

INSPECTION REPORT

ST PETER'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Woolston, Warrington

LEA area: Warrington

Unique reference number: 111370

Headteacher: Mrs Susan McWilliam

Reporting inspector: Mr John Heap
18824

Dates of inspection: 19 – 21 May 2003

Inspection number: 247110

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior

School category: Voluntary aided

Age range of pupils: 5 – 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Hillock Lane
Woolston
Warrington

Postcode: WA1 4PQ

Telephone number: 01925 815314

Fax number: 01925 851702

Appropriate authority: Governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr Ashley Finch

Date of previous inspection: 23 February 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
18824	John Heap	Registered inspector	Education inclusion English	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught?
19443	Nancy Walker	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
20794	Gordon Alston	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Special educational needs Mathematics Design and technology History	
19041	Roger Linstead	Team inspector	Information and communication technology Art and design Music	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
32218	Andrew Mumford	Team inspector	Science Geography Physical education	How well is the school led and managed?

The inspection contractor was:

PkR Educational Consultants Ltd
6 Sherman Road
Bromley
Kent
BR1 3JH

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Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Peter's is a Roman Catholic primary school that caters for pupils between the ages of four and eleven. It is situated in Woolston, which is on the outskirts of Warrington. This is a below average-sized primary school in England with 170 pupils on the roll of the main school: 83 boys and 87 girls. The roll has remained fairly consistent in recent years. Children arrive at school reflecting the full range of attainment levels but, overall, the attainment on entry is average. Pupils are organised into seven classes. The pupils come from local residential areas which have few significant signs of deprivation. Housing ranges from local authority estates to mainly private dwellings. It is an area of average mobility with, for example, about eight per cent of the pupils moving in, or out, in the last year. Most pupils are white with a very small minority from the Black-Caribbean heritage. There are no pupils learning English as an additional language. There are five pupils (three per cent) entitled to free school meals, which is well below average. Thirteen pupils (eight per cent) are on the register of special educational needs, the majority with moderate learning difficulties. This is below the national average. One pupil has a statement of special educational needs, which is below the national average. The most significant change since the last inspection is the large turnover of staff, including the appointment of a new headteacher.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school with some very good features and a few areas for development. Standards are high at the ages of seven and eleven. Pupils enjoy school ever so much, behave very well and form excellent relationships. The school successfully supports all the pupils and ensures that they benefit equally from what the school has to offer. There is consistent good teaching and the headteacher is leading the school skilfully and well through a period of transition, particularly in the staffing. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- At the ages of seven and eleven, standards in national tests are high in English, mathematics and science.
- Overall, teaching and learning are good, and particularly strong in the Reception year.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to school, behave very well and form excellent relationships with each other and the adults in the school.
- Pupils with special educational needs are provided for well and make good progress.
- Overall, provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.
- The headteacher leads and manages the school well.

What could be improved

- Standards could be higher in mathematical problem-solving and in the skills to locate information in the library.
- There are not enough resources to support practical mathematics and reading, most particularly in the library.
- There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to learn about the many cultures, faiths and heritages in our society.
- The governing body does not sufficiently influence the forward planning of the school and there are shortcomings in the procedures to maintain health and safety.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in February 1998. Since that time there has been satisfactory improvement. In relation to the key areas for improvement identified in the last report, there has been good improvement in provision and standards in information and communication technology and physical education. Staff are progressing well at evaluating the decisions they make and the standards being achieved. However, the governing body is still relying too heavily on the input of the headteacher and staff. There has been a satisfactory development of curriculum guidance documents for staff. Although there have been improvements in the resources for learning, this has not gone far enough and remains an area for development.

STANDARDS

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

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

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

Results for 11-year-olds were well above the national average in 2002 for English, mathematics and science. In comparison with similar schools, English and science results were above average and; mathematics results were average. The proportion of pupils attaining the higher than expected Level 5 was above average in English and mathematics and well above average in science. Over the last three years, results are well above average in English, mathematics and science. There are no significant differences in the standards of boys and girls. The overall trend in results is similar to the national one. The present targets for attainment in national tests are sufficiently challenging and the school is on course to meet them.

Standards for seven-year-olds in 2002 were very high (top five per cent) in reading and well above average in writing and mathematics when compared with all schools. In comparison with similar schools, reading was very high, writing was well above average and mathematics results were above average. The proportion of pupils attaining the higher than average Level 3 was well above average in reading, writing and mathematics and above average in science. Over the last three years, results in reading, writing and mathematics are significantly above average. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls. National trends have steadily improved. The school has been inconsistent, with reading standards showing the best performance.

Current standards are above expectations in the Reception class and in English and science by the age of seven and 11 and well above expectations in mathematics. This represents good achievement. Attainment is above expectations in art and design, geography, history and aspects of physical education. In music, attainment is above expectations at 11. There is insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement about attainment in design and technology. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets set for them, including those identified as being gifted and talented.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Levels of concentration and interest are high from the youngest children to the oldest.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. In all areas of the school there is a calm and orderly atmosphere that supports and enhances learning. There have been no exclusions.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Throughout the school pupils form excellent relationships with each other and adults. Their response to moral and social guidance is particularly strong.
Attendance	Very good. The attendance rate is very high.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is good and promotes high standards and good achievement. Teaching and learning are strongest in the Reception class, where they are consistently very good. Particularly noteworthy are the management of the children, the high expectations of all the adults and the effective teaching methods. Children are extremely interested in all that is going on and show excellent concentration and self-reliance. In Years 1 to 6, teaching and learning is good and pupils achieve well. Teachers generally manage pupils' learning very well and appropriate emphasis is placed on developing basic skills particularly in literacy and numeracy. However, average and lower attaining pupils' problem-solving in mathematics and the use of the library by all pupils is not as good as it ought to be because:

- the resources for these activities are inadequate;
 - the use of judgements of pupils' levels of attainment is inconsistent in teachers' lesson planning.
- Pupils with special educational needs are taught well and, consequently, make good progress.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good overall. Throughout the school there is a broad and balanced curriculum, with particular strengths in the Reception year. Some improvements needed in Years 1 to 6 in practical mathematics and acquiring library skills. Personal, social and health education is effective. There is a good range of activities outside lessons.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good overall. Pupils are well supported in the classroom through the implementation of targets identified in individual education plans.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural	Very good overall. Spiritual, moral and social development is particularly strong. In the main, cultural development is good but stronger in relation to pupils' development of local knowledge and understanding.

development	Improvements are needed in providing pupils with a deeper understanding of the culturally diverse nature of society.
Aspect	Comment
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. Pupils are well cared for and the procedures to support attendance, behaviour and judging pupils' levels of attainment are good. Procedures for child protection are satisfactory.
Partnership with parents	Good. Parents are very supportive of the school because they identify with its values and beliefs and are welcomed. The quality of information for parents is good and this helps them to make a very full contribution to their children's education.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher is successfully leading the school through a period of transition. She is maintaining standards and rightly identifies the needs of the school. She is well supported by the newly appointed deputy headteacher and the staff as a whole.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. Governors fulfil the majority of their legal responsibilities and support the school well. They are kept well informed by the headteacher. However, there are areas for improvement in their evaluation and forward planning for the school. Procedures for risk assessment are weak.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. The school development plan benefits from the improved checking and evaluating of provision and of test results. As a consequence, most areas for development are accurately identified, pursued and improved.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. Financial management is sound and the grants acquired for specific purposes are appropriately used. The school has sound procedures for ensuring value for money in its purchasing of resources and services.

Accommodation is good, with particularly extensive external provision. There are adequate levels of staffing. Overall, learning resources are adequate, but there are shortcomings in English and mathematics.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school. • Their children are making good progress • The approachability of staff. • The expectations the school places on pupils of hard work and achievement. • The quality of teaching. • The behaviour of pupils. • The range of extra-curricular activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents have not indicated any significant weaknesses.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Homework.• Information for parents. | |
|--|--|

Inspectors agree with the very positive views expressed by the parents.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Overall, standards are above the nationally expected level and pupils' achievement is good. The early judgements of children's levels of attainment on entering Reception Year show that standards are broadly average. By the end of the Reception Year, the children achieve very well and the majority reach, with many exceeding, the levels expected for their age in communication, language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative and physical development. All children are on course to exceed the standards expected for their age in personal, social and emotional development.
2. Results in the national tests for 11-year-olds in 2002 were well above average for English, mathematics and science when compared with the national average. In comparison with similar schools, English and science results were above average and mathematics results were average. The proportion of pupils attaining the higher than expected Level 5 is above average in English and mathematics and well above average in science. Over three years, results were well above average in English, mathematics and science. There are no significant differences in the attainment of boys and girls. The overall trend in results is similar to the national one. The targets for the current 11-year-olds are sufficiently challenging and the school is likely to achieve them.
3. Standards achieved by seven-year-olds in the 2002 national tests were very high (top 5 per cent) in reading and well above average in writing and mathematics when compared with all schools. In comparison with similar schools, reading was very high, writing was well above average and mathematics results were above average. Proportions of pupils attaining the higher than expected Level 3, were well above average in reading, writing and mathematics. According to teachers' judgements of attainment, science results were above average. Over three years, the trend in reading, writing and mathematics results is significantly above average. There is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls.
4. Overall, standards of work seen during the inspection by the age of 11 are above the nationally expected level. These standards show good achievement for the majority of pupils. In most subjects, standards are above expectations; the exceptions are mathematics, which is well above national expectations, information and communication technology, which is in line with national expectations. In design and technology and physical education there is insufficient information to make a secure judgement. However, standards in the aspects observed in physical education are above national expectations, for instance dance, games and swimming.
5. Overall, by the age of seven, standards of work seen during the inspection are above national expectations. Again, the standards in the majority of subjects are above national expectations. The exceptions are mathematics, with standards that are well above expectations, information and communication technology and music which are in line with national expectations. There is insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement in design and technology and physical education.

6. In English, standards at the ages of seven and eleven are above national expectations. The standards in speaking and listening are above national expectations, with pupils speaking in a very confident and skilled way and listening carefully and competently. Reading standards are well above national expectations. Pupils have good basic skills and understand what they read. Eleven-year-olds do not always bring expression to their reading and they do not have sufficient knowledge of the library and its classifications. In writing, standards are above national expectations. Basic skills are good for most pupils and the highest attaining write very well because they remember their audience and make sure that they enjoy what they are reading. Lower attaining 11-year-olds have weaknesses in the basic skills of handwriting, spelling and punctuation.
7. In mathematics, seven-year-olds have good basic skills in written number work, but their mental and oral mathematics skills ought to be better. Higher attaining pupils have got the use of several strategies when doing their calculations and they know sufficient facts about shapes, measures and more difficult number work such as fractions. By the age of 11, pupils have built well on the good practices, knowledge, skills and understanding that they have learned earlier in the school. Skills in calculating area and perimeter and in using coordinates are well developed in the higher attaining pupils. Average and lower attaining pupils show weaknesses in applying their knowledge, skills and understanding to the mathematical problems they face, most particularly in links with everyday mathematics.
8. In science, seven-year-old pupils have a good understanding of investigative processes. They understand the need for a fair test, and that investigations are carried out with predictions and recording of the outcomes. They can name parts of plants. They know that forces, such as pushing and pulling, may change an object's shape. Observation skills are good, and they record what they see. During Years 3 to 6, pupils' knowledge and understanding build effectively on the strong base achieved by the end of Year 2. By the age of 11, Pupils know how to set up and record an experiment, using prediction, description and evaluation as a natural part of the process. Even when their predictions are wrong they have very clear reasons for the suggestions they have made. They have good subject knowledge.
9. In information and communication technology, seven-year-olds use computers well to word process by entering and correcting text and use correctly the space bar, shift key and backspace key. By the age of 11, pupils copy formulae onto spreadsheets and create tables, for example in area and perimeter work. They successfully save their work. Pupils create a range of formats to suit the purpose of their writing, including the use of PowerPoint to enhance their work by introducing graphics and sound. Across the school, pupils use widely their skills, knowledge and understanding to enhance learning in other subjects such as history, art and design and geography. However, there is not enough use in science.
10. Throughout the school, literacy and numeracy skills, knowledge and understanding are used and developed satisfactorily. In literacy, good reading and writing skills are used in subjects such as geography, history and science. However, the opportunities to further develop pupils' expertise are not as extensive as they could or, indeed, should be because:
 - too many writing responses are done on prepared worksheets;
 - reading materials are presented to pupils rather than challenging them to seek their own texts.

11. Numeracy skills, knowledge and understanding are also evident in other subjects such as design and technology, geography, history and science. However, the shortcomings in average and lower attaining pupils' confidence and competence in using numeracy skills mean that they are engaged in relatively simple work, rather than more challenging problem solving.
12. Pupils who have special educational needs make good progress in relation to their individual targets. All pupils identified on the special needs register have individual plans that include their targets and also monitor progress. Class teachers judge pupils needs and progress, they discuss this with the special needs co-ordinator who plans and monitors the individual educational plans. This close co-operation and frequent review of pupils' targets contributes significantly to the good progress made by pupils with special educational needs, including those identified as gifted and talented. The pupil with a statement of special educational need makes very good progress towards his targets.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

13. Standards in pupils' attitudes, values and personal development have been maintained since the last inspection, they remain very good and are a significant strength of the school. As a result, all pupils are able to take full advantage of the education on offer to them and face new and challenging experiences with willingness and confidence. In summary, pupils are very well mannered, they are very reliable and responsible, and they work hard and do their best. They are a credit to their school, themselves, and their parents.
14. Pupils have very good attitudes towards school and their learning. Parents, in their responses at the meeting with inspectors and in their returned questionnaires, confirm that their children are very happy to come to school. Pupils arrive on time and they settle very quickly to their work both at the start of the day and after break and lunch-times. Pupils consistently achieve attendance levels well above those found in other primary schools across the country. They listen very carefully to their teachers and they are clearly keen to learn. They sustain very high levels of concentration even when tasks are difficult and play a full part in discussions and activities.
15. Throughout the school, behaviour is very good. Pupils are extremely polite and well mannered and this appears to come naturally to very many of them. This begins in Reception, where the youngest pupils are sensible and follow routines in an orderly manner. Pupils know the school rules and what is expected of them and they follow instructions immediately and without fuss. There are very rare occasions when pupils misbehave and the school has had no cause to exclude any pupil, even on a short-term basis, for many years.
16. Excellent relationships exist throughout school because:
 - pupils like each other and their teachers, for example they are quick to list 'kind teachers' and 'friendships' as the two key reasons why they like their school;
 - there is a very high level of mutual respect for one another balanced with friendship and good humour.Pupils support each other very well in lessons and around the school and celebrate each other's achievements with sincerity. This was clearly demonstrated during the inspection at an award assembly where pupils applauded their peers with enthusiasm and warmth. The pupils expressed pride and recognised the achievement of their teacher's success in a sports event.

17. Pupils develop very well as individuals and parents are particularly appreciative of the crucial part the school plays in ensuring the achievement of these very high standards by their children. Pupils are confident and self-assured and they can be relied upon to make sensible decisions and take on responsibility in a very mature way. There is a very high level of self-discipline. This is particularly evident at recreation times when, in the absence of play equipment, pupils organise and engage in their own very suitable team games and activities and play fairly with enjoyment. Pupils are also very honest and good natured and so again there is very little need for 'telling tales' and adult intervention. A very good example was seen during a mathematics game in Year 4. Pupils competed briskly with each other and despite their keenness to win, there was no hesitation by anyone in owning up to errors.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

18. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is good and this promotes good achievement by pupils and high standards in national tests. There was no unsatisfactory teaching observed and a strong proportion of lessons were very good. The best teaching is in the Reception Year. In general, this is a similar picture to the last inspection, but there is a larger proportion of very good teaching. This confirms the views of parents at their pre-inspection meeting with inspectors, and in the returned questionnaires.
19. In Reception, the quality of teaching and learning is very good. There are no shortcomings in the teaching and some aspects are excellent, for example:
- the very high expectations of children's behaviour, effort and work;
 - the use of varied methods that interest and encourage the children;
 - the excellent management of the children.
- Adults know the children very well and have a very good appreciation of how they learn. Resources are used well to make sure that all of the children are working hard from arrival to departure, and the very good support given by classroom assistants is very well directed by the able teacher. The children make very good progress because they are very well taught, the relationships in the classroom are exemplary and parents are highly supportive.
20. In Years 1 and 2, the quality of teaching and learning is good. Both teachers produced lessons that are mostly good. In the best lesson observed, a very good history lesson in Year 2, the key strengths were:
- the quick, but detailed, recall of learning in previous lessons helped pupils prepare for new learning about holidays in Victorian times and comparing these with the present day;
 - very good use of Victorian artefacts that enabled pupils to investigate and find out for themselves; they included, a suitcase, picnic basket and fishing line;
 - good questioning that focuses pupils' attention on similarities and differences with today;
 - management of the lesson was very good and this promoted very good behaviour in the class.
- In both classes teachers have effective methods to foster the basic skills of literacy and numeracy, because their knowledge and understanding of the school's strategy is well founded. Lesson planning is good and teachers' expectations develop strongly the pupils' willingness to succeed and behave. Pupils are given regular homework and this is appreciated by parents.

21. In Years 3 to 6, the quality of teaching and learning is good. Although most of the lessons observed were good, each teacher produced, at least, one very good lesson. In the best lessons there are some common characteristics:
- teacher's subject knowledge is very good and this led to interest and effective response from pupils. For example, in a Year 4 art and design lesson the teacher gave a very clear explanation to pupils about making a model of a chair;
 - the pace of the lessons was very brisk, as it was in a Year 6 information and communication technology lesson. Thirty minutes of rapid questioning and research, followed by detailed explanations from the pupils.
- Throughout the classes, the management of pupils is very good. In the best lessons, the information gained from the judgements of pupils' levels of attainment are used well to match work to individuals. However, this is inconsistent and as a whole is judged to be only satisfactory. A very similar picture emerges about the marking. It is effective in Year 3, where it has a large effect, particularly in the basic literacy and numeracy skills. There is also some good marking in Year 6 and it has been particularly useful in the approach to national tests because pupils have been clear about their strengths and areas for development. Homework is satisfactory; it is regularly set and provides helpful follow-up to classwork.
22. The literacy strategy has been implemented soundly. However, it has led to an overuse of prepared worksheets. These sheets provide help and assistance in some cases and little more than single-word exercises in others. Useful work is done in science, but some of the English work is less helpful, or useful. The Numeracy Strategy is effectively guiding teaching and teachers have grown in confidence whilst using it. The areas for development are:
- improving average and lower attaining pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding in problem-solving, particularly in everyday mathematical activities;
 - developing average and lower attaining pupils' mental mathematics skills.
23. Throughout the school, teaching is good in all the subjects where there is enough evidence for inspectors to make a secure judgement. In design and technology there is insufficient information to make a secure judgement about the quality of teaching and learning.
24. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good and pupils make good progress towards their targets. Teachers use well the information gained from judging pupils' levels of attainment to plan for pupils' individual needs. The teachers' planning reflects the needs identified in pupils' targets. Teaching assistants who work with special educational needs pupils are working well in lessons to offer individual and group support that is well focused. The support that is offered by these staff is good. They have a good understanding of pupils' academic and emotional needs. The support offered by the teachers is also good, with some effective lessons where the teachers used a range of strategies well to extend pupils' learning and raise their self-esteem. Pupils with emotional and behaviour difficulties are managed well in lessons. Teachers give pupils the opportunities to work in different groups and this helps pupils to develop their thinking as they discuss and exchange ideas with their peers. There are very good relationships between pupils and staff and between pupils.

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

25. The curriculum has been much improved since the last inspection. The quality and range of learning opportunities for pupils in Years 1 to 6 are now good. There are good quality plans for each subject, which is a further improvement. Teachers' use of new national strategies is satisfactory in English and mathematics. The curriculum adequately meets the latest legal requirements.
26. Strengths of the curriculum include:
- the learning opportunities offered to children under six are very good;
 - the strong link to pupils' interests and experiences;
 - opportunities to use and develop speech, drama and listening in lessons;
 - good links between subjects which widen pupils' understanding;
 - the good range of out-of-school visits;
 - arrangements to ensure *all* pupils play a full part in all types of learning;
 - good links with the local church, community and schools.
27. Pupils receive good personal, social and health education and the school successfully builds on the good qualities of the school community. However, the amount and quality of provision vary from class to class, but are never less than satisfactory. Pupils receive effective health and sex education through their science and religious education lessons. All pupils in Years 4 - 6 have swimming lessons.
28. Teachers link subjects effectively so that pupils make more of them. For example, history work on Ancient Egypt in Year 3 includes reading, persuasive writing, art and geography. As a result, pupils improve their creativity, use of imagination, expression in writing and designing skills as they increase understanding of past civilisations. Pupils often use drawing and illustration well to record new learning particularly in science, design and technology, history and geography. There is good provision for those pupils identified as gifted and talented.
29. Good arrangements to enrich pupils' learning through activities outside lessons include:
- after-school groups and matches for football, rugby, netball and cross-country;
 - cross-stitch and gardening clubs;
 - drama and French clubs;
 - a choir for the juniors;
 - concerts and drama productions each year for both infants and juniors;
 - small group lessons on guitar.
- Furthermore, the school arranges residential visits for pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6. These widen successfully their experience of outdoor pursuits, history and geography. They also enhance pupils' spiritual, social and cultural education.
30. Important areas for development in the curriculum remain:
- the unsatisfactory library provision for pupils in Years 3 to 6;
 - the insufficient use of computers in other subjects, particularly mathematics and science;
 - the overuse of worksheets from the school's adopted published schemes in too many lessons, such as geography.
- These shortcomings delay the development of pupils' independence and creativity in researching and recording new learning.

31. The curriculum does not emphasise enough the ethnic diversity of today's society. However, pupils continue to get strong support from the Church and community to support their spiritual and moral education; for example, when the school prepares all Year 3 pupils for First Communion.
32. The curricular opportunities provided for pupils with special educational are good. They have equal access to all areas of the curriculum. The school also helps pupils to develop their skills through interesting out of school activities. The school has done a lot of work since the last inspection to identify and target specific needs. Teachers use test results and records to identify pupils for targeted support. The good partnership established between Warrington's educational service staff and class teachers further enhances the rigorous assessment and monitoring procedures. The targets are shared with older pupils and they are encouraged to evaluate the progress they make towards them. The school takes appropriate measures to involve parents in the review and target-setting processes.
33. Overall, the school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. Consequently, this remains a strength of the school, as the last inspection report presented it. Daily acts of collective worship are effective and meet legal requirements. Cultural development is good, overall, because there is very good provision for pupils to understand their own culture, but provision for the development of multicultural awareness is not good enough.
34. The provision for spiritual development is very good. The school has clear and effective values and beliefs that are shared and supported by the parents. These are appropriately informed by the Christian gospels and include direct reference to truth, faithfulness, honesty, openness, forgiveness and respect. Much of the planned provision is within the effective daily acts of collective worship. The quality of these acts of worship is often very good. For example, pupils were invited, in a class worship, to celebrate the talents of one child and the kind of tributes paid were:
- that she is good at speaking and used mature vocabulary;
 - that she is a good story writer;
 - that she has amusing tales to tell.
- These responses came from reflective thoughts and positive support. The good effect on the pupil's self-esteem is obviously high. Many opportunities are found to provide pupils with opportunities to reflect on the plight of others, whether people in less well-off circumstances or those who are ill and infirm.
35. Provision for pupils' moral development is very good. Clearly, the staff provide good role models for pupils to follow. There is a helpful code of conduct that is agreed with the pupils and forms a consistent foundation for an orderly and decent place to learn. Pupils consider that staff are fair in their treatment of them and inspectors confirm their view. Circle time (class discussions) and assemblies provide good opportunities for pupils to discuss moral issues, for example a Year 6 collective worship session focused on 'Something you have done that you should not have done'. The most powerful part was the introduction of key words and ideas such as 'guilty', 'ashamed' and 'sad'.
36. The provision for pupils' social development is very good. The organisation of classes promotes good social skills through:
- co-operative and collaborative working;
 - occasions when one pupil acts as the leader of the wider group.
- Throughout the school, pupils are given good opportunities to show that they can be trusted, for instance:

- Year 6 pupils prepare for assembly times and undertake other duties;
- even the youngest children support the school by doing important little jobs.

The good range of activities outside lessons and the visits, including residential experiences, are important parts of the provision. However, an area to develop is the forming of a school council that would enable a range of pupils to take further responsibility within the school and acquire skills of citizenship. In the most recent school development plan, the school has rightly identified the need to have a school council and this is being introduced in September 2003.

37. Overall, the provision for cultural development is good. There is very good provision for pupils to gain an understanding of local culture through studies in history, geography, science and religious education. Many opportunities are taken to work outside the school and take advantage of day-to-day experiences. Pupils know their area well. Improvements have been made in developing pupils' knowledge and understanding of the more diverse nature of society beyond the school's environs. For instance, all year groups have some work that is based on other cultures:
- Reception Year have experience of tasting food, listening to music and dancing from India, Spain, China and Italy;
 - Year 2 pupils study aspects of Mexican culture;
 - Year 4 pupils look at aboriginal art.

Work in religious education includes blocks of time (one week on each) studying Judaism and Islam. However, there are no visits or visitors from a broader range of faith or ethnic settings. This is a missed opportunity because the location of the school is close to places of wide cultural diversity. Pupils are gaining experiences through books, television and video, but missing out on direct contact by which they would experience the similarities and differences with their own faith and culture.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

38. The school provides a good level of care for its pupils. Many aspects are as good as they were when the school was last inspected but because the school has not kept pace with some of the changes and increased expectations of all schools, especially in the formal procedures and written documentation, this is not as good overall as it was when the school was last inspected.
39. Staff are caring people who are instrumental in creating a calm and peaceful atmosphere in school. They take a keen interest in their pupils and are quick to offer comfort when they need it. Relationships are very good and routines are very well established. Consequently, pupils feel confident and secure in themselves. Child protection arrangements are satisfactory. Most members of staff have a clear understanding of the procedures and the headteacher takes very swift action when concerns arise. Nevertheless, the formal documentation is inadequate, including:
- the omission of written guidance to staff;
 - the provision of a consistent recording system.
40. First aid arrangements are adequate and evacuation procedures are practised each term. Pupils are well supervised and teachers are particularly vigilant in ensuring pupils are safely handed over to a known adult at the end of each day. Teachers use their common sense and professional skills to safeguard pupils' well-being on visits out of school. However, the headteacher is aware that written guidance and procedures are currently insufficient to ensure that hazards are identified and action taken to reduce any potential risk.

41. Pupils receive good guidance in leading a safe and healthy life through the school's personal, social and health education programme and through themes in assemblies. For example:
- pupils are encouraged to eat fruit at recreation time and infants are provided with free fruit each day;
 - the importance of drinking sufficient water is stressed and water coolers are positioned around the school;
 - a good quality meal is on offer at lunch-times.
- Although the governing body tours the premises from time-to-time, there has been insufficient rigour in their approach to assessing risks in the school and formal records have not been maintained. Consequently, shortcomings have gone unnoticed, for example, the low standards of maintenance in most of the pupils' toilets. The headteacher is keen that a more systematic and thorough approach should be taken to all health and safety matters.
42. The educational and personal support and guidance given to pupils are good with some significant strengths. Procedures for judging pupils' levels of attainment and recording the results are good. The school has developed a useful range of tests and other methods in English and mathematics. These processes begin in Reception, where they give a clear and helpful insight into the children's levels of attainment over a wide range of areas. The findings are used well to plan for individual children and one of the reasons why teaching and pupils' achievement are very good. In addition to national tests at seven and eleven, the school carries out further testing at regular intervals to identify pupils' strengths and areas to improve, particularly in English and mathematics. There is a sound process to analyse the results, set realistic targets and track pupils' progress through the school.
43. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are very good. Staff have very high expectations of pupils and they lead by setting very good examples. They are very quick to address the slightest misdemeanour and they do it firmly, but quietly and sensitively. Personal achievement both in and out of school is always recognised and celebrated in lessons and particularly in a weekly award assembly. Staff are very careful to listen to pupils and give credit to their ideas and provide them with opportunities to develop their personal strengths, such as helping with duties around the school and initiating charity fund-raising. As a result of all that the school does to support pupils, there is a very calm and purposeful atmosphere in school and so pupils simply enjoy coming to school and parents confirm this.
44. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and has been maintained since the last inspection. The inclusive ethos of the school in providing the best possible opportunity to meet the academic, social and emotional needs of all pupils in a caring and exciting environment is clearly evident in the way pupils with special educational needs are supported throughout the school. Their needs are identified early and strategies are put in place to support and monitor their progress. As a result pupils make good and sometimes very good progress towards their targets and they achieve well.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

45. The school continues to work well with parents in a partnership of educational and personal support for pupils.
46. Parents' opinions of the school have improved even further since the last inspection and they now hold the school in very high regard. They are particularly pleased with the quality of teaching, and with what the school does to help their children become mature and responsible young people. Parents also describe the school as a very happy place with good friendships amongst pupils and with teachers and parents. Inspectors agree with these judgements. There is nothing that significantly displeases most parents.
47. The school has improved the quality of the information it provides for parents and this is now good. There are regular and informative newsletters which keep parents well informed of the day-to-day procedures, expectations, and events of the school. Information on what will be taught in each subject is provided for parents at the start of each term. Although the guidance is brief in some subjects, suggestions are particularly detailed and helpful about how parents can support their children at home in English and mathematics. Home/school reading records are an effective method of communication between parents and teachers and there are many opportunities for parents to visit school to see pupils' work and exchange information with staff. For example:
- there is a formal parents' meeting each term;
 - there is an open invitation to parents to attend the weekly awards assembly.
48. Relationships between staff and parents are well established; consequently, informal exchanges of information often take place before and after school. End of year reports are mainly good, because:
- they provide detailed information on what each pupil has learned in English, mathematics and science;
 - they report particularly well on each pupil's individual development as a person.
51. However, in other subjects, sometimes too much attention is paid to what has been covered in lessons rather than what the pupil has actually learned. Occasionally, reports contain educational language that is not easy to understand; for example, 'synthesises information from secondary sources', 'narrative and non-narrative', 'understands tactics and composition and varies response'. The governing body's annual report to parents and the prospectus now include all information required by law and both are good sources of information for parents.
52. Parents support the school and their children very well indeed. They know the school routines and expectations including attendance and punctuality, uniform and behaviour, and they do virtually all that they can to help their children to meet those expectations. For example, they take very few holidays in term time and they instil high levels of personal presentation in their children. Large numbers of parents attend events in school, including the weekly award assembly and formal parents' meetings. A number of parents help in school on a regular basis and very many parents often listen to their children read at home, even when they are older and fluent readers. Parents, together with the support of the parish and teachers, also give time and effort to raise funds to buy additional equipment to benefit pupils' learning.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

53. The school's leadership and management are good. The headteacher led the school through a difficult time in 2002 and she continues to provide good leadership and direction to the school. She is ably supported by the senior management team and the rest of the staff who have a shared commitment to improving the quality of education for all pupils.
54. The governing body is very supportive to the school and has satisfactory structures to carry out their duties. Governors have a developing understanding of the strengths and priorities for improvement. The governing body does not totally fulfil all its statutory duties, particularly those relating to health and safety. It does not contribute to the strategic leadership of the school. Its monitoring is insufficiently developed apart from the finances, so that it is unable to evaluate provision and initiatives, or to challenge the school.
55. Co-ordinators lead their subjects well. They have updated policy statements and have devised schemes of work that support teaching throughout the school. They have good knowledge of their subjects. They contribute action plans to the school development plan. Monitoring of the work of the school is developing. The school uses the results from National Curriculum tests and other judgements of pupils' levels of attainment to identify strengths and weaknesses and evaluate its own performance. When a subject is a focus of the school development plan, co-ordinators analyse pupils' work to identify what has been covered well, and what needs to be worked on further. The school undertakes the systematic monitoring of teaching. For example, in the past 12 months, lesson observations have taken place in the following subjects:
- science;
 - reading;
 - mathematics;
 - information and communication technology
- Performance management is fully established and supports the work towards improving pupils' levels of attainment and achievement.
56. The special educational needs co-ordinator effectively manages the provision for pupils with special educational needs. A strength is her enthusiasm and empathy for these pupils. The school shows a strong commitment to supporting pupils with special needs and invests more money than it receives by providing extra teaching assistants to help these pupils in the classroom. The quality of this support is good and effective use is made of this support, particularly in literacy and numeracy lessons. The school has improved the quality of provision for pupils with special educational needs since the last inspection. It has a very good capacity to improve this further.
57. The school development plan is based on an evaluation of the current position and identifies a good range of improvements and developments. It contains the aims of the school, which are reflected in the action plans. All plans are costed, and contain planned future developments as well as specific actions for the current year. However, whilst the school's learning resources are satisfactory overall, there are significant weaknesses in the key areas of:
- mathematics – practical equipment to support problem-solving and investigations;
 - class reading books;
 - the library.
- Some of these shortcomings have been identified, such as the class books, but there is still a long way to go. There are sufficient teaching and non-teaching staff. The quality of the accommodation remains good and presents no restrictions on teaching

all elements of the National Curriculum. Since the last inspection, partition walls have been erected in many areas of the school and this has considerably reduced the interference of noise between classrooms. Some classrooms are small for the current number of pupils but extension work is imminent to address this. The large hall and very ample outdoor areas are very good features and make a range of additional activities and events possible.

59. Financial planning and administration are satisfactory. Regular reports are provided to the headteacher and governing body. The school maintains a significant contingency reserve. Issues raised in a recent audit are already being addressed. Principles of best value are soundly applied. The day-to-day organisation of the school is efficient and there is good administrative support given to the headteacher and staff. Funds that are allocated for specific purposes are used appropriately.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

60. To further improve this good school, governors, headteacher and staff should:

- (1) further raise standards in mathematical problem-solving and library skills by:
 - improving pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding in problem-solving and investigative mathematics, particularly average and lower attaining pupils;
 - ensuring that all pupils have sufficient knowledge and understanding of how to locate and use books in the library;(Paragraphs: 6, 7, 11, 30, 71, 73, 75, 78, 80, 81, 84)
- (2) improve the performance of the governing body by:
 - ensuring that all statutory responsibilities are met, particularly in health and safety;
 - increasing their input into strategic management;(Paragraph: 51)
- (3) improve the resources within the library and for practical mathematics;*
(Paragraphs: 54, 75, 78)
- (4) increase pupils' knowledge and understanding of the diverse cultural nature of society.
(Paragraph: 37)

The issues marked* have been identified in the school's most recent development plan.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	41
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	32

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
Number	0	12	21	8	0	0	0
Percentage	0	29	51	20	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	170
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	12

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	5
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	9

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	2.5
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	12	11	23

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	12	12	12
	Girls	11	11	11
	Total	23	23	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (100)	100 (100)	100 (96)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	12	12	12
	Girls	11	11	11
	Total	23	23	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (100)	100 (100)	100 (100)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	14	15	29

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	13	13	14
	Girls	14	12	13
	Total	27	25	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	93 (93)	86 (87)	93 (93)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	13	13	14
	Girls	12	13	15
	Total	25	26	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	86 (93)	90 (86)	100 (93)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	164	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	3	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	1	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	1	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21
Average class size	24

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	58

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2002/2003
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	£
Total income	407,384
Total expenditure	382,073
Expenditure per pupil	2,234
Balance brought forward from previous year	18,741
Balance carried forward to next year	25,311

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	6
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	6
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	3
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	170
Number of questionnaires returned	64

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	75	25	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	70	25	3	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	58	36	6	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	56	39	3	0	2
The teaching is good.	78	22	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	63	31	3	2	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	73	23	3	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	75	22	2	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	64	28	5	2	2
The school is well led and managed.	66	22	13	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	73	27	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	63	36	2	0	0

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

61. The school provides a very good start to children's education. The overall quality of the teaching is very good, with high quality practice in all lessons. Together with the very good planning of the relevant curriculum, thorough assessment procedures, effective adult support, and the improved facilities for indoor and outdoor experiences, the children learn effectively in the Foundation Stage. This shows an improvement in the provision for young children since the previous inspection.
62. Children enter the Reception class at the beginning of the school year in which they become four. During the inspection there were 25 children in the Reception class attending full-time. Most children have a range of skills typical for their age in all areas of learning when they join the school. By the time they leave the Reception class, nearly all will have achieved the levels expected for their age and a significant number will exceed them in most areas of learning. The exception is in their personal and social development where all the children will have exceeded them. Staff have a very good understanding of how young children learn. They plan lessons and manage the children very well and provide a wide range of interesting activities. The very effective liaison between the teacher and the conscientious teaching assistant is very beneficial to all children. As a result, the children are happy and enthusiastic, concentrate well and work with interest. They play very happily both indoors and outdoors, co-operate sensibly when sharing equipment and are well motivated. Children's attitudes to learning and their behaviour are excellent. Children with special educational needs receive very good support from the teacher, nursery nurse and teaching assistant. As a result, they make good gains in their learning.
63. The school has made good progress since the last inspection because:
- the teaching and learning are consistently very good;
 - the staff are full of enthusiasm and show a great deal of care for the children;
 - the school has worked hard to develop a cohesive approach to planning and judging children's levels of attainment;
 - the school has improved the accommodation and this is having an impact on the quality of teaching and learning and on their achievement;
 - the management of the Foundation Stage is very good, strengths and areas for improvement are identified and strategies used to improve the provision.

Personal, social and emotional development

64. By the time they leave the Reception class, all children are well on their way to attaining beyond the level expected for their age in this area. This is a clear indication of the rapid progress children make due to the skilful teaching in the Reception class. The teaching in this area is very good. The well organised resources and the care and trust offered by the staff enable children to be confident learners. They settle in to the general routine quickly and as they gain in confidence they choose and explore the world around them. They show great involvement and concentration as they attempt various activities independently and in different groups. Children show care and respect for others and school property as they choose and share the resources. The staff provide very good role models for children, always treating each other and children with sensitivity and respect. Children are given many opportunities to take responsibilities around the class. The snack times are used effectively to develop their social skills. Most children can cope with getting dressed and undressed as they play in the role-play

areas. They also manage this very well during the physical education sessions and help one another in the process. The children are very well behaved both in and outside class.

Communication, language and literacy

65. The teaching and learning in communication, language and literacy are very good. There is a strong emphasis on speaking and listening. Children are given opportunities to talk about their experiences, whether it is talking about the map they have made or which of the three little pigs built the strongest house. Children listen well and follow the teacher's instructions closely. They have a good vocabulary and are gaining in confidence and express their ideas clearly. Children speak confidently in whole-class situations and are beginning to show an awareness of listeners. The staff take time to listen to what children have to say and act up on their suggestions. The conversations with children in the role-play areas are used well to develop children's speaking skills both inside and outside the classroom. Children are interested in sharing books with one another and with the adults. The careful organisation of the books and the regular trips to the library encourage the children to develop their interest in books. The use of listening centres and computer programs, along with reading areas, helps the children to extend their reading skills. Children are encouraged to take books home to share with their parents or carers. The children have a good understanding of letter sounds and use this knowledge effectively to work out unfamiliar words. While sharing a book with a group of children it was evident that they can use these skills effectively to make sense of the text. Most children could identify the title. The higher attaining children talk about what might happen next and state which part of the book they like best and why. Children are beginning to write a simple sentence using known words and marks and are given opportunities to learn about writing for different purposes. Children make good progress in developing their writing skills. The teacher uses elements of the National Literacy Strategy effectively to develop children's communication, language and literacy skills.

Mathematical development

66. Children are provided with a good range of activities to support their learning in this area. The teaching of mathematics is very good and children make good progress. Staff use a variety of interesting activities to make learning about mathematics fun for young children. Most children have a good understanding of numbers. They are beginning to solve simple problems involving addition and subtraction with numerals up to 10, and higher attaining children attempting numbers beyond this. The teacher uses aspects of the National Numeracy Strategies well to develop children's mathematical ideas and methods to solve problems. In one of the sessions observed children could use different strategies to complete missing numbers. The majority of the children are well on their way to attaining the expected level related to this aspect of mathematical development. Most children name the common two-dimensional shapes and use the shapes effectively to make repeating patterns. Children use the balance to work out the number of multi-links needed to balance various objects. Children's knowledge and understanding of shape, space and measure are well developed.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

67. The very good quality of teaching creates an exciting environment that helps children to explore the world around them and find out how things work. Their attainment in this area of learning is above the expected level by the time they leave Reception class. Children describe enthusiastically simple features of things they have observed.

Careful questioning by staff in situations such as these helps children to develop their thinking skills. Children observe specific features of living things and group them according to their specific features. They are confident in making models of things they have seen and experienced using appropriate materials. Children can use a variety of tools and techniques to connect and join different parts as well as solve problems that may arise as they go about building models for specific purposes, for example rockets. All children are confident in using the computer and other simple equipment such as the listening centres. They use the computer to draw pictures and play games using the menu to select programs they want to use and use the icons confidently to make things happen. Their drawings of their route from home to school show that they observe and record features of their locality. Children are given opportunities to learn about important events in their life. They learn about the beliefs and cultures of others through stories and discussions about different festivals. They have the opportunity to use dressing up clothes from other cultures. Stories such as 'Handa's Surprise' are used effectively to learn about life in other countries.

Physical development

68. All children are set to reach the expected levels for their age by the time they leave the Reception class. In most aspects, such as sense of space and use of tools and materials, they attain well beyond the expected levels. The teaching in the area is very good. The staff use the outdoor area creatively by organising the activities during lesson times to offer children maximum opportunities to develop their physical skills and enjoyment in games. The permanent access to outdoors for the children and a good range of large outdoor equipment enhance the progress they make towards all aspects of physical development. Children negotiate space well as they play games and use wheeled toys. They are able to combine different movements as they explore different ways of moving around. They show a growing awareness of safety as they use space to explore different movements. Children take part in these activities with confidence and enthusiasm. Staff use these sessions very well to further develop children's understanding of positional vocabulary. Children manipulate materials and use tools with increasing control to achieve the desired effect.

Creative development

69. The quality of teaching is very good and role-play areas, both inside and outside, are used well to develop children's imagination. Children use these areas effectively to act out stories they know and to create roles and things they have seen and experienced. Children who were playing in the gondola knew what they needed to make the boat move. As the children move through the Reception class these skills are further extended. They gain confidence to organise themselves into different roles in negotiation with their classmates and use the available resources as props to develop their play, for example in 'The Travelling Circus'. The selective intervention by the staff in these situations helps the children to move their play forward and to extend and consolidate their knowledge and skills in other areas of learning. Teachers use the sessions well to develop children's literacy and numeracy skills. Children sing nursery rhymes and songs they know with great enthusiasm. They are beginning to explore pulse and many can identify high and low sounds. Opportunities for children to explore different materials and media are good. Children are given opportunities to express their ideas freely using different media as well as opportunities to learn about specific techniques through adult directed activities. The vast majority of children are set to attain the expected levels for their age by the time they leave the Reception class and a significant number will achieve beyond them.

ENGLISH

70. Overall, standards are above average at ages seven and eleven. These standards are similar to those achieved in the 2002 national tests. Standards in reading are better than those in writing. There are no significant differences in the attainment of boys and girls in the work seen.
71. Pupils' achievement is good throughout the school. The evidence from lessons and the analysis of work is that pupils make good progress year-on-year, but there is greater development in Year 3 and this is due to very good teaching and particularly incisive marking. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to their prior levels of attainment. They benefit from:
- good individual educational plans;
 - good judgement of individual needs;
 - frequent reviews of pupils' targets.
72. These findings are similar to the last inspection, most particularly in relation to standards, teaching and attitudes. There has been a good and welcome improvement in the range of reading materials in classrooms. However, still more books are needed, particularly in the weak library that has improved in recent years, but not to the level needed to fully support pupils' learning. Further funds are available to improve the number and quality of books and the relocation of the library.
73. By the ages of seven and eleven, standards in speaking and listening are well above national expectations. Pupils speak clearly, hold the listener's attention and provide interesting examples to add colour to their views. Most pupils talk enthusiastically about the books they read and contribute well to lessons. Pupils listen very well to each other's opinions and respond in a sensitive and courteous way. Their vocabulary is extensive and the highest attaining pupils show some sophistication.
74. Standards in reading are well above national expectations. At the ages of seven and eleven, most pupils are skilled readers for their age, understanding their books well. At the age of seven, the number of higher attainers is less than in 2002, but the very best readers are excellent. They read challenging texts accurately and expressively and understand the book. The range of books that they read in and out of school is extensive. Eleven-year-olds have successfully built on most of these skills, but all have a couple of shortcomings:
- lack of expression in their reading;
 - a narrow appreciation of how to use a library to find information. For example, all pupils know about the alphabetical system of classification, but none of them uses the numerical system. This is mainly because the library is inadequate.
- Throughout the school, pupils' attitudes to reading are strong.
75. Standards in writing are above national expectations at the ages of seven and eleven. Pupils learn to write fluently and in an increasing range of styles. At the age of seven, all pupils write legibly and the majority are accurate at spelling and punctuation. The highest attaining pupils have basic skills that are well above the expected level. They capture the reader's attention in a direct way: 'You may think you know the story of Little Red Riding Hood but that is definitely not the proper story. Let me tell you the real story.' By the age of 11, pupils write in a clear, direct style that captures the reader's attention and exposes the topic. The vast majority of pupils have good basic skills and many pupils are progressing well because of the extra help they get in 'booster groups'. The highest attaining pupils bring suspense to their work: 'I crept up the attic stairs and held my breath.....' Lower attaining pupils are developing better basic skills, but there are shortcomings in the basic skills of handwriting, spelling and punctuation.

Nevertheless, they are making, at least, satisfactory progress. Throughout the school, pupils have good attitudes to writing and the vast majority show a lot of pride in their work.

76. The development of literacy skills is satisfactory overall. This judgement makes a difference between good writing skills that are employed in a wide range of subjects and unsatisfactory library-use skills. However, pupils are skilful at finding the information they need in books, but all too often the texts are provided for them rather than they going to find the appropriate source. To overcome the shortages in the library the school makes good use of the local authority library loans.
77. The quality of teaching and learning is good, overall. Teachers have good subject knowledge and prepare their lessons well. A good proportion of the writing tasks set for the pupils are carefully selected to contribute to learning and understanding in other subjects, for instance:
- in history - writing about being a sailor in Tudor times;
 - in science - recording experiments and investigations.
- In the best lessons, such as one in Year 3, the strengths were:
- detailed recap of previous lesson;
 - good pace to the lesson which kept pupils interested in the adventure story and the brisk movement in the plot;
 - good questioning, both to individuals and the whole class. Questions to the highest attaining pupils revealed their good knowledge and understanding of the characters in the story;
 - very good graphical representation of when the characters experienced high and low points of fear in the story.
- However, standards in marking are inconsistent, with examples of very good, incisive work in Year 3. Although the marking is up to date, elsewhere it does not always give enough guidance to pupils. Use of homework is satisfactory.
78. Management of the subject is satisfactory. The quality of teaching is checked regularly through lesson observations and in analysing pupils' books. Standards of attainment have been maintained, but there has been insufficient attention given to the role of the library. Teachers are encouraged to use information and communication technology to develop and showcase literacy standards and this is adequately managed, most particularly in information gathering and word-processing. The procedures to judge pupils' levels of attainment are good and their use to guide curriculum and lesson planning is satisfactory. Resources are unsatisfactory and the co-ordinator is aware of the shortcomings in class reading materials and the library.

MATHEMATICS

79. Pupils' attainment at age seven and eleven is well above national expectations. Pupils make good progress in the infant classes and junior classes. Results of national tests in 2002 for pupils aged 11 were well above national averages but only average when compared to similar schools. The majority of pupils in the present Year 6 are on track to meet national expectations by the end of the year and a significant number will exceed them.
80. Strengths in the subject are:
- the good planning that helps pupils develop effective skills, knowledge and understanding in most aspects of the subject;
 - good assessment that is used well to set targets for pupils;
 - teachers' high expectations, promoting effective learning and good achievement;

- the great enthusiasm which pupils show in their lessons.
81. Areas for development are:
- strengthening the focus on developing pupils' mental skills at the start of lessons, so that average and lower attaining pupils can answer questions with greater speed, accuracy and confidence;
 - providing pupils with more opportunities to use and apply their knowledge in practical, problem-solving situations, particularly for average and lower attaining pupils;
 - improving resources for practical investigations.
82. Since the last inspection, high standards have generally been maintained. This is due to:
- the good quality of the teaching;
 - careful attention being given to the analysis of test results;
 - the much improved procedures for the testing and recording of pupils' attainment that enables teachers to set realistic targets for the pupils.
83. By the age of seven, pupils count up to 50 in multiples of 10, 5 and 2. They recognise odd and even numbers, identify common coins, name and describe the properties of common shapes and, apart from the lower attaining pupils, use standard units to calculate length and weight. Mentally, higher attaining pupils confidently calculate addition and subtraction to 20 and explain their strategies for doing so. For example, one pupil explained that when asked to add $5+10+3$, he started with the largest number first. Higher attaining pupils are beginning to use their knowledge of simple fractions to solve problems, for example in calculating half of 40 pence. They understand place value to 100, but few are able to partition two-digit numbers into multiples of tens and units and re-combine them as part of their calculations. Good progress is being made in number but this is less so in mental mathematics. Average and lower attaining pupils recall of number bonds and multiplication tables is not as strong as their computational skills. Similarly, their skills in solving problems and practical application of mathematics are not as high as their other number skills.
84. By the age of 11, pupils are given the opportunity to tackle a number of problem-solving activities. In lessons, most identify the correct form of computation required to answer a problem, but many average and lower attaining pupils become confused when undertaking problem-solving sums. Pupils are confident in undertaking work in addition and subtraction and they have a clear knowledge of place value to three figures. They understand that subtraction and division are the inverse operations of addition and multiplication and use this knowledge to check their calculations. Pupils have been introduced to decimals to two places and pupils use them confidently in the context of measurement and money. Pupils have a clear understanding of fractions and can identify equivalent fractions. Most pupils are confident in using coordinates in the first quadrant and some higher attaining pupils successfully produce work using four quadrants. Many pupils are able to calculate the area and perimeter of simple shapes and are able to recognise the reflective symmetry of shapes or to use protractors accurately to draw and measure angles. Pupils collect data on various issues and successfully produce a range of suitable graphs, including pie charts, to illustrate their findings. However, average and lower attaining pupils' skills in applying their mathematical knowledge in everyday practical situations or solving problems are weak. They do not always answer quickly or confidently the questions that test the speed of their mental recall.

85. Pupils achieve well in the lessons observed. There are no marked differences in the performance of girls and boys. The progress in the pupils' learning is good overall, particularly in the development of number skills and the use of key vocabulary. However, the daily class sessions of mental arithmetic and problem-solving activities are not always fully effective in helping all pupils to rehearse and apply knowledge and they vary according to the quality of the teaching. In discussion with a group of Year 6 pupils, they were hesitant in response to mental questions, such as add 87 and 24 together, and their explanations on how they reached their answers were not always clear or logical. The school policy on equality of opportunity ensures that pupils with special educational needs make generally good progress and are fully integrated into the activities of the class. However, in the oral/mental sessions there are limited opportunities through targeted questioning to meet these pupils' specific needs. Most teachers question higher attaining pupils sufficiently well in mathematics to further extend their thinking.
86. Throughout the school, the overall quality of teaching is good, with some very good features. Teaching and learning have improved since the previous inspection. The quality of teaching contributes significantly to pupils' learning and to their good achievement. The strengths in the teaching are:
- all lessons successfully follow the National Numeracy Strategy;
 - the well-balanced three-part lessons are providing good opportunities for pupils to gain and extend knowledge, practise new skills and share ideas;
 - in all lessons the learning objectives are shared with the pupils so they are clear on what they are expected to learn and can judge for themselves whether they have achieved the objective by the end of the lesson;
 - resources are used very effectively to motivate and challenge pupils;
 - lessons promote interest and pupils concentrate well on their work;
 - teachers have high expectations and use assessment information very well to plan lessons that take account of pupils' individual needs;
 - mathematical vocabulary is consistently reinforced.
- As a result of the good teaching, pupils have good attitudes towards their mathematical work. They enjoy taking part in the oral and mental parts of the lesson and in other activities planned for them in lessons. Pupils work with enthusiasm and are able to sustain their concentration over long periods of time when working independently. However, there are weaknesses in the teaching of pupils' mental skills and in providing pupils with effective strategies to solve problems. This is because:
- the quality of the oral/mental starter and the discussion at the end of lessons vary throughout the school;
 - pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to describe and compare strategies and mental recall is restricted to too narrow a range of examples;
 - teachers do not provide enough opportunities for pupils to use the knowledge they have gained in everyday, practical, problem-solving activities.
87. The school utilises the National Numeracy framework as its scheme of work and very comprehensive plans are also produced to clarify the work to be covered by different groups and in different year groups. Overall, the Strategy has been implemented soundly. The new co-ordinator is knowledgeable and very hard working and has already contributed to the improvements that are being made. Teaching has been regularly monitored and, as a result, further initiatives have improved standards. For example, a greater focus on developing pupils' skills in problem-solving and improving resources for practical investigations in infant classes. However, these initiatives have yet to influence practice and pupils' achievement. Resources for investigations in Years 3 to 6 are unsatisfactory. Procedures for judging pupils' levels of attainment are used very effectively to establish whole-school areas for development, to match suitable work to

different groups of pupils and to establish individual targets for improvement. Information and communication technology is insufficiently used to develop pupils' mathematical knowledge and understanding. Mathematics is used appropriately in other subjects of the curriculum, such as science, design and technology, history and geography and this helps enhance pupils' numeracy skills.

SCIENCE

88. Current standards at the ages of seven and eleven are above average, reflecting the test results in 2002. The good achievement of pupils noted in the previous inspection has been maintained. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well and they make good progress in relation to their prior levels of attainment.
89. By the age of seven, pupils have more than the expected level of knowledge, skills and understanding. They understand what a 'fair test' means and that they must give their view (hypothesis) and then work accurately to test it. They classify pond life in the simple terms of whether it is a plant or an animal. Pupils know that exercise and careful eating have a beneficial effect on human health. They can point to changes in their heart rate when they undertake exercise. Pupils successfully predict the effects on various materials that are pulled or squeezed. They predict accurately the distances that cars travel when rolled down slopes of varying inclines and make an electrical circuit that lights a bulb.
90. By the age of 11, pupils have built on the solid foundations set in earlier years. They successfully complete a range of experiments and investigations, such as working out the amount of stretch in an elastic band. Good knowledge is developed about preventing disease and tooth decay in humans. Higher attaining pupils know that plants rely on photosynthesis for food. They also use accurately a wide range of scientific vocabulary, particularly in their work on materials. Most pupils know about substances that dissolve in water, but only the highest attainers fully understand the idea. Pupils understand that light sources cast shadows and they know how to construct an electrical circuit which they clearly and correctly draw and label.
91. Pupils throughout the school enjoy science, especially the practical activities. They share resources and tasks well, and listen to each other when they discuss scientific problems. Their attitudes to science are good, and their behaviour is good both in whole-class discussions and in group activities.
92. The quality of teaching is good overall. This helps to promote good learning by pupils. Good attention is given to the correct use of scientific vocabulary. Teachers emphasise scientific thinking in all aspects of the pupils' work so this becomes second nature to them. Pupils are confident and are not afraid of making a mistake because relationships are very good. The enthusiasm of teachers is an important factor in the attitudes of the pupils. The use of investigative frameworks assists the pupils in developing their skills. However, the extensive use of worksheets impedes the progress of all pupils, particularly the higher attainers.
93. Management of the subject is sound. Areas for improvement are identified and shared with staff. For example, this year:
 - pupils' work has been analysed;
 - available resources have been reviewed;
 - the quality of the teaching has been soundly monitored.However, the collection of this evidence has yet to influence practice. The science curriculum is well covered through planned topics. Appropriate links are made with

other subject areas, but there is insufficient use of information and communication technology to further learning and achievement.

ART AND DESIGN

94. Standards by the ages of seven and 11 are above those expected for pupils' ages and many of the strengths identified in the last inspection report have been maintained. They are, however, lower than the outstanding standards reported at the last inspection. This appears to be because:

- the subject has had a lower priority, arising from other major national initiatives;
- there have been several changes in the curriculum;
- there are significant gaps in resourcing.

Nevertheless, achievement is good for all pupils, including those with special educational needs.

95. Strengths in the subject are:

- the quality of observational drawing and painting;
- three-dimensional work;
- the effective use of art in other subjects to record and illustrate new learning.

Areas for improvement are:

- the arrangements for checking, noting and tracking pupils' developing skills;
- the amount of resources, particularly for advanced techniques.

96. By the age of seven, all pupils create drawings that are accurate in shape and colour. For instance, their drawings of fruit and vegetables are good basic shapes that are well refined to add texture that signifies a variety of skins. Pupils successfully draw and colour buildings in the style of Antonio Gaudi. They copy shapes very accurately with good pencil control. Particularly noteworthy in all of their work is the time, care and perseverance that all pupils show in improving their original work.

97. By the age of 11, pupils have good colour-mixing skills and knowledge. They accurately reproduce the colours in paintings produced by famous artists, such as Cézanne and Hockney. Most pupils evaluate painters' work accurately and describe vividly how painters such as Van Gogh use texture in their paintings. Pupils show good designing skills when they draw and build shelters. Drawings exhibit satisfactory standards. Most pupils use their skills to produce good, annotated drawings in other subjects, such as science and geography.

98. Overall, teaching is both confident and effective. The strengths are:

- the disciplined development of pupils' skills through teachers' careful planning;
- the depth in learning through investigation and discussion;
- the good knowledge of styles, great artists and techniques;
- the good quality displays that celebrate pupils' achievements.

Areas for improvement are:

- the use of sketchbooks, so that pupils can see their level of achievement;
- the need to increase opportunities for pupils to choose their equipment and materials.

A very good Year 4 lesson on designing and making a chair for a child showed these strengths. Well-led and thoughtful discussion drew out design needs such as safety and attractiveness. Rigorous observational tasks using squared paper and viewers held at arm's length taught pupils to really look. All pupils rose to these challenges, sustained concentration very well and enjoyed working together in the class art gallery they had created during the year. The teacher shared and praised pupils'

achievements, noting that those who had said 'I can't draw!' at the beginning of the year had achieved good results.

99. Management of the subject is good and the co-ordinator has firmly established a new curriculum which meets both statutory requirements and the needs of the school. These improving arrangements are developing standards further and towards the outstanding practice recognised in the last inspection report. This is most clearly seen in the lessons, teachers' planning and pupils' recent work which all show the good quality of provision.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

100. It was not possible to see any lessons due to the way that the school organises the curriculum. Therefore, it is not possible to make secure judgements about standards or teaching across the school. The school has made sound progress in addressing the points raised in the last inspection and has reviewed and improved successfully the way it tests and records pupils' attainment.
101. By the age of seven, pupils use a range of materials to construct simple models based on the plans they have drawn. Year 1 pupils select appropriate materials and tools to make their models. Their work on hedgehogs (with a moving part) shows they are beginning to understand how things can be joined. In Year 2, pupils generate ideas and plans about their designs by studying different products and commercially produced items, such as games. They join and combine materials in different ways. Their game and puppet designs are good examples of this. They describe the steps they have taken to design and make their models and puppets. Pupils talk about what they could do to improve. In a discussion with a group of Year 2 pupils, they use appropriate vocabulary to describe how they joined the different parts when constructing their game, for example 'Rabbit in the well'.
102. In Years 3 to 6 pupils build successfully on the skills and knowledge they acquire in earlier years. Year 3 pupils clarify ideas and use drawings and labelled sketches to communicate details of their design. Year 4 pupils' designs of textile money containers show that they are beginning to measure, mark out and cut materials to create their models. They make realistic plans to achieve their aims. By the age of 11, pupils produce a step by step plan of their work. They show a good understanding of how a material's working characteristics influence its application. This was evident in the discussion with a group of Year 6 pupils about their design of shelters. They talk about how they decide about using particular materials for the roof of the shelter and why they thought certain shapes and materials are good to make the structure stronger. They know that they can collect information and ideas from books and other sources. Pupils make good progress in all aspects of design and technology. Their knowledge about materials and their characteristics and the way they communicate their plans and ideas are particularly strong.
103. No teaching was seen. However, the analysis of pupils' work, teachers' planning and discussion with pupils indicate that the teaching is effective. The way pupils are encouraged to present their work indicates the high expectations teachers have of their pupils. The planning is detailed and assessment opportunities are identified. However, there is very little evidence of use of information and communication technology to gather information and communicate ideas. Pupils are very enthusiastic about the subject.

104. The leadership and management of the subject are sound. The co-ordinator has monitored teachers' planning and lessons by working alongside colleagues. Her action plan indicates she is clear about the strengths and areas for development. The resources are adequate and staff and pupils make good use of these. Design and technology is used well to develop pupils' skills and knowledge in other subjects such as history, English, music, mathematics and science. The procedures for recording pupils' attainment are sound although they are fairly new. The collation and analysis of this information is in its early stage of development and, therefore, its influence is not yet evident.

GEOGRAPHY

105. Pupils' attainment has been maintained at the same level since the last inspection and is generally in line with national expectations. Achievement is satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress, overall.

106. By the age of seven, pupils successfully compare overseas locations, such as Tocuaro in Mexico, with Warrington. They also consider life on the imaginary Scottish island of Struay, and draw appropriate conclusions about the way island people live. Pupils develop an understanding of plans and maps and, particularly the idea that a plan/map is a 'bird's eye view' of a place. This is made most clear by the use of photographs to show the ground floor of a building. Useful links are made with work in history through plotting the journey of Florence Nightingale to Scutari in the Crimea.

107. In Years 3 to 6, pupils build soundly on their knowledge skills and understanding. For example, by the age of nine, pupils have learned about different parts of the world, such as India and New Zealand. They compare features on maps of the school, Woolston, the United Kingdom and the World. They know about the water cycle and plot journeys. By the age of 11, the majority of pupils know about erosion and mountain environments. They use appropriate vocabulary confidently and have views about the environment. However, in most classes there is no difference between the work of the highest and lowest attaining pupils. Mapping skills are less secure than other aspects of the subject. Pupils enjoy geography and talk enthusiastically about what they have learned, but their written work is of inconsistent quality. This is because too often the work is related to prepared worksheets that lack challenge and require the minimal amount of writing or thought. However, sometimes they have the opportunity to do very useful, independent research and the work they complete is of a good standard.

108. Overall, teaching is satisfactory. Lessons are adequately planned, delivered at sufficient pace to maintain interest and resources are used to good effect. Links are made to other subjects, such as history, art and information and communication technology. However, there are insufficient opportunities to develop literacy skills and understanding because some teachers use too many prepared worksheets that lack challenge and work is not closely matched to the differing needs of groups of pupils. Overall, marking is satisfactory but inconsistent. In a very small minority of books, work that is wrong is praised by teachers, for instance in map work. This does not enable pupils to learn from their mistakes.

109. Management of the subject is satisfactory. The new co-ordinator has identified gaps in resources, made relevant purchases and re-written the policy to reflect current practice. However, there has not been the opportunity to directly check the quality of teaching. The curriculum is enhanced by visitors like the police, visits to places such as Formby and to the local gardening club. There are satisfactory procedures for

assessing pupils' work, although there is little evidence that this influences future planning.

HISTORY

110. Standards found in the last inspection have been improved upon and are now above those expected for pupils at the age of seven and eleven. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection and all pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well. They attain good standards, particularly in the way they compare life in the past with the present by using a variety of sources of information. Improvements in resources and in judging pupils' levels of attainment have also influenced standards.
111. By the age of seven, pupils' knowledge and understanding of history is developing well and they have good chronological understanding. In Year 1, for example, pupils begin to understand the difference between now and then as they record the differences in their own lives over time and changes in homes. Year 2 pupils make comparisons across time periods as they discuss seaside holidays now with those long ago. They demonstrate knowledge of historical events and of famous people in the past. For example, pupils have researched about Florence Nightingale and the booklets they produced demonstrate a good knowledge about elements of her life and her contribution to history. As they read books and watch videos to find information on Florence Nightingale, pupils begin to understand how different sources of information can give clues about the past.
112. By the age of 11, pupils have a broad view of the history of Britain and of Ancient civilisations. They display a good general knowledge of the periods of study and gain appropriate insight into what life was like for people living in significant periods in history. For example, in Year 3, pupils know about the invasion of the Vikings and describe some aspects of life under this occupation. Year 4 pupils demonstrate knowledge of the rulers and events of the Ancient Egyptians and make comparisons between life then with the present day. Pupils in Year 5 demonstrate good knowledge of the Tudor period as they write an account of a day in the life of a sailor involved in sea exploration. In discussion with a group of Year 6 pupils they have good recall of what they had learned of the Tudor explorers and about life in the swinging Sixties. They show enthusiasm for the subject and are very forthcoming about the work they have done. Skills of historical enquiry and interpretation have improved since the previous inspection. There are good opportunities for the posing and answering of research questions. Pupils are confident in using a variety of information, including information and communication technology to carry out research, and they record their findings in a variety of ways.
113. The quality of teaching and learning is consistently good. The strengths in the teaching are:
- lessons are well planned and carefully structured;
 - pupils are set interesting and challenging tasks;
 - there are good links with other subjects. For example, Year 3 pupils were well motivated and worked with good concentration as they used their information and communication technology skills effectively when visiting a web-site to find out information about Viking sailors and voyages. They also used their mathematical skills effectively to calculate the distances they had travelled;
 - teachers have a secure subject knowledge and use questions well to extend knowledge and understanding. This was evident when a higher attaining Year 2

pupil was asked, 'What do we use today instead of a parasol to protect us from the sun when we are at the seaside?'

- pupils are managed very well and very good relationships have been established, so pupils work hard to give of their best;
- lessons are maintained at a brisk pace and very good use is made of a wide variety of resources and artefacts;
- teaching assistants are well briefed and work effectively to support pupils with special educational needs, so they are enabled to make the same good progress as their peers.

114. The subject is well managed. The co-ordinator has a good understanding of strengths and areas for development in the subject. Procedures for judging pupils' levels of attainment have improved since the previous inspection and are closely linked to the levels of the National Curriculum. Opportunities to use information and communication technology are identified in teacher's planning and contribute well to learning in this subject. The outside environment, both locally and further afield, is used well as a learning resource. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

115. Standards are at the nationally expected level for pupils aged seven and eleven and this marks a good improvement since the last inspection. However, they could be higher still given pupils' higher attainment in other subjects such as English, mathematics and science.

116. Strengths in the subject are:

- a new and well-used information and communication technology suite with an electronic whiteboard which makes teaching and learning easier and more effective;
- the good quality of teaching;
- continuous and effective improvements in training teachers and in resources since the last inspection;
- pupils' and teachers' confidence in computer work;
- good leadership and management which have resolved shortcomings found at the last inspection and, thereby, raising standards.

117. Areas for improvement are:

- further promoting the wider use of information and communication technology in other subjects, particularly science and mathematics;
- devising procedures to check and track individual pupil's progress.

118. By the age of seven, pupils use successfully the computer for word-processing, playing adventure games and finding information. They confidently use the mouse, select menus and manage the keyboard. Paint programs are used effectively to make abstract shape patterns on a red background and the shapes are subsequently filled in. Pupils make profitable use of programs and the Internet to enhance learning in other subjects. Examples include the study of mosaics by Gaudi in their artwork and importing pictures for the 'myths' project.

119. By the age of 11, pupils are good at finding information from CD-ROMs and the Internet. They rapidly access their own work and the information that they require. They skilfully use PowerPoint to write, illustrate and provide sound for stories. Strong use is made of their skills, knowledge and understanding in enhancing learning in other subjects. For example:

- using the Internet to research topics, such as life on board ship in Tudor times;
 - using PowerPoint to develop a presentation about the characteristics of mountain environments;
 - spreadsheets broaden mathematical expertise.
120. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress and enjoy their computer work. Nearly all pupils regularly use computers at home, which is a real help to progress. Some teachers give effective extra help to pupils who have access to computers only at school, to ensure they do not lose out. However, this practice is not consistent. The above average language and mathematical skills of higher and average attaining pupils enable them to use computers speedily and efficiently. Lower attaining pupils gain satisfactory understanding of procedures, but take longer to input information and to work independently. However, all pupils use only two fingers on the keyboards. This is because the school does not teach basic typing skills.
121. Strengths in teaching and learning are:
- careful use of paired work to improve the learning of both higher and lower attaining pupils;
 - good subject knowledge enabling teachers to give prompt individual help;
 - clear learning objectives, which pupils understand and achieve;
 - enthusiasm and pace reflected in pupils' learning;
 - very good timing, challenging pupils but ensuring they have just enough time to achieve aims and to finish work.
122. These strengths produced good quality learning in a Year 3 research lesson. Pupils used two websites to choose and download a picture of a longship and to make notes about Viking ships and life. They were keenly interested, concentrated well throughout and enjoyed successfully meeting the challenges to their skills. Teachers make good use of digital cameras, CD-ROMs, tape and video throughout the curriculum. However, as most classrooms do not have their own computers, opportunities to link routinely information and communication technology to other subjects are fewer than in most schools.
123. The co-ordinator's hard work has improved provision through increasing levels of equipment, training for teachers and learning. This enables teachers to implement well the National Curriculum. The school shows a strong commitment to the continued development of the subject.

MUSIC

124. Standards at the age of 11 are higher than the national expectation, an improvement since the last inspection. Standards at the age of seven are at the expected level. Standards of singing are higher than expected for both ages. Good leadership and management have raised standards. Achievement in music is good because of the improved quality of teaching since the last inspection. The school meets statutory requirements for music by following a published scheme of work based on the National Curriculum.
125. Strengths include:
- percussion composition;
 - vocal and instrumental performance;
 - pupils' enjoyment of music as a result of enthusiastic teaching and learning.
- Areas for improvement are:

- resources, particularly of tuned percussion instruments.
126. The good quality of teaching and learning results from:
- teachers' very good organisation of learning;
 - very good behaviour as pupils follow instructions exactly and work very responsibly in practice and performance groups;
 - good planning and challenging timing which enable pupils to rehearse, appraise, improve and perform compositions effectively;
 - good arrangements to give full musical opportunities to all pupils, including the gifted and talented and those with special educational needs.
- The main area for improvement is:
- checking and tracking the development of each pupil's musical experience, knowledge and skills.
127. The above strengths in teaching led to good achievement in a Year 5 lesson on an imaginary journey through space. The teacher linked learning to science and literacy; ran the lesson at a stimulating pace, and gave groups effective help, sometimes by playing his guitar. Pupils worked with great enthusiasm but also listened appreciatively to others. As a result, their compositions showed form and meaning, creatively developing both dynamics and tempo.
128. The school also enhances learning opportunities by:
- involving all pupils in annual musical productions;
 - providing a junior choir and two guitar groups;
 - arranging workshops led by professional musicians.
129. Music at St. Peter's plays an important part in developing pupils' self-esteem, listening and social skills and widening their experience of different cultures. For example, pupils play instruments and hear music from Aboriginal, Mexican and Indian traditions.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

130. It is not possible to report on all the areas of this subject because they are covered at different times in the year. Consequently an overall judgement about attainment is not given. However, attainment is good in the aspects observed, namely dance, games and swimming. The previous inspection noted that pupils' attainment was below national expectations, with pupils not receiving their full curriculum entitlement. Since then there has been good progress and improvement.
131. Routines are well established. All pupils are appropriately dressed, and they change quickly so little time is wasted. Every class started each lesson with a warm up, and teachers reminded the pupils about why they did this. In Year 2, pupils understand that exercise increases their heart rate.
132. By the age of seven, pupils are able to move in a co-ordinated and controlled way, for instance finishing a dance in time with the music. They interpret music well. In Year 5, most pupils swim with good techniques. All pupils are able to swim 25 metres and employ personal survival skills by the time they leave the school. By the age of 11, pupils competently play hockey, strike the ball effectively and develop good tactical skills. Pupils' attitudes to physical education are good. Most pupils listen carefully to the teacher and they apply themselves fully with clear physical exertion. They are enthusiastic and responsive to the tasks set, bringing creative thought to their work. Their performances improve as they reflect on what they are doing.

133. Teaching of physical education is good. Teachers provide positive comments and points for development and pupils adapt what they are doing as a result. Teaching often includes successful working in pairs that encourages effective partnerships. Teachers frequently participate enthusiastically in lessons. This encourages pupils and enables teachers to demonstrate particular points.
134. Management of the subject is good. The co-ordinator for physical education has good subject knowledge. Resources are good for outside activities and satisfactory for the rest. Equipment is easily accessible for adults and pupils. The available space for physical education is good. Experiences are enhanced with activities outside lessons and with a residential visit in Year 6 that gives opportunities for outdoor and adventurous activity.