing, such as sequencing words to make a sentence. By the time children leave the reception class most recognise simple words and, although many are still unable to read stories with accuracy, many do learn to write simple sentences. They make up stories, such as an alternative to 'The Enormous Watermelon'.
86. Elements of the literacy framework are used well and phonics and letter formation are taught very effectively. Both teachers and nursery nurses have high expectations and by the time children leave the reception class, most have reached the expectations of the Early Learning Goals for communications, language and literacy.

### **Mathematical development**

87. Children have little knowledge of numbers when they begin school, with some unable to recognise any. By the time they reach the age of five, most have attained the Early Learning Goals for mathematical development. Well-planned activities ensure a very good quality of learning. Children count upwards and backwards, beginning to develop greater confidence and understanding of numbers. Number rhymes and songs are used effectively to improve understanding, singing number songs such as '*One-two-three-four-five*'. Most children recognise the relationship between a numeral and the number of objects referred to. They are given a range of problems to solve and begin to sort and classify. They develop an understanding of size and position, using words such as 'smaller'/'larger', 'more'/'less' and 'tall'/'taller'. Children play dice and other number games, investigate the capacity of different containers and measure, for example, cupfuls of oats. They make models and print using 3-dimensional shapes. Displays reinforce an understanding of numbers. For example, "over", "under" and "across" with 'The Three Billy Goats Gruff'. Use of a programmable toy reinforces the concepts of direction and distance.
88. As in other activities, the very high quality of teaching by all adults and the well-focused activities ensures that each child makes very good progress. Very good day-to-day assessment is used to help plan suitable activities for the following sessions. A numeracy 'open day' has been held to show parents what is covered and others are planned.

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

89. Most children enter the nursery class with little general knowledge. A number of activities foster learning in this area. Displays in both classrooms reinforce different aspects of learning. A display on toys in the reception class reinforces the difference between 'new', 'old' and 'very old' and one above the nursery 'Milk Bar' of skeletons shows how milk provides calcium to help strengthen bones.

90. Children select resources on their own and use them with care. The overall quality of teaching is very good and results in sufficient progress for most children to attain in line with the requirements of the early learning goals by the time they are ready to leave the reception class. The range of carefully planned and stimulating activities means that the children are introduced to a wide variety of experiences which widen their understanding. Children's visits include the local parks (where they have seen different animals), Manchester Airport (using public transport), the Museum of Science and Industry and to new flats being built near the school. They become aware of the need for healthy bodies and of changes through physical education lessons, baking and in growing plants. They have made circuits as part of a topic on light and dark. A display in the classroom shows paintings of silhouettes done as part of this topic. Children use the computers to develop a wide range of skills such as using the mouse, saving their work and how to log onto the Internet. Their standards of attainment in computer skills are well above average. Children in the reception class have mapped their play area and have studied a topic on how toys move. During the inspection, visitors from Lyme Park brought a number of old toys, which encouraged observation and discussion.

### **Physical development**

91. Children in the nursery area soon develop an awareness of the needs of others and the space around them. The outside area is used regularly and children climb and balance with confidence. They play on bikes and other toys, running, jumping and learning to consider others. Their physical development is good through good teaching. There is now a secure outdoor play area, which has been developed since the previous inspection, and there are wheeled vehicles available.
92. Materials are readily available for children to cut and paste and these activities develop their skills and confidence as they explain what they are doing. For example children in the reception class made windmills as part of their topic on 'forces'. They make books and handle tools, such as staplers, with confidence.
93. All the children in the nursery and reception classes enjoy the more formal physical education sessions which involve dance and movement. Most children attain the early learning goals in physical development. Praise effectively reinforces learning and boosts the children's confidence.

### **Creative development**

94. Many children have experienced little to develop their creative skills or imagination prior to starting school. Throughout their time in both the nursery and reception classes, they make significant progress through the rich variety of experiences provided and very good teaching overall, which enable them to take part in a wide range of creative activities. The imaginative play areas have included a bears' cave, an aeroplane, a café, florist's and post office. They paint recognisable pictures with developing skill. Musical instruments are provided and children use these with increasing confidence. An excellent music lesson in the nursery showed the children's self-assurance, enthusiasm and concentration in working with instruments and singing along with the teacher and nursery nurse. During this lesson, the children listened to Chinese music which, they said, reminded them of water. The Early Learning Goals covering media, music and imagination are met for the vast majority of the children. All adults ensure that the lessons have pace and enthusiasm, ensuring that the children enjoy their high quality learning.

### **ENGLISH**

95. In the national tests for eleven year olds in 2002, pupils in Year 6 attained standards in line with the national average, whilst in the national tests for seven year olds, the performance of Year 2 pupils was above the national average in writing, but fell slightly below in reading. When compared with similar schools, their performance in writing was well above average and above average in reading. Inspection evidence confirms that standards in English are good at seven and eleven. There has been a steady improvement in standards since the last inspection. This improvement in standards is a direct result of the good quality of teaching and the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy which is providing very effective continuity and enabling pupils to make good progress in their learning. More specifically in reading, standards have improved for the current cohort of pupils in Year 2 compared

with those pupils in 2002. This is mainly because of a strong focus on reading in classes and the development of comprehension skills, leading to subsequent improvement in pupils' performance.

96. The majority of pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 exceed the expected level in their speaking and listening. Teachers give pupils opportunities to develop these skills in many areas of the curriculum. They listen attentively to their teachers and to each other and sustain their concentration well. Their responses show that they have a clear understanding of what they have heard. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils had the opportunity to take the 'hot seat' and respond in character to the questions posed by others in the class. The teacher encouraged high standards of speaking in terms of clarity, length of delivery and volume. Pupils responded well and with growing confidence. In a Year 6 lesson, pupils had a lively debate on whether the children at St Elizabeth's should or should not wear a school uniform. They confidently shared their views and those whose opinion they had sought previously as part of a homework activity. Some pupils used more formal language such as 'distinguished' and 'presentable'. Probing questions by the teacher encouraged pupils to critically evaluate points being made for both sides of the argument. Good in-class support from teaching assistants gives pupils with special educational needs the confidence to make oral contributions in lessons.
97. By the time they are seven pupils have good reading skills. Higher attaining pupils read with expression and good intonation paying attention to punctuation. Other pupils read well but at a slower pace and self correct, use context and picture clues to aid fluency. Only the higher attaining pupils are secure in using contents and index pages. Teachers and support assistants provide effective teaching in small groups during literacy lessons to consolidate work on sounds and punctuation. In a shared reading session in Year 1, pupils read with confidence and suitable expression the tale of the Three Billy Goats Gruff. All pupils take home their books and parents share their comments in the reading record book.
98. Throughout Years 3 to 6, pupils read with good understanding and make good progress because teachers are careful to explore with pupils both the surface and hidden meanings of what they read. Most pupils enjoy reading for pleasure and have favourite authors such as Roald Dahl, Dick King-Smith and Jacqueline Wilson. The majority of pupils are confident to use an index, contents page and a glossary. The school's library books are appropriately classified but are shelved along a corridor which makes it difficult to teach information finding skills to a whole class. The co-ordinator has ensured that pupils have access to a good range of attractive fiction and non-fiction in each classroom.
99. At the ages of seven and eleven, pupils' attainment in writing is above that expected nationally. In the Year 1 and 2 classes, teachers promote accurate writing by paying careful attention to the spelling of common words and letter blends, with the result that pupils' spelling is better than expected for their age. Pupils in these classes use capital letters, full stops and exclamation marks correctly. Pupils gain in confidence and skills because teachers challenge them to write in a variety of ways. They achieve this by exposing their classes to a variety of forms of writing and expecting pupils to use the correct terminology to describe what they are doing. In a Year 1 class, pupils spoke easily of ellipsis, suspension, bold font, offering these words without prompting when they saw such examples in the text they were looking at as a model to improve their own story writing.
100. Pupils begin to join up their writing in Year 1. By the time they are in Year 6, most of them have fluent, joined up handwriting due to the early emphasis on neatness and presentation.
101. As pupils move through the school, they become increasingly aware of their own learning and the progress they are making. This is because teachers in all classes regularly set clear targets for improvement which are attached to the front of pupils' books. Pupils respond very well to this strategy and develop good attitudes to their work. Teachers cover the features of the National Literacy Strategy well and pupils incorporate similes, metaphors and personification into their writing. A lower attaining pupil in Year 5 wrote 'body tensed like a coiled spring'. Texts are studied to help pupils understand how authors create their stories. After analysing an extract from 'The Iron Woman' by Ted Hughes, Year 4 pupils learned how to use expressive and descriptive language to create moods, build tension and describe emotions. Their success in such writing was celebrated by displaying it in a bound booklet in the classroom. By Year 6, pupils have developed well their story structure, describing settings and creating characters. There is some lively writing with a crisp style, particularly from higher attaining pupils. Pupils extend their literacy skills into other subject areas; for example, following their

geography field trip to Peak Cavern and also to Styal Park, pupils wrote at length reports on these activities.

102. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and high expectations, which promotes demanding work. Lessons are well-planned and well-organised, with teachers following the structure of the National Literacy Strategy. In their planning, teachers are particularly careful to provide work that is suited to the needs of all pupils. Those who are lower attaining and those with special educational needs are very well-supported by teaching assistants. The high quality of this support is a major strength of the teaching, enabling pupils of all levels of attainment to achieve well. There is a strong commitment by teachers and teaching assistants to raising standards. To this end, the targets they have for individual pupils are shared with them and progress towards them is carefully monitored. Teachers' daily marking is of a high quality. It informs pupils clearly about what they have done well and what could be improved and is a simple but very effective strategy. The evidence of pupils' response is seen in the good quality of their work. Relationships between adults and pupils are good and this promotes an atmosphere in which pupils feel confident to offer answers.
103. The school's planned programme of work is the National Literacy Strategy. The various aspects of work are comprehensively covered. Literacy skills are developed, not only in English but in some other subjects, particularly in geography and science. The acquisition of reading and writing skills has a high priority in the school and enables pupils to achieve good standards. The use of information and communication technology to support learning in English is not yet fully developed. For example, pupils had few opportunities to use information and communication technology to draft, redraft and present their work.
104. The teacher with responsibility for English provides good support and advice to her colleagues. Through studying teachers' planning, observing lessons and looking at pupils' work, she is aware of the work that is being covered throughout the school. Since the last inspection a new reading scheme has been introduced. Several other national initiatives to support the literacy work have been adopted and these are being delivered effectively by teaching assistants to help the targeted pupils.

## **MATHEMATICS**

105. Pupils enter Year 1 with standards in mathematics which are generally average for five year olds. By the time they are seven, and when they leave the school at eleven, these standards are above the levels expected for this age, with a good percentage of pupils attaining highly. This is an improvement since the time of the last inspection when pupils made satisfactory progress and when much of the teaching was sound. The overall quality of teaching is now very good.
106. The 2002 tests for eleven year olds showed that standards fell below the national average and also averages for similar schools, with unsatisfactory progress made, especially for those capable of achieving higher grades. Results of the 2002 national tests for seven year olds showed that on average points scores the pupils achieved above the national average and well above the average for pupils from similar schools. Considerable improvement has been made during the past year to raise these standards, particularly for pupils in Year 6. A very good quality of teaching supported by focused curriculum development have resulted in a rapid improvement in the standards attained by most pupils.
107. These standards are a direct result of generally very good teaching and of pupils who enjoy their lessons and are keen to learn. This is very noticeable in the effective use of the National Numeracy Strategy, which gives pupils a carefully structured session of mental and written mathematics each day. All lessons begin with a short mental arithmetic session and end with a structured summing-up session. This enables pupils to understand what they have learned and gives teachers a good knowledge of what the pupils understand. They use this knowledge very effectively to reinforce their teaching and improve pupils' standards. During mathematics lessons, pupils are grouped in each class according to their level of attainment, which ensures that those pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards their mathematical targets. Work is matched effectively to the pupils' identified attainment and extends the learning of all, including higher-attaining pupils. The booster mathematics groups are very effective in developing mathematical understanding. In a number of lessons, pupils demonstrated the ability to think mathematically, handling number problems in a



natural, confident manner. This happened particularly in two lessons observed – one an excellent lesson in Year 2, where the pupils were almost desperate to show their methods. This same enthusiasm was seen in other classes, in particular Years 3 and 6. The great strength in mathematics is this confidence which builds very successfully on what the pupils already know. There is no significant difference over time in attainment between boys and girls.

108. Most pupils enter Year 1 having achieved their early learning goals in mathematical development. All teachers ensure that pupils build well on their early work. Pupils develop the use of accurate mathematical language effectively and work practically to solve problems. Year 2 pupils know their doubles to ten and identify 'near doubles' using their mathematical knowledge. The high value placed on different strategies is a priority throughout the school, and as a result the majority of pupils are confident in explaining the reasons for their answers. All attainment targets are covered effectively through both key stages. Year 6 pupils investigate recurring numbers and use fractions as operators. Most multiply and divide whole numbers by ten and a hundred. Many use decimal points in their calculations.
109. All rooms display key words for the class and many of these displays value and extend work done by pupils. These include displays reinforcing place value in Year 3 and questions on strategies in Year 6. Mathematics is used effectively in other areas of the curriculum. In Year 4, for example, pupils make different angles by programming their computer; they draw graphs in science and in Year 1 have created pictograms to illustrate the different methods the pupils use to get to school. The use of information and communication technology to support learning in mathematics, and the way mathematics is used to improve pupils' capability in using computers, are both currently being more fully developed. Thus work is in need of continued emphasis and development.
110. The quality of learning and achievement in mathematics reflects the high quality of the teaching. This is very good throughout the school, with the quality of teaching ranging from good to excellent. This reflects the high quality of provision for pupils across the whole range of attainment. Teachers use a variety of methods to reinforce and consolidate previous skills. All teachers use questions carefully to ensure that pupils give logical reasons for the problem-solving strategies they use. This was a strength in all lessons. A number of lessons illustrate how this effective questioning helps to ensure good progress. Questions such as 'Why?', 'How can we check?', 'What strategies have we been using?', 'Has anyone done anything differently?' and, at the end of a lesson, 'What do you feel we've learned today?' reinforce both the different methods pupils use to reach an answer and what they have actually learned.
111. All teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of the subject. They plan work carefully and use questions effectively to extend pupils' thinking. All teachers make good use of formal and informal opportunities for pupils to practise their number skills. This makes a positive contribution to pupils' learning and achievement. Ongoing assessment is used effectively to evaluate progress during lessons and planning is generally adapted when necessary. Homework is set regularly and provides reinforcement and extension to the work covered in class. Marking is comprehensive and effective, giving praise and help when needed. On some occasions, pupils do not respond to the teachers' comments sufficiently, indicating that some important messages are not followed through. For example, a teacher's question, "Did you pick single digits for a reason?" was not answered. This was the case in most year groups. The presentation of work is usually good, showing the pride pupils take in their work.
112. Teachers are good role models in the way they value pupils' contributions and relationships are very good. This increases the pupils' self-respect as well as their respect for the contributions of others. It ensures that they behave well in lessons, concentrate hard and enjoy their work. The consequence of this high quality teaching is that the pupils' attitude to mathematics is invariably very good. Most pupils enjoy the subject and many are keen to succeed. They work very well together, collaborating and sharing tasks when appropriate. In most lessons all the pupils worked hard and many lessons buzzed with their enthusiasm.
113. The very effective subject management helps to ensure that teachers are confident and that all parts of the subject are covered successfully. The recently introduced mathematics scheme is proving very effective and each teacher uses this as a basis for what is taught, adapting and amending it to suit the

particular needs of the pupils. Lesson planning and outcomes are monitored and lessons have been observed. The quality and quantity of resources are good; they are used very effectively during lessons and pupils treat them with respect.

## SCIENCE

114. Standards of attainment in science are slightly above the national average for pupils in Year 2, and in line with the national average for pupils in Year 6. This represents a satisfactory level of improvement since the previous inspection, when standards of attainment were in line with national expectations at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6. Inspection evidence reflects the results of the national tests for 2002 and shows pupils in Year 2 to be above the national average and in line with the average at the end of Year 6. Standards within both key stages have steadily risen since the previous inspection. There are no significant differences in achievement between boys and girls in the infants, although girls generally do better in the juniors.
115. By the end of Year 2, most pupils understand the principle of reversible change, with higher attaining pupils using more specific language to explain what they mean. Most understand the basic characteristics of healthy eating and the effects of pushes and pulls on an object. They test their ideas against simple hypotheses and use tally charts to observe what is happening. They record their results on simple bar charts and higher attaining pupils draw conclusions about what they have learned: *'butter melts and then it is a liquid. Later it becomes a solid again'*.
116. In the junior classes, most pupils continue to make good progress in their scientific knowledge and understanding. Pupils in Year 3 and Year 4 make gains in their knowledge and understanding of processes related to solids and liquids and magnetism. For example, Year 3 pupils understand that some metals are non-magnetic. Most pupils also increase their ability to investigate scientific concepts and test their ideas. Year 4 pupils work out how to carry out tests to separate solids and liquids. They also use subject terms such as filtration with increasing accuracy. By the end of Year 6, most pupils accurately apply the concept of a fair test, identifying one variable, in their work on magnets and springs and dimming light bulbs. They show an appropriate understanding of forces and gravity in their written work. Higher attaining pupils show a more precise understanding of concepts like upthrust and make better use of their scientific knowledge when drawing conclusions in their investigations.
117. All areas of the National Curriculum are covered thoroughly and investigative science is thoroughly planned for in all classes. Investigative methods are used well in many lessons to give a practical basis to learning. This was seen in several lessons during the inspection, for example, in a lesson in Year 2, where pupils recorded the results of their investigations into how far a toy car will travel down a ramp. In Year 3, pupils were intrigued as they investigated which metals are magnetic/ non-magnetic. In Year 6, pupils used investigation to find out whether changing solids into liquid is an irreversible change. Throughout the school their investigative work involves real scientific enquiry. Pupils make predictions and then test to see how accurate their hypotheses have been. They record their observations in a variety of formats and use their scientific knowledge to explain their conclusions.
118. Teachers also effectively reinforce and develop pupils' literacy and numeracy skills through science. Key terms and subject language are promoted through teaching and are used well by pupils, particularly those who are higher attaining. Pupils are given opportunities to use their numeracy skills through the use of a tally chart to record findings and the use of graphs and charts to show results. The school is developing the use of information and communication technology to support learning in science and the use of science to improve pupils' capability in using computers.
119. Overall standards of teaching were good, and ranged from satisfactory to very good. There was no unsatisfactory teaching. Planning is based on clear assessment of what each pupil knows and understands. Marking is effective and helps pupils to improve. In a very good Year 3 lesson, assessment was used extremely well by the teacher to adjust activities during the lesson to suit the learning needs of different groups of pupils. Teachers' questioning skills are particularly effective in building on what the pupils already know, as, for example, in a lesson in Year 4 where the pupils were building on their prior learning about solids and liquids. Teachers use their subject knowledge well to make learning accessible to all pupils, as in Year 2 where pupils were given different formats for

recording the results of their investigations. Subject terminology is used well by teachers to challenge higher attaining pupils and to increase the understanding of all pupils. The behaviour and attitudes of the pupils are good and this contributes positively to their learning. They are enthusiastic, listen carefully, work happily together and are keen to learn. Relationships are invariably very good and pupils collaborate well in a range of paired and small group situations.

120. The subject co-ordinator is very effective. She has focused her attention in the past three years on raising pupils' standards of attainment through the integration of investigative work into the scheme of work throughout the school and regular monitoring of pupils' performance through assessment procedures. She has monitored pupils' performance in both National Curriculum and end of unit tests in order to identify curricular targets for improvements in learning. She regularly samples pupils' work and has developed a portfolio which gives examples of the standards of work achieved in the school.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

121. One art lesson was observed during the inspection, and a number of the pupils' art books were scrutinised and analysed. Pupils were interviewed and displays of art around the school were noted. From this it is apparent that standards of attainment in art are below the national expectations, with the standards lower for the oldest pupils. This was found to be a weakness at the time of the last inspection and a key issue for action read, "Improve attainment in art by: developing and implementing comprehensive and consistent schemes of work with specific learning objectives; implementing a sustained programme of staff development to increase teachers' subject knowledge, competence and confidence; and widening the range of resources". There has been some improvement in the subject since then, but as yet it has proved insufficient in improving overall standards of attainment throughout the school. Drawings, paintings and sketches lack the accuracy, precision and attention to detail expected of pupils in Year 6. The school has adopted the Curriculum and Standards Authority (QCA) scheme of work and the range of resources has been increased. However, the teachers' subject knowledge is still poor and this results in some low expectations.
122. There are some examples good work displayed around the school despite the overall standard of work being below what is expected. For example, a link is made with science looking at different textures and weaving in Year 1; designs illustrating the pupils themselves and the things they love in Year 2. Links are made with information and communication technology where appropriate; for example, Year 5 pupils work with the 'Dazzle' program to produce backgrounds for their still life projects. Despite the fact that there are these examples of better work, a sustained programme of staff development is needed to improve the breadth and depth of what is taught, which covers all areas of the curriculum at all the relevant level.
123. Subject management is satisfactory. The subject coordinator monitors teachers' planning in the subject to look at the outcomes of teaching and learning. She samples pupils' sketchbooks to look for evidence of progression in their knowledge, understanding and skills. The curriculum is planned to ensure that pupils experience a broad range of different media in their lessons.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

124. Evidence drawn from teachers' planning, displays and lesson observations, indicates that levels of attainment of pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 are as expected for pupils of the same age nationally. This represents a distinct improvement from the previous inspection when standards of attainment in design and technology were judged to be unsatisfactory and in need of improvement.
125. There has been a significant improvement in designing skills since the previous inspection. By the age of seven, pupils, including those with special educational needs, understand that design and technology is about designing, making and evaluating the end product to consider how they could improve it. By making a moving vehicle capable of carrying a toy, pupils in Year 2 have gained an understanding of how simple mechanisms work. They carried out tests to see if the vehicles would move and also carry a toy. The work was linked to their work on forces in science. Pupils in Year 1 predict and then observe how food changes when it is cooked. Using information and communication technology, they record their findings about favourite fruits on a bar chart.

126. Through Years 3 to 6, pupils continue to make sound progress. They are provided with a range of learning opportunities such as designing a moving monster or other object which could be controlled by a simple pneumatic system, making a purse, musical instruments and slippers. The displayed designs and written evaluations, with suggestions for improvements, are indicative of attainment expected for pupils of this age. Pupils learn to use appropriate tools safely and competently. Year 6 pupils consider the appearance, function, cost and safety issues when designing and making slippers. They choose material to suit the purpose of the design and make templates to ensure consistency in size. They also evaluate their designs and products in order to make improvements.
127. No lessons were observed in Years 1 and 2 but the written work and the displayed vehicles suggest that pupils have benefited from good teaching. The teaching in Years 3 and 4 was good. In a Year 4 lesson, the teacher used the support of the teaching assistant and a parent helper very effectively to ensure that the pupils developed a greater understanding and skill in working with textiles. Pupils used specific terms, for example, appliqué. The teacher provided good opportunities for the pupils to talk through the processes, which made a good contribution to their confidence as good speakers. Pupils in Year 3 made their own design choices of objects to make using air to make them move. Although they were using the same equipment for the movement mechanism ie syringes, plastic tubing and balloons, they showed a good level of creativity and imagination in the lesson and at the same time about the many uses of pneumatic power in everyday life. Teachers have a secure knowledge of the subject. Good support from additional adults in the classroom allows all pupils to make progress in the construction of their designs. Teachers expect pupils to behave well and to work hard. As a result, a good working atmosphere is created.
128. The subject coordinator attributes the good progress made since the previous inspection to staff training which has raised standards and increased teachers' knowledge. The recent policy encourages teachers to focus on methods of checking pupils' progress over time and there are some draft procedures for this which are linked to the national planned programme of work and the National Curriculum attainment targets. Some attractive and high quality resources were being used in the lessons observed.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

129. Standards of attainment are in line with national expectations for pupils in Year 2 and in Year 6. The school has maintained the standards seen at the previous inspection. Pupils make satisfactory progress in their geographical understanding. This represents a satisfactory rate of improvement since the previous inspection.
130. Pupils in Year 1 make excursions into the immediate environment of the school and its surrounding area to record journeys and the location of places of interest. Through such experiences, pupils are beginning to recognise features of the environment and their significance to their lives. They develop their skills in mathematics and information and communication technology to record in a pictogram the ways in which children arrive at school. Writing directions from their classroom to the information and communication technology suite provided a realistic opportunity to practise instructional writing, making a purposeful link with work they were doing in the literacy lesson. The use of the digital camera on a walk provided a good introduction to written work the pupils did on the computer later the same day. Pupils in Year 2 compare their own lifestyles with a completely different one by studying an imaginary Scottish location based on the Katie Morag stories. They understand such vocabulary as mainland and island. Pupils extend their knowledge of the wider world through the medium of Barnaby Bear, a toy character who travels abroad with pupils, teachers or friends of the school.
131. In Years 3 to 6, pupils continue to make sound progress. Pupils in Year 3 have a clear understanding that they live in a European country and that their lives differ from those of people in a village community in India. Pupils in Year 4 showed a good understanding of the use of grid references and symbols on Ordnance Survey maps. An investigation into climate change made by pupils in Year 5 gave them the opportunity to write in a variety of styles to collect and record their information. They wrote interview schedules, letters of enquiry and recorded the weather conditions using a rain gauge and a temperature probe. They are also developing a working knowledge of how weather reports are presented in newspapers. In Year 6, pupils have the opportunity to look at erosion and deposition in a

local river. They know how to explain the changes brought about by these processes. In their study of rivers, most pupils identify and sequence the components of the water cycle.

132. Teaching and learning are good overall. Pupils show interest in their work and enjoy the opportunities there are to work together in pairs. They do this co-operatively. They sustain their concentration well and show that they have listened well to earlier explanations. Teachers have sound subject knowledge and make good use of additional support in the classroom to ensure that pupils of all levels of attainment can participate and learn effectively. They use questioning skilfully to develop pupils' understanding and check their ideas. Expectations are appropriate and a brisk pace of learning is maintained to stimulate and motivate pupils' interest. Work is carefully marked and there are informative comments for the pupils to help them improve their work.
133. The subject is managed and led well. The teacher with this responsibility has opportunities to observe other teachers' lessons so that the school might identify the strengths and weaknesses in the teaching of the subject. Since the previous inspection, the school has adopted and modified to suit their local needs the national planned programme of work. Information technology is used to enhance the content and delivery of lessons, with the Internet being used as a valuable resource. Links with literacy are used to increase the variety of ways in which pupils record ideas.

## **HISTORY**

134. Only one lesson was observed during the inspection, in Year 5. The evidence from this lesson as well as the analysis of pupils' work and discussions with teachers and pupils indicate that pupils have a balanced programme of history in both the infant and junior classes. There was insufficient evidence to form a firm judgement on standards of pupils' work or the quality of teaching.
135. In Year 2, pupils understand the difference between real and imaginary people. They study famous people, including Mary Seacole and Florence Nightingale. They order pictures of nurses in the correct sequence of time. Pupils in Year 4 and Year 5 learn features of historical periods in greater depth and detail, including the Ancient Greeks and Life in the Tudor Period. They use the Internet for research and show understanding of similarities and differences between life in the present and past times. By the time they are in Year 6, most pupils are beginning to show understanding of change between historical periods in their work on Britain since the 1930s. They study features of life in the Twentieth Century in detail and show understanding of the reasons for change through improvements and developments in technology. The analysis of pupils' work indicates that teachers have high expectations of what pupils are capable of achieving and use a wide range of teaching and learning strategies, including interviews with older people in the locality about life in the Twentieth Century.
136. The subject is effectively managed with a scheme of work, which provides pupils with a broad and balanced curriculum. The subject coordinator monitors provision in the subject by observing lessons and sampling pupils' work. Her curriculum release time has been used to 'map' progression of pupils' learning across the school and to develop assessment in the subject through the use of key questions. The school makes very good use of visits and visitors to enrich pupils' learning experiences. These include visits to Ordsall Hall, Lyme Park, Manchester Museum and the Museum of Science and Industry in Manchester.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

137. The school has made very good progress since the last inspection in improving provision for information and communication technology (ICT). At that time, standards of attainment were unsatisfactory both in Year 2 and in Year 6, with most pupils making unsatisfactory progress as they moved through the school. Levels of hardware and software have improved significantly since then and the number of computers per pupil is now above the recommended level at approximately eight pupils to every computer. The school now has a dedicated ICT suite and has enlisted the support of a specialist local company who provide curriculum as well as technical support. The curriculum for ICT is secure and a useful scheme of work is in place. The scheme is currently being revised to integrate it in other curriculum areas, although this work is at an early stage of development. These initiatives have had a positive impact on pupils' standards of attainment and the issues identified at the time of the previous inspection have now been fully addressed. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, attain standards of attainment broadly in line with what is expected nationally by

ages of both 7 and 11, with an increasing trend of rising standards in the infant and lower junior classes. They achieve well and make good progress across the school.

138. In Year 1, most pupils demonstrate good mouse control in using a drawing package. They use the shape, colour and flood fill tools. They write their own sentences and have imported images into their work from Clipart, adding text with help. In Year 2, pupils develop these skills further, writing independently using the keyboard and using the paintbrush and colour tools with ease to draw their own pictures. They use the flood fill tools and paint brush in their drawings, which are more accurate and precise. They use different fonts in their writing. They also program a floor robot to follow a specific route, writing their own programs for the robot to follow.
139. By the end of Year 6, the attainment of most pupils matches the level expected and they continue to make good progress. Pupils with special educational needs also make good progress in the subject against their prior learning and achievement. Pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5 increase the level of accuracy and precision with they use graphics programs to produce their own drawings. Year 3 pupils, for example, produce symmetrical shapes in their drawings. They increasingly combine text and graphics in their presentation of work and produce posters using a desk-top publishing package. They also increasingly organise their writing in different ways using columns and text boxes. Data handling packages, spread sheets and Logo are all used confidently by pupils as they progress through the school. By the time they are in Year 6, most pupils have a sound knowledge and understanding of basic ICT skills, although they have, as yet, limited opportunities to develop their skills in the control strand. Year 6 pupils know how to search the Internet for information in a topic linked to geography, download the information, import it into a Word document and also import and resize an image. They use a desk-top publishing package to produce advertisements and posters and design a living room using a graphics package. They know how to use spreadsheets, calculating totals using a simple formula.
140. The quality of teaching is good overall. Good classroom organisation means that most pupils have their own computer when they are taught in the dedicated suite, which significantly improves the quality of their learning experience. Half the class have their ICT lesson, whilst the other half are taught physical education. Half way through the lesson, the groups swap over. Planning is thorough, with specific and focused objectives. When demonstrations of activities and techniques are given, pupils have a clearer idea of what is expected of them and the pace of learning is usually quicker. Activities are sufficiently challenging for most pupils and require them to develop new skills and techniques. They are well managed by teachers, who monitor progress closely and give guidance and assistance as needed, with good support from classroom assistants. Pupils' attitudes to learning in ICT are very positive. They respond extremely well to their teachers and are stimulated and motivated by the tasks. They focus well on the tasks they are set, concentrating well and sustaining their interest and enthusiasm. They are keen to demonstrate their skills, to help each other and show good levels of respect for the contributions of others.
141. The leadership of the subject is good. The subject leader has a clear vision of how ICT contributes to pupils' learning, which is effectively summarised through the development plan. She receives good support from a local company which the school uses for curriculum as well as technical support. The resources in the dedicated computer suite have been supplemented in the last year by the addition of two networked computers in each classroom. These resources have given pupils greater continuity in their learning. All teaching staff have completed the government funded training for ICT and have also received additional support in using ICT in their classrooms from Into Action Computers. These developments have enabled the school to significantly improve its provision in ICT. The subject coordinator has also monitored provision through lessons and, as a result, is currently working to revise the scheme of work and assessment procedures to fit into all subject areas. She has produced a portfolio of work to exemplify the different levels of attainment in each year group, and this is a useful document.
142. Teachers plan opportunities for pupils to use ICT in a range of subject areas. During the inspection, pupils' use of ICT to support learning was seen in several subject areas – history, geography, art and design, science, mathematics and English. However, the school is aiming to produce a much more systematic approach to the use of ICT across all subjects through the revision of the scheme of work to map the units into subject areas.

## MUSIC

143. Only two lessons for pupils aged between five and eleven were observed during the inspection, so it is not possible to make a firm judgement on the standards reached.
144. The evidence from the two lessons observed is insufficient to make an overall judgement on the quality of teaching and learning, but suggests that pupils' learning experiences are satisfactory overall. Activities cover both composing and performing, and listening and appraising to give a balance of experiences. There is a good range of instrumental tuition available, with specialist provision for pupils identified as having a talent in music. Curriculum provision makes a conscious effort to make links to musical instruments from different cultures: for example, a Chinese Jong, a sitar and an alpine horn.
145. There is an enthusiastic co-ordinator, who ensures that pupils are introduced to a wide range of musical experiences, including work with the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra. She manages the subject effectively, by sampling work from each class and observing lessons during her coordinator release time. The quantity and quality of resources are good and, from the limited evidence available, appear to be used effectively.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

146. Standards of attainment in physical education for pupils in Year 2 are in line with those expected nationally. For pupils in Year 6 standards of attainment are above what is expected nationally. This represents an improvement on the previous inspection, when standards of attainment were in line with the national expectation in Year 2 and in Year 6. All areas of the curriculum are covered and all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in their learning. Each class has three lessons of physical education per week, including swimming in Year 3 and 4. This provision has a positive impact on pupils' achievements over time.
147. Pupils in Year 2 create simple sequences of movements, using the floor and simple apparatus. Their movements include star jumps, cartwheels and rolls. They work hard and cooperate well with one another. In Year 3, most pupils show a good sense of rhythm in their dance movements and interpret music extremely well through their movements to tell a simple story. Pupils in Year 4 develop a sequence of action and balancing movements, incorporating a range of movements, making good use of space and using a range of equipment for their sequences. Pupils in Year 6 continue this progression and link skills and techniques they have learned with increasing precision and accuracy. Many analyse their own and others' performance, and comment on the success with which they applied themselves.
148. By the time they leave the school, most pupils swim at least 25 metres. Swimming lessons are focused on Year 3 and Year 4, with additional tuition for any pupils in Year 6 who can not swim one length of the pool.
149. The quality of teaching and learning was very good overall, ranging from good to excellent. Most of the teaching of gym and dance is done by the curriculum support teacher, who is also the subject coordinator. She teaches every class in the school in at least one part of the physical education curriculum, which aids the continuity and progression of pupils' learning. The strengths of teaching are that pupils are engaged in the lesson from start to finish. The teacher shares success criteria with pupils at regular intervals and uses reviews and mini-reviews to evaluate pupils' progress and help them to improve. Demonstrations by pupils are regularly used to illustrate techniques and to evaluate progress. Very good use of praise is combined well with constructive comments to help pupils improve. Self and peer assessment are both used several times a lesson to analyse performance in order to improve. Lessons have a clear structure, which includes both warm-up and cool-down exercises. A very good pace of learning is maintained throughout the lesson, which stimulates and motivates pupils. They show very positive attitudes to their learning. Pupils develop good co-operation and collaboration and recognise the importance of teamwork. They co-operate very well with each

other, are confident, encouraging and very supportive. They are enthusiastic, enjoy physical education lessons and generally try hard to improve their work.

150. The subject is very well managed, with a very effective policy and scheme of work, based on a model provided by the local education authority. The coordinator monitors provision in the subject through working alongside class teachers on gymnastics and observing lessons. She sees planning from each class and using the lesson evaluations to plan for next steps in learning. The school is linked to a school sports coordinators' scheme, with a secondary specialist sports college; this link provides tuition for the pupils in swimming, rugby and cricket.
151. There is very good extra-curricular provision for sport. There are school teams in several sports including boys and girls football, netball and cross-country. The school was awarded the Active Mark Gold Award by Sport England for its sports provision. A local company is used by the school to do multi-sport activities with both infant and junior-age pupils.