

INSPECTION REPORT

**FLORENCE MELLY COMMUNITY PRIMARY
SCHOOL**

Liverpool

LEA area: Liverpool

Unique reference number: 133336

Headteacher: Mr A Reeves

Reporting inspector: Ian Knight
23031

Dates of inspection: 16th - 19th June 2003

Inspection number: 249061

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Bushey Road Walton Liverpool
Postcode:	L4 9UA
Telephone number:	(0151) 226 1929
Fax number:	(0151) 256 1983
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr J Southern
Date of previous inspection:	None

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
23031	Ian Knight	Registered inspector		The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
15181	Meg Hackney	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?
29261	Penelope Ward	Team inspector	Special educational needs English Music Religious education	
32021	Andrew McClean	Team inspector	Educational inclusion Mathematics Information and communication technology	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
22790	Jane Pinney	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage Art and design Design and technology Physical education	
17757	Judith Willis	Team inspector	English as an additional language Science Geography History	

The inspection contractor was:

Tribal PPI
Barley House
Oakfield Grove
Bristol
BS8 2BN

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33 Kingsway
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WC2B 6SE

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Florence Melly Community Primary School opened in September, 2002 following the closure of separate infant and junior schools on the same site. It is a large school serving an area of considerable disadvantage in Walton, Liverpool. Fifty-two pupils attend the nursery part-time; in the rest of the school there are 340 pupils. Over half the pupils are eligible for free school meals – a very high proportion. Almost all pupils are white British, with small numbers from other ethnic backgrounds. Just over one pupil in six is identified as having a special educational need, including dyslexia, emotional and behavioural difficulties, speech and communication difficulties and physical disabilities. Children enter the school with attainment that is well below that found elsewhere, with very low attainment in language.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very good school. The headteacher and his team offer outstanding leadership to the school. From a low baseline, pupils attain standards in line with national expectations in most subjects, exceeding them in some. This represents very good achievement and comes about because of very good teaching. The school maintains an atmosphere of mutual respect to which pupils respond most positively. All staff are passionate in their quest for high standards and really care about their pupils. All pupils are catered for very effectively including those with a special educational need or who are identified as being gifted and talented. The cost per pupil is about average, so the school offers very good value for money.

What the school does well

- In a very short time, outstanding leadership and management from the headteacher and his deputy has enabled the staff and pupils from two schools to become a highly effective and cohesive single unit.
- Pupils achieve very well because the school makes very good provision for **all** pupils, including those with a special educational need or who are identified as being gifted and talented.
- Teaching is very good; there is an unusually high proportion of excellent teaching.
- All adults, teaching staff, classroom assistants, learning mentors and non-teaching staff, treat pupils with great respect that is returned; pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good.
- The school promotes pupils' moral and social development very well.
- The school's long term strategic planning is very good; it focuses on exactly the right areas.

What could be improved

- Attendance is too low and the school's procedures to promote good attendance are not effective enough.
- The curriculum does not consistently provide for the more complex thinking skills of deductive reasoning, inference and empathy required to excel in, for example, history.

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

STANDARDS

As the school was only formed last year, assessment results that can be compared to national averages are not available. Inspection evidence, supported by the school's own assessment results, shows that pupils throughout the school achieve very well.

Children enter the nursery with attainment that is well below that found nationally in most areas and very low in communication, language and literacy, the key to future learning. Following good teaching in the nursery and reception classes, children make good progress and achieve well. Nevertheless, as they start the National Curriculum in Year 1, their attainment is still below expectations overall, although in line with expectations in personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development. Very good teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 result in pupils making good progress and achieving very well. Pupils in Year 2 are attaining the expected standards in all subjects except for information and communication technology, in which standards are above expectations. Very good teaching and learning continue in the juniors and pupils in Year 6 are attaining standards in line with

expectations in most subjects. Standards are above expectations in information and communication technology, music and religious education. However, standards are below expectations in history because pupils are not consistently taught the skills of historical enquiry. When this attainment is considered in the light of these pupils' previous attainment and the levels of challenge seen in lessons, then it represents very good achievement. The school has set challenging targets for its performance in the National Curriculum tests in Year 6 this year and is making progress towards meeting them. Pupils who have a special educational need make good progress and achieve very well. The school maintains a register of gifted and talented pupils in the juniors and they make very good progress.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils show very good levels of enthusiasm in school and are very interested and involved in the activities on offer.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils show a very good understanding of the impact of their actions on others.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils have very good respect for others' feelings, values and beliefs. They demonstrate very good initiative and personal responsibility. Relationships throughout the school are outstanding.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory.

The ethos for learning in the school is quite exceptional. Pupils and teachers hold each other in high esteem, so that pupils really want to learn.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The teaching of English is very good and of mathematics is good. Staff throughout the school reinforce and emphasise the basic skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology particularly well. All teaching takes place in a good-humoured atmosphere of mutual respect in which pupils are allowed to flourish. Teachers' planning takes full account of individuals' capabilities, so that all pupils are challenged at, or beyond, their comfort zone. As a result, pupils learn very well. Teachers and other adults work very well together. They use well designed, open questions to encourage diffident pupils and ensure all are involved. The atmosphere in lessons is such that teachers' excellent management of pupils is quite invisible. This means that no time is lost and pupils work productively in lessons and at a good pace. However, the emphasis on factual recall in history hinders pupils' learning of the skills of deduction, inference and research. The new scheme of work includes these and is to become operative from September 2003.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The school has very effective strategies in place for the teaching of literacy and numeracy skills. The provision for extra-curricular activities is very good. However, it does not currently provide consistently for pupils' developing thinking skills of research, deductive reasoning and empathy.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good, leading to good progress and very good achievement.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Very good provision for moral and social development; good provision for spiritual and cultural development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good. The monitoring of pupils' academic performance is good. The learning mentors and all staff provide very good personal support and guidance for pupils. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are excellent. However, procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are unsatisfactory.

The school works well in partnership with parents.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Outstanding. The headteacher and his deputy have together ensured that all staff share a vision of educational excellence. The school's aims and aspirations are clearly visible in all the school's work. Senior managers and curricular co-ordinators are very effective in fulfilling their delegated roles. The school has identified exactly the right areas for further development and has taken very good action to achieve them.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. The temporary governing body has effectively supported the school since its formation last September. It will shortly be dissolved to be replaced by the substantive body.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The analysis of data has been effective in improving provision in, for example, writing. Teaching is monitored effectively by senior managers and some curricular co-ordinators. However, most co-ordinators have not yet fully developed their monitoring role.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. Educational priorities are very well supported in the school's strategic planning. Specific grants are used very effectively for their designated purposes.

The school is very well staffed, has good accommodation and satisfactory levels of learning resources. The library is not yet well enough stocked. The school makes very good use of the principles of best value.

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.• Teaching is good; the school expects their children to work hard and do their best.• The school helps their children become more mature and responsible; behaviour in the school is good.• Parents are comfortable in their dealings with the school.• The school is led and managed well.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Parents had no significant concerns.

The inspection team agrees with parents' positive views.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Despite their background of significant disadvantage and low attainment on entry, pupils attain standards that are broadly in line with national expectations by the end of Year 6. They are challenged at, or beyond, their comfort zone in lessons and make good progress. The combination of these factors, together with very good teaching and learning, indicate that these pupils' achievement is very good.
2. The school has only been open in its current form for a year and National Curriculum test results are not yet available for comparison with other schools. Nevertheless, inspection evidence, supported by the school's own assessment and tracking data, indicates that pupils make good progress throughout the school. The school has set challenging targets for the performance of its pupils in Year 6 this summer and is making good progress towards achieving them.
3. Children enter the nursery with attainment that is, overall, well below that found nationally. In the area of communication, language and literacy, their standards are very low, but physical development is slightly better, though still below standards seen nationally. Following good teaching and learning throughout the Foundation Stage, that is, nursery and reception, children make good progress and achieve well. They have improved more than would be expected, although they still enter Year 1 behind their peers in other schools. The good teaching they receive seizes all opportunities to extend pupils' vocabulary and linguistic skills so that, by the end of reception, their attainment in communication, language and literacy has caught up with the other areas, although still below national expectations. Hand in glove with these opportunities for linguistic development goes the school's provision for children's personal, social and emotional development. The well-organised routines in the classes and the atmosphere of mutual respect enable children to progress well in this area and they enter Year 1 having achieved this Early Learning Goal. Good provision for children's knowledge and understanding of the world and for their physical development enables them to achieve these Early Learning Goals too. The good progress across the board, with very good progress in some areas, set in the context in which the school works, confirms that children achieve well throughout the Foundation Stage.
4. Pupils in Year 2 have had the benefit of very good teaching and learning and they are attaining standards that are broadly in line with National Curriculum expectations in all subjects except for information and communication technology, in which standards are above expectations. Pupils entered Year 1 with attainment that was below expectations; they have made good progress in Years 1 and 2 to attain these standards. Again, if this good progress is considered in the context of the levels of disadvantage in the area and the very well judged levels of challenge in lessons, then it is clear that achievement is very good in Year 2.
5. Pupils in Year 6 are similarly attaining standards that are, overall, in line with national expectations. This might, if compared to the findings for Year 2 above, suggest that progress in Years 3 to 6 has only been so-so. This is not the case. The school's attainment records show that this group of pupils overall is weaker than usual and contains an unusually high number of pupils with a special educational need. Standards in information and communication technology, music and religious education are above national expectations. In all other subjects, standards are in line with national expectations except for history, which is below expectations. This is because the current scheme of work for history focuses on factual recall and does not offer enough opportunities for pupils to use the historical skills of research, inference and empathy. The co-ordinator is aware of this and plans are well advanced for an improved scheme of work to be implemented in the new school year. Even so, achievement in history is still satisfactory in the juniors. When pupils' progress in all subjects, seen in the analysis of completed work, is taken into account, together with the levels of challenge in lessons, then these standards again represent very good achievement.
6. Pupils with a special educational need make good progress in relation to their prior learning in their classes. When in their small teaching groups, they make very good progress in relation to the

targets contained in their individual education plans. Many of the individual education plans are focused on language development and mathematical development. In almost all lessons, teachers plan carefully to provide work that ensures that pupils with a special educational need can succeed. Assessments and records show that pupils develop their confidence, make rapid progress and often reach higher than the expected standards. There are very few pupils with English as an additional language, none of whom are at the early stages of acquisition. They make the same good progress as their peers.

7. The school is especially proud of its provision for pupils who are gifted or talented and rightly so. Such pupils are identified in the juniors and teachers' planning often includes extension activities for them. Other provision is in the form of after school clubs. Because of the quality of provision, these pupils make very good progress and achieve very well in the school.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

8. Throughout the school, pupils of all ages have a very good attitude. They are enthusiastic and eager to be involved in all activities. This is a considerable strength of the school and makes a strong contribution to pupils' progress and achievements. All pupils, including those with a special educational need, the gifted and talented and the youngest children, are very happy in school and enjoy learning. The school is an extremely pleasant, orderly and stimulating learning community, where pupils know what is expected of them. In all classes, pupils are caring and supportive of each other. They show a very good respect for the feelings, values and beliefs of others. Parents are almost unanimous in their view that pupils behave well and enjoy school. During lessons pupils concentrate well on their work independently or within a group. They listen very attentively to their teachers and, in most lessons, eagerly respond to questions and challenging tasks. Pupils work very well together in groups and they share resources sensibly and co-operatively. For example, during an excellent Year 4 science lesson, pupils were totally absorbed working together in groups to plan and carry out a fair test of materials which help to delay ice-cubes from melting. Pupils are very friendly and polite and this reflects the school's tangible ethos of mutual respect. They try hard to be helpful and they are very courteous and welcoming towards visitors. Children in the nursery and reception class settle quickly into well-established routines where they are happy and secure.
9. Behaviour is very good and often excellent in all areas of the school. Pupils want to please their teachers and hardly any examples were seen of inappropriate behaviour either in classrooms or in the playground. Pupils respond well to the school's very positive system of rewards and the celebration of good behaviour and academic achievement. In all classes, they value the opportunity to win stars, stickers, certificates and prizes and work hard to do so. Through the school's exceptional ethos and the excellent adult role models, pupils have a clear understanding of the difference between right and wrong. In the hall, during the very well attended breakfast club and at lunchtime, pupils are very polite and well behaved as they sit together at small tables to enjoy their meals. Behaviour is excellent during assemblies and pupils enter and leave the hall in a very quiet and orderly manner. They play together very harmoniously in the playground and older pupils are very aware of their responsibility for looking after younger ones. Incidents of bullying or harassment of any kind are very rare and pupils and parents are confident that any problems are dealt with promptly and effectively by the headteacher and staff. There have been no exclusions since the opening of the new school.
10. Relationships throughout the school are excellent and a significant strength. Pupils have a very happy and relaxed relationship with their teachers, classroom assistants and learning mentors. This has a very positive effect on their self-esteem and personal development. Pupils with a special educational need are very well included by their classmates and their contributions are valued by all. The excellent relationships amongst pupils and between pupils and all adults in the school, have a strong effect on personal, social and academic progress.
11. Pupils' personal development and opportunity to use initiative are very good. This is linked closely to the school's ethos of learning and its high expectations of achievement. Pupils in all classes are very keen to take responsibility for various jobs such as classroom monitors, door monitors, helping at the breakfast club and in assemblies. Elected members of the very successful school council represent their classes and take their responsibilities very seriously. Currently, they are enthusiastically discussing how they could improve the playground, including relationships between year groups and

the development of a 'friendship bench'. In addition, two pupils represent the school at Liverpool Schools Parliament and ensure that pupils have a voice in the community. Many pupils take part in residential weekend activities and a variety of after-school clubs and are effectively developing good personal and social skills.

12. Pupils with a special educational need have very good attitudes to school. They are very well integrated within the school community. The level of support and encouragement that they receive has a significant impact on their self-esteem, their confidence to ask for assistance when they are not sure what to do and on their very good achievements.
13. Attendance is unsatisfactory and, at 91.8 per cent, is well below the national average. Unauthorised absence is high and well above the figures shown nationally. A significant number of pupils take holidays during term time. Although the majority of pupils are punctual, there is a group who regularly arrive a few minutes after registration in the morning. Lessons do, however, start promptly and there is an efficient and well-ordered start to the day. This has a very positive effect on pupils' attitudes towards school and on their achievements and progress.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

14. The main reasons behind the very good achievement in the school are the very good teaching and learning. Lessons take place in a supportive and relaxed atmosphere, in which relationships are very good. The sense of pleasure in one another's presence is palpable, so that pupils want to work hard to please their teachers. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and work rate, so that lessons move briskly and pupils work productively. The school has, in a very short time, fostered in its pupils a 'can-do' philosophy, in which it is 'cool to be clever'.
15. In all, 66 lessons or parts were seen. Teaching and learning were judged to be excellent in nine lessons, an unusually high proportion. Teaching was very good in a further 23 lessons and good in 21. In only one lesson was teaching unsatisfactory. These figures are impressive and the quality of teaching is further confirmed by the analysis of pupils' completed work.
16. Good teaching and learning in a supportive environment allow children in the Foundation Stage to achieve well. The staff in both nursery and reception work well as a team. They have a good knowledge of the expectations of the Early Learning Goals and of the needs of young learners. They teach the basic skills well. Planning is satisfactory, but it does not always indicate how children will make the best use of their time when they have a free choice of activities. Teachers and other adults show high expectations and choose teaching methods well. They manage children very well so that they feel secure and happy. This leads to good progress, during which children make good levels of effort to complete their work. They work at a good pace and are developing their interest, concentration and independence very well. Support staff work very well to support teachers and children in their quest for learning. However, although there are good procedures to check what children know, understand and can do, these are not consistently used to plan activities to maximise children's progress. Nevertheless, children do achieve well and enter Year 1 well prepared for the rigours of the National Curriculum.
17. Teaching and learning in Years 1 to 6 are very good. Teachers have a very good knowledge of the curriculum that allows them to plan very well, including all pupils – whether they have a special educational need or are gifted and talented. The basic skills are taught outstandingly well, so that pupils work with application and continue to make good progress. The school's previous emphasis on the teaching of writing has borne fruit and its attention has now shifted to aspects of mathematics. Teachers have very high expectations in lessons, to which pupils willingly respond. The quality of relationships is such that the excellent management of pupils is achieved invisibly and in an atmosphere of mutual respect. Teachers choose methods wisely to inspire and encourage their charges. Lessons move at a very brisk pace, with resources close at hand. Classroom assistants make a very positive contribution to pupils' learning either in withdrawal groups or in the classroom. As a result, pupils work very productively. However, day-to-day marking is not always of the same calibre so that, although pupils have a good knowledge of their own learning, this could be further improved.

18. In the subjects of the curriculum, teaching was judged to be very good in English, information and communication technology, religious education and science. Teaching was good in all other subjects except for history, in which it is satisfactory, and design and technology, where there was too little evidence on which to base a secure judgement. The teaching of pupils with a special educational need is very good. Together, the special educational needs co-ordinator, the class teachers and specialist teachers discuss and develop pupils' individual education plans. Effective use is made of the support staff and the learning mentors, who make a positive contribution to the very good quality learning. Teachers plan and implement work specifically designed to match pupils' particular learning needs. They also use skilful questioning to ensure that pupils are fully included in lessons, so enabling them to make consistent gains in their learning. There is good quality support and teaching from classroom assistants, learning mentors and staff from support agencies. The provision of targeted support to meet individual needs and group needs ensures that they develop high levels of self-esteem and learn very well. The opportunity for pupils in the infants to have small group teaching for literacy and in the juniors for literacy and numeracy is having a very positive impact on the quality of learning and the very good achievement of pupils.
19. In the best teaching, all of the features of good teaching come together harmoniously so that pupils are engaged, inspired, challenged and learn particularly well. For example, in an excellent mathematics lesson for pupils in Year 6, all pupils were extremely well challenged as they learned about metric and imperial units. The preparation of the lesson was excellent and the pace brisk - pupils entered the room and settled to work within seconds. The teacher used very good questioning, varying the questions according to pupils' capabilities, so that all were included and all were able to contribute. The judicious use of praise further encouraged pupils to participate, so that they gained in confidence and could explain their reasoning. Pupils were able to use mental imagery that will be relevant to their whole lives to convert complex problems into simple steps.
20. In an excellent English lesson for pupils in Year 1, lesson planning was very detailed and effective. The 'big book', a counting book set in Africa, helped make a good contribution to pupils' cultural development and forged links with numeracy. The teacher demonstrated very well, so that pupils gained a clear understanding of how to find key facts from a text. Other resources were very well prepared and used as pupils used letters to form words like 'hole' and 'pole'. The pupils understood that the final 'e' is not sounded ('What do you say?', 'Absolutely nothing!'), but they knew it had to be there to make the correct 'o' sound. As a result of the teacher's very good management of pupils, in which the rules were enforced whilst positive attitudes were encouraged through praise, pupils wanted to participate and all tried hard. The atmosphere was so positive that one lower attaining pupil was very keen to attempt to write a sentence on the board without fear of making a mistake.
21. A very good nursery lesson focused on children's knowledge and understanding of the world. Children were very well motivated as they transplanted seedlings into larger pots. When the teacher brought out a box full of plants, children were enthralled. The teacher and other adults seized every opportunity to extend children's vocabulary and encourage them to speak and sing songs. Children's knowledge and understanding were very well encouraged as they carefully touched the plants and examined them through magnifying glasses. Very good relationships between adults and children resulted in children knowing what was expected of them, so they sat still and behaved well. As children transferred their plants they made very good progress as the teacher took more opportunities to extend their vocabulary and mathematical understanding as they discussed which pots were bigger and which smaller.
22. Of course, not all teaching can be this exciting. The only unsatisfactory lesson was in history. The teacher had too few texts about the life of John Logie Baird and his accomplishments. She had produced a large booklet that she and the class read together, but this took a long time and the pace was adversely affected. The questions afterwards were very straightforward and did not challenge pupils to use the skills of inference. Although they learned some facts about John Logie Baird, they had no opportunity to use the higher skills of inference and deduction, nor to answer questions like, 'What must it have been like for Baird when.....?'

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

23. The curricular provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good. Learning is suitably based on talk, practical experiences and structured play. Long-term planning is appropriately based on the recommended Early Learning Goals and is well adapted to include those children who do not yet have the skills and understanding to work within the Foundation Stage curriculum. Provision is enhanced well with a range of activities that are always available and made easy for the children to select and work with independently. Nevertheless, the co-ordinator is aware that there are some weaknesses in short-term planning which are preventing even better learning. For example, progress is limited because teachers do not always plan activities that are at the right level for each individual child to achieve well, based on what they already know and can do. In addition, teachers do not always plan purposefully for activities that are not the focus of direct teaching. Short-term planning has been prioritised as an area for development.
24. In Years 1 to 6, the curriculum is broad and balanced to meet the needs of all pupils. Subjects are taught in accordance with the National Curriculum and the locally agreed religious education syllabus. Literacy and numeracy are well covered with the successful implementation of both national strategies; this is because all staff have received good training in these aspects and plan the subjects well across the whole school. Writing and the use and application of mathematics have received specific attention. All subjects have recently written policies and the school uses a comprehensive curricular map to ensure both coverage and balance with core and foundation subjects. However, the new scheme for history has not been fully implemented, meaning that the more complex thinking skills of historical enquiry are not currently emphasised enough.
25. There is a strong emphasis on the teaching of mathematics and English, with the skills of literacy and numeracy being well represented across the curriculum. Provision for information and communication technology is very good; lessons are timetabled to use the now fully functioning computer suite and all pupils are encouraged to use information technology to support their work. Good use is made of the Internet and CD-ROMs. All classes use digital cameras regularly to record their activities. Teachers use interactive whiteboards and laptop computers very well.
26. The school ensures all pupils have equality of opportunity very effectively. Gifted and talented pupils are identified early and have their own individual education plans to match their needs varying from computers to mathematics, flute to soccer. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Pupils follow the same curriculum as other pupils, through tasks that are well adapted to their individual needs to ensure that they make consistent gains in their learning. Although there is some withdrawal of pupils for teaching and support this is appropriate. The teaching of pupils in Years 5 and 6 in groups based on capability for literacy and numeracy is particularly effective. Pupils with a special educational need have their own individual education plans that are regularly reviewed and updated. The school council gives pupils the chance to express their desires and concerns, making a solid contribution to the future direction of the school.
27. Provision for extra-curricular activities in school is very good. A breakfast club opens every morning and there are lunchtime and after school clubs on most days. Gifted and talented pupils attend specific events designed to cater for their needs such as a computer and music weekend at Winmarleigh Hall and summer schools at a local high school. Clubs vary from recorders, art, science, computers, mathematics, speech and drama to Tag rugby, soccer and netball. The wide variety of activities matches the school's ethos of inclusion. Trips are made to support the curriculum, as well as sporting and outdoor education activities.
28. Personal, social and health education is taught as a discrete subject with sex and drugs education being covered in Year 6. The subject is used very effectively to promote and support the positive behaviour of pupils. A school council makes a significant contribution to pupils' lives, this in turn contributing to the Liverpool Schools' Parliament. The school has been awarded the Healthy Schools' Award. Regular assemblies are held to celebrate pupils' achievement. At present links with the local community are satisfactory; visits by the local police have been made and a local community group meets in school to discuss matters of mutual interest.
29. The school's provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is very good and a strength of the school. The school has a very strong positive ethos and this is reflected in all its work.

30. The school makes good provision for pupils' spiritual development. For the most part acts of collective worship are well planned and thoughtfully delivered and make a good contribution to pupils' emerging notion of spirituality, supported by visiting clergy. Themes such as 'using one's talents' are effective in fostering a sense of community and raising pupils' self-esteem. Pupils are given opportunities to reflect on their own experiences and are growing in their understanding that some experiences and beliefs extend beyond the here and now. Religious education lessons make a good contribution to pupils' spiritual development. They are helped to gain insight into their own and other peoples' values and beliefs and, in particular, they are encouraged to respect and value the feelings of others. Good opportunities are provided for pupils' spiritual development in other areas of the curriculum. The provision of a wide diversity of experiences presents pupils with good opportunities to explore and develop what animates them. For example, younger pupils expressed sheer delight during a science investigation. Older pupils listened totally enthralled as a teacher read a story during a literacy lesson. In music, pupils expressed their wonder as they listened to Flamenco music. The celebration of achievement each Friday helps pupils to develop a pride in their own achievements and to celebrate those of others.
31. The provision for pupils' moral development is very good. The headteacher and staff provide very good role models and remind pupils of the correct form of behaviour, giving reasons for them. Discussions very often take place in lessons and in assemblies and rules of conduct are displayed throughout the school. Pupils are given targets for behaviour, expectations of attitudes and behaviour are high and they are regularly praised for maintaining good standards. Pupils are encouraged to develop a clear understanding of right and wrong and to treat staff, visitors and other pupils with courtesy and property with respect. The great majority of older pupils have a high degree of self-discipline. Relationships throughout the school are excellent and there is a mutual respect between pupils and staff. This underpins the whole school and ensures that the school's aims and values are put into practice.
32. The school makes very good provision for pupils' social development. Pupils are expected and encouraged to form very good relations with each other, the teachers and other adults. As they work through the school, pupils are encouraged to work collaboratively, to take turns and to share resources, such as when they co-operated to find information about Liverpool from the Internet or when working as a team in physical education. Suitable opportunities are provided for pupils to take responsibility in classrooms and in the life of the school, for example in the breakfast club and in sorting out equipment at playtime. The very good extra-curricular provision is particularly effective in instilling a sense of citizenship. A particular strength of the provision for social development is the flourishing school council. It is very well organised by the learning mentors and is extremely effective in providing all pupils with the opportunity to engage in the democratic process. Members of the council are shortly to visit the Houses of Parliament, where they will meet with the local MP.
33. The provision for cultural development is good. The curriculum makes a good contribution to pupils' awareness of their local heritage, for example through lessons in history, art and music and through frequently planned visits to local areas of interests, such as around the city of Liverpool. The school places a high priority on developing an improved understanding of the beliefs, traditions and customs of other cultures and develops this well through music, art, geography and religious education. The school is pro-active in continually seeking ways to further improve the multi-cultural provision for pupils. For example, it is in the process of establishing e-mail links with schools in Norway and the religious education co-ordinator is shortly to be given a sabbatical, specifically to arrange improved links with other cultures.
34. Links with partner institutions are good, with students from the local high school carrying out their work experience in school. Teaching and nursery nursing students carry out their practices in school. There is good communication with the main receiving high school with link units being taught in science between Years 6 and 7.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

35. The provision for pupils' care and welfare is very good and a significant strength of the school. The school is a very safe, happy and caring environment in which to learn. The warm welcome extended

to all pupils as they arrive at school in the morning is a credit to the staff. Parents are confident that their children are well looked after in school and that any problems are quickly resolved. Teachers, learning mentors and all adults in the school know pupils and their families very well and they are constantly alert to their individual, physical and emotional needs. This provides valuable support for learning and has a very positive effect on pupils' attitudes and behaviour. The school's policies provide very clear guidelines for staff on all aspects of safety and pupils' welfare. Teachers assess pupils' progress and if there is a need for intervention from an outside agency the appropriate arrangements are made for specialist support. Appropriate arrangements are made to ensure that the requirements outlined in the pupils' statement of needs are met. The school is well equipped to cater for pupils with physical difficulties to ensure that they have equality of access. Very good induction procedures help children and their parents to understand the organisation of the school and to settle quickly into school routines. Pupils in Year 6 are very well informed and supported by teachers to ensure a smooth transfer to the secondary school. Learning mentors liaise closely with secondary learning mentors to ease the process for many pupils.

36. The health and safety policy is clear and well implemented. The site is very well monitored through good procedures and regular risk assessment. Staff are vigilant in ensuring that any safety issues are reported and appropriately followed up. In all classes, pupils are well supervised during lessons and in the playground and staff ensure that pupils pay good attention to safe practices. Electrical equipment and physical education apparatus are checked regularly and fire drills are held each term. The provision for first aid is good with several staff who are qualified first aiders. All accidents are well recorded and parents are contacted promptly when necessary.
37. The school pays very good attention to issues of child protection through good procedures. Any concerns are monitored well and recorded. A nominated teacher and the headteacher are the named designated persons with overall responsibility. All staff, including lunchtime supervisors, are aware of the procedures through regular meetings and training sessions. A child protection statement is displayed prominently in the entrance to the school. All pupils have access to outside support agencies through learning mentors and the special educational needs co-ordinator. Good up-to-date personal and medical records are kept for all pupils and these are used well to support individual needs.
38. The procedures to monitor and promote attendance are unsatisfactory because the school does not have an effective system to follow up unauthorised absence on a daily basis for all pupils. However, the school works hard to encourage pupils to attend regularly and to arrive punctually and has a good system of rewards. The educational welfare officer attends the school weekly and works with the school to follow up absences. The establishment of the highly popular breakfast club has had a very positive effect on the attendance of some pupils. The completion of registers linked to an electronic registration system is consistently and accurately applied by teachers in all classes. The procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and eliminating bullying or harassment are excellent throughout the school. There is a consistent approach to the code of conduct and a very good system of reward and celebration of good work and behaviour that is valued by pupils. The impressive way in which pupils behave and conduct themselves and their attitude towards school reflects the excellent procedures and the outstanding ethos of the school. The procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' educational and personal development are very good. Teachers know their pupils very well and their personal achievements are very well monitored on a formal and informal basis.
39. The procedures for assessing pupils' attainment on entry to the school are good. Careful attention is paid to identifying and recording the progress children make in all aspects of their development in the nursery and reception classes. The school collates this information into individual profiles. Clear indications of children's attainment are recorded and the information is used well to set individual targets for improvement. The co-ordinator is aware, however, that teachers do not always refer to assessments of individual levels of attainment when planning tasks to meet individual needs.
40. The school has recently put into place good procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress. The system tracks individual pupils' progress in English and mathematics on a yearly basis, using a range of statutory and optional national tests and teacher assessments. Teachers use these assessments to predict pupils' levels in Year 2 and Year 6 National Curriculum tests and

to identify pupils for further support to enable them to attain the levels expected for their age. However, the system will not be fully implemented until the next academic year when it will provide clear information for tracking and analysing the progress of individuals and groups of pupils throughout the school. At present the system is too new to judge the impact of the procedures on raising standards of attainment. Systems for assessing pupils' attainment and progress in science, information and communication technology and the foundation subjects are not yet fully in place although it is intended to apply the good system identified for the history curriculum to other curricular areas. This involves the identification of expected outcomes for pupils of different abilities in each year group for all units of work and will support teachers in planning work to match the needs of all pupils.

41. There are also good systems for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic progress. Based on teacher assessments, all pupils have targets for improvement in writing as part of a whole school initiative to raise standards in writing. This is related well to the performance management of teaching staff and is having a positive impact on standards of writing throughout the school. Pupils are identified for extra support in mathematics and in English to help them to meet the expected standards for their age. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported both in classrooms and in withdrawal groups for literacy and numeracy. Gifted and talented pupils have been identified in the juniors and work is planned appropriately to provide challenge for these pupils.
42. The use of assessment to inform planning is sound. Results of tests are analysed to identify areas of learning for particular focus. Medium and short-term lesson planning incorporates opportunities for assessment based on clearly identified learning objectives. Some teachers use this assessment information well to guide their planning but the practice is not yet consistently applied throughout the school.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

43. The school has a good partnership with parents and works hard to encourage them to be involved in the life of the school. Many parents hold the school in high regard and have an excellent view of the quality of education and care provided for their children. The majority of parents feel that the school works closely with them and they are comfortable to ask questions and discuss any problems. Although some parents provide valuable help for their children's learning at home through listening to reading and supporting homework topics, there is a significant number who find it difficult to maintain such a partnership. During the inspection many parents were seen in the playground, speaking to the headteacher and staff who are readily available to welcome them at the start and end of the day. The headteacher and deputy headteacher provide very prompt support for parents so that matters of concern are dealt with as they arise.
44. The learning mentors help and support parents very well and they are also involved in the local housing community group that keeps parents well informed of situations within the community. Good relationships are fostered with parents through the Thursday group activities when parents have the opportunity to develop a range of new skills such as information and communication technology, numeracy, aromatherapy and drugs awareness. During the week of the inspection, a small group of parents worked together designing and creating greetings cards to sell for school funds. The group send out their own attractive newsletter 'Newz Fm' to encourage others to join the successful venture.
45. All pupils have a home-school reading record but there is some inconsistency between classes in their quality and use as a means of communication between home and school. A small number of parents help regularly in classrooms and help to organise the breakfast club. More parents help when pupils go out on visits. Parents of pupils with a special educational need are involved very well by the special needs co-ordinator and learning mentors. They receive helpful information about individual education plans and are encouraged to attend all assessment and review meetings. Parents are invited to join pupils at their end of term celebration assembly. The Friends of Florence Melly is a small group of committed parents who organise special events and raise considerable funds for the school. Activities are well supported by parents and members of the community and this enables the Friends to provide a range of additional learning resources to support teaching and learning.

46. The quality of information for parents is good. The headteacher sends out regular newsletters to parents providing them with helpful information about events and organisation. Since the opening of the new school parents have not yet received a list of curricular topics to be taught, but the school recognises this as an area for improvement during the next academic year. Parents of children in the Foundation Stage receive a good amount of information including a conducted tour of the building that helps them to understand how the school is organised. Reports to parents following the first year of the new school are not yet available. The current prospectus contains sufficient helpful information for parents about the organisation of the school and areas of the curriculum. The governors' annual report is not yet available.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

47. The headteacher and his team provide outstanding leadership and management of the school. The governing body, which is still a temporary governing body overseeing the establishment of the new school, fulfils its responsibilities soundly. The school's performance is monitored well and effective action has been taken to deal with any weaknesses. Resources are used very well. The school applies the principles of best value very well. The school is very well staffed to meet the demands of the curriculum, enjoys good accommodation and is soundly resourced.
48. The school was formed less than a year ago from the former separate infant and junior schools. The headteacher and his deputy have a clear vision of excellence for the new school. Their outstanding and inspirational leadership has forged a cohesive team from the previously separate staffs. As a result, all staff are fully committed to the school and its excellence. The schools aims, including striving for high achievement and enabling pupils to grow in a safe and harmonious environment, are clearly visible in the school's day-to-day working. Staff and pupils are comfortable in each other's presence and treat one another with respect based on good humoured relationships. This high level of commitment in the school, together with the quality of action already taken, shows that the school is in an excellent position for further improvement.
49. The mammoth job of integrating the systems from two different schools into a cohesive whole has been managed very effectively. All the required policies are in place and understood throughout the school. Schemes of work have evolved. Co-ordinators' understanding of the provision in both junior and infant departments has been significantly enhanced by them working alongside their opposite numbers. The school is making innovative use of 'sabbaticals', in which staff have blocks of time away from the classroom in order to visit other schools, observe good practice and speed up the development of, for example, music and religious education.
50. The deputy headteacher and senior managers have clear responsibilities in school. They have assisted the headteacher in the setting up of all the required procedures. Curricular co-ordinators are, in general, providing good leadership, but only the co-ordinators of the core subjects have so far monitored the school's work directly. The management of special needs provision is very good. The co-ordinator for the area provides very good leadership. She works closely with the headteacher and the nominated governor to ensure that pupils receive very good quality provision and are fully included in school life. In this school, delegation is real and effective and staff with delegated responsibilities overall make a very good contribution to the school's work.
51. The governing body is in a state of flux. The temporary governing body, formed to oversee the creation of the school, remains in place until September, when it will be replaced by the permanent body. Members of the temporary governing body are committed to the school and have made a satisfactory contribution to shaping the school's direction so far. They have a sound understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. However, there are some minor omissions from the statutory requirements for the school's prospectus.
52. The school has made a good start to the monitoring of its work. Teachers have been observed teaching the core subjects by senior managers, co-ordinators and local authority advisers. This has led to the sharing of good practice and the reduction of weak practice. However, not all subjects have been analysed in this way as yet so that, for example, the emphasis on factual knowledge rather than the skills of enquiry in history has not been dealt with fully. The results of the National Curriculum tests undertaken in the separate schools last year were fully analysed alongside

observations this year to enable the school to focus appropriately. For example, an emphasis on writing has brought about improvements; the same process is now taking place for areas of mathematics. The school improvement plan, which summarises the actions the school is taking, contains well researched priorities that inspection evidence confirms are correct. The very fast establishment of the school with all its strengths is testament to the very good actions taken at, and following, its formation.

53. The school has sufficient teachers with appropriate qualifications and experience to teach a broad and balanced curriculum for all areas of pupils' learning. Staffing levels are good and teachers are well supported by classroom assistants and learning mentors who have received appropriate training. There is very good co-operation amongst staff in working towards the school's goals with many staff having participated in training for literacy, numeracy and information technology. Accommodation in the school is good. The quality and quantity of books is satisfactory. The provision of computers is good and recent technological support has resulted in their greater availability for lessons after initial problems. Learning resources are satisfactory in most subjects with good provision in mathematics, English, information and communication technology and science. There is a lack of good quality resources for both multi-cultural and multi-faith education as well as for history in Years 3 to 6. Good use is made of outdoor facilities and school halls. The site manager and cleaners keep the school very clean and are treated as an important part of the whole school staff. Kitchen staff provide a good standard of food and comply with all health and safety regulations. All ancillary staff are proud to be part of an effective team which supports pupils' progress in their time at the school.
54. Provision for the induction and training of staff both new to the school and newly qualified teachers is good. The school's performance management strategy is very good. All staff have received very good professional development interviews and their targets are aligned to identified areas of whole school development.
55. The school's financial planning and strategic use of resources are very good. The headteacher and governing body manage the finances very effectively and work closely together in setting the budget. The financial implications of the recent opening of the new school have been considered very carefully. Governors are kept fully informed about the school's financial situation and all spending is linked closely to income and educational priorities. The school has recently received a positive audit report. Principles of best value are applied very well. Financial control and day-to-day administration by the school and finance committee are very good and records of financial decisions are clear and detailed. The support of an outside accounting agency ensures regular expert monitoring of all expenditure. Very good procedures are followed to measure the cost effectiveness of major spending decisions. The school effectively uses specific grants for their designated purposes and is currently in receipt of a number of externally funded initiatives relating to the establishment of the new school.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

56. To enable the school to improve even more, the governors, headteacher and staff should:
- i. strive to improve attendance by improving the procedures to promote good attendance;
(Paragraphs 13 and 38)
 - ii. ensure that the plans for improving the curriculum, so that it provides for the more complex thinking skills, are carried out.
(Paragraphs 5, 24, 52, 120 and 121)
57. In addition, the school should consider taking action on the following, more minor weaknesses:
- improve the consistency of the use of assessment in planning;
(Paragraphs 39, 40, 42, 58, 100, 105, 111, 136 and 143)
 - improve resources for history in Years 3 to 6, multicultural and multi-faith education.

(Paragraphs 53 and 122)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	66
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	45

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
Number	9	23	21	12	1	0	0
Percentage	14	35	32	18	2	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	26	340
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	198

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	4	60

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	10
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	4

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	N/A
National comparative data	5.5

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	N/A
National comparative data	0.4

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete 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	335	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	1	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	17.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20
Average class size	24.3

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	10
Total aggregate hours worked per week	295

Qualified teachers and support staff: Nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	32
Number of pupils per FTE adult	13

FTE means full-time equivalent.

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)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2002/3
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	£
Total income	544,235
Total expenditure	526,449
Expenditure per pupil	1,438
Balance brought forward from previous year	0
Balance carried forward to next year	17,786

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	392
Number of questionnaires returned	94

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	82	16	0	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	84	13	0	2	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	77	18	0	2	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	61	25	2	2	9
The teaching is good.	84	13	0	2	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	78	18	1	2	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	85	11	0	1	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	82	16	0	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	78	20	0	1	0
The school is well led and managed.	84	14	0	1	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	81	15	0	1	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	66	17	6	3	8

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

58. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage, which includes the nursery class and two reception classes, is good. It provides a lively and stimulating environment in which children discover that learning is fun. It is co-ordinated impressively and works well as a unit. The adults working in each class form a strong team to support learning and to harness the children's natural curiosity and eagerness, led with considerable skill by the co-ordinator. The quality of teaching and learning is good, as are the attitudes of the children, who show constant enthusiasm and enjoyment. The curriculum is well planned around the recommended areas of learning, being appropriately based on talk, practical experiences and structured play. Good assessment procedures provide clear indications of children's attainment and are used well to set clear targets for improvement. However, the use of this information to plan activities more closely matched to children's abilities, based on what they already know and can do, is underdeveloped.
59. Most children entering the reception classes have experience of pre-school education, the majority in the school's own nursery. The transition from home to school is made effectively and the school works hard to involve parents in their children's learning. Children enter the nursery with standards of attainment that vary, but that are mostly well below average when compared with children of a similar age. A significant number of children have poor language and communication skills. The children develop their skills well, because of high quality teaching and the varied and interesting range of experiences with which they are provided. Children, including those with special educational needs, make good gains in learning in all areas and very good gains in their language development, personal and social skills and knowledge and understanding of the world. By the time the present reception children enter Year 1, they are likely to have achieved the early learning goals in their knowledge and understanding of the world and in their personal and social and physical development. They are unlikely to reach them in their communication, language and literacy and in mathematical and creative development.

Personal, social and emotional development

60. Many children enter the nursery with poorly developed social skills. They find it hard to initiate ideas, have limited powers of concentration and play in isolation, rather than relating to others. However, because of the positive and supportive ethos, children make very good progress, becoming confident and increasingly independent. At the start of the day, for example, children and parents are warmly and personally welcomed and, as they register themselves by finding their name, children quickly become secure in the daily routine. In the reception classes, children become increasingly confident and independent. In registration, for example, children enjoy the opportunity to answer in French and Spanish and are proud to be given the responsibility of taking the register to the school office. They begin to show an awareness of each other, as when they worked in pairs in a literacy lesson. All the children coped well within a large group as they joined Years 1 and 2 for assembly. They are independent in their personal hygiene and change themselves ready for physical education lessons. They are happy to attempt new experiences and are not afraid to make mistakes. They choose their own activities and take pride in their achievements. They understand what is right and wrong in a variety of situations. Children with special educational needs receive good support that ensures they too are able to fully benefit from the positive environment.
61. Teaching in this area of learning is very good. The team of adults in the nursery and reception classes provide very good role models and create a calm, happy and ordered environment where the children grow, secure in the knowledge that they are valued. The adults clearly respect each child, listening to them and giving regular praise and encouragement. They build trusting relationships between the children, their parents and themselves. Because of careful reinforcement, children learn and understand what is expected of them and respond well to the consistent expectations. The classes have a proper emphasis on, and give all children the best opportunities for, development of their social skills throughout the day. As a result, children are developing positive attitudes to school, to learning, to each other and towards themselves. They are well prepared to start Year 1.

Communication, language and literacy

62. When the children start school, a few have satisfactory speaking and listening skills, but most need considerable support. Children make very good progress in their oral development because there are well-planned and stimulating opportunities for them to talk and listen in all classes and a strong emphasis is placed on the acquisition of these skills. The adults share closely in the children's learning in groups, listening to them, questioning carefully and extending their language. They monitor the children's developing skills and work sensitively to build up confidence. In the nursery, most children are now responding well to adults. A significant number use words and, sometimes, short phrases, and a few talk confidently in sentences and respond to questions. However, there are still some children who do not speak readily. Children continue to develop their skills very well in the reception classes. By the time they are ready to begin Year 1, it is likely that, although most children will be confident to talk about interesting experiences, some will not be able to do so clearly. The ability of a minority of pupils to organise and clarify their thinking will still be limited. A few children ask questions and explain themselves clearly, as was evident, for example when one child gave a detailed description of a hot air balloon.
63. All enjoy books and respond well to stories read expressively to them. When children in the nursery share books a few 'tell' a story as they turn over the pages and recognise several letters, but most do not. But all make good progress in the way they respond positively to books. All the children in the reception classes have embarked on the school's reading scheme. Most read simple texts with accuracy and growing fluency, recognising a few familiar words, although they have difficulty in remembering what happens. About half the children use their knowledge of sounds to help with unfamiliar words. Some higher attaining children read with good expression, using punctuation to help them in their reading. The teachers ensure that children are well supported in the development of reading skills. They read regularly in groups or independently and take books home each night to share with their parents.
64. In writing, children make satisfactory progress. In the nursery, most children recognise their name but only a few can write it. Some children are making marks with some emerging shapes. Most children have poor pencil control, but they are learning about print and pattern and its significance and are carefully encouraged to develop good work habits and use a pencil or crayon properly. In the reception classes, most children write their own names independently. They are beginning to write a few familiar words independently, but mostly they copy under the teacher's writing. The quality of teaching of writing is satisfactory. Good use is made of the elements of the literacy strategy to develop writing skills and the needs of pupils with special educational needs are well met. However, progress is limited because there are not enough opportunities for children to develop their independent writing.

Mathematical development

65. Although the majority of children are unlikely to attain the expected standards by the time they are ready to start Year 1, most are making good progress in their mathematical development. Provision is good overall. For the most part, teaching is exciting, so children are challenged and enjoy learning. The use of number rhymes and songs contributes well to children's mathematical development. However, in the nursery, where activities form part of the continuous provision rather than being the focus of direct teaching, opportunities for developing mathematical understanding are sometimes missed because tasks have not been planned in sufficient detail to meet individual needs. Most children enter the nursery without the necessary experience, language and understanding of number and, although adults work hard to ensure that all understand the necessary concepts and develop the language needed, there are still significant areas where many children find difficulty. In all classes, children are introduced to mathematical vocabulary and questions are well tailored to their individual needs. For example, in the mental arithmetic session at the start of the lesson, higher attaining reception children were asked to recognise and sequence numbers to 20, while lower attaining children sequenced numbers to ten. In one lesson, where teaching was very good, the outdoor area was used very well to enhance learning. Children made very good progress in their understanding of words describing position as they excitedly played a game with beanbags. Most children are likely to understand the process of addition and subtraction by the start of Year 1 as, for

example, they are beginning to calculate mentally one more and one less. With help, they are beginning to record their number facts as sums. Skills are taught carefully, using imaginative and creative methods and good resources.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

66. The children in all classes achieve very well compared with their attainment on entry to the school. They start to make sense of the world around them through a well-planned range of activities led by all adults. This provides a good foundation on which to build the later subjects of science, design and technology, information and communication technology, geography and history. They are regularly challenged and show curiosity and wonder at the world around them, as when looking through a magnifying lens, examining the Union Jack flag, or investigating the friction of different surfaces. They need much support to develop the communication skills needed to reach the Early Learning Goals in this aspect as their lack of language skill hinders their learning, but most succeed in doing so. In the nursery, children are given the opportunity to transplant and observe seedlings as they grow. Higher attaining children identify the stem, leaves and roots of the seedlings and understand that plants need light and water to grow. As one child observed, 'they need to get a bit of sunshine'. Reception children learn that pushing and pulling can make things move. With their teacher, children conducted a simple investigation into how the type of surface affects the distance travelled. The outdoor play area is used extremely well to develop children's awareness of the wider world. For example, having used the digital camera to take their 'passport' photographs, nursery children participated in well-planned role-play activities introducing aspects of France as they crawled through the Eurotunnel' and ate at the French café. Reception children walked a route to Red Riding Hood's house, identifying features such as trees on their way. Bible stories, such as that of Noah, and participation in school assemblies, help children to understand their own culture and beliefs and those of other cultures.
67. Teaching is good. Adults observe children and ask questions to challenge their thinking and move them on in their discovery of the world. Children are provided with a wide range of materials and experiences and are encouraged to talk about or to paint and draw what they see. The very good relationships ensure that children are managed well and learn effectively.

Physical development

68. The children's physical skills develop well and most children attain the expected level by the time they enter Year 1. There are ample opportunities to develop skills. Commercial construction kits and jigsaws of increasing difficulty are used with confidence. Tools, such as scissors, pencils and paintbrushes are handled in a range of interesting activities in each class. The nursery children concentrated hard when they coloured and cut out spiral shapes and filled flowerpots with soil, handling tools carefully and safely. The children enjoy going outside and use the available space with developing awareness as they use sit-and-ride toys. Reception children are well co-ordinated and can throw and catch with increasing accuracy and good awareness of others and the space around them. They can run, skip, jump and balance with the expected control and confidence. They mostly have the expected dexterity in hand/eye co-ordination when cutting, sticking and gluing and they colour in and paint satisfactorily.
69. The quality of teaching is good. Staff provide a good range of resources to enable children to develop their skills, especially their finer movements. In a physical education lesson in the hall, reception children made good progress in the development of their skills because a brisk pace was maintained and the teacher had high expectations. The children were trying hard, enjoying the praise and encouragement they received.

Creative development

70. Attainment in creative skills is below the expected level overall, by the end of the Foundation Stage. A significant minority of children have difficulty in communicating their ideas and lack imagination; however many children lack experience of creative activities and the necessary language for play when they enter school, so that this still indicates good progress. Children in all classes have many

opportunities to develop creatively and expressively through music, imaginative play, home role-play, art and design and the beginnings of design and technology. They have a good range of activities that allow them to respond using all their senses. In the nursery, a group of children showed independence and initiative in acting out going on a picnic, although other children play in a more solitary fashion, one child for example playing with the doll's house. Reception children act out different roles in the realistic travel agent. In paintings and drawings, children are developing their awareness of the correct use of colour, although few mix paints independently. Some excellent pencil drawings of fish, however, demonstrate that, in their observation skills, many children exceed expectations.

71. The quality of teaching is good overall. Activities undertaken with the teacher are planned well and children are motivated well by the challenging and interesting tasks. For example, in one of the lessons seen the teacher gave good explanations and modelled the technique of using papier-mâché well. Children knew what was expected of them and were excited by the task of making models of hot air balloons. As a result, good gains were made in learning. However, although children enjoy a range of opportunities to choose and work independently, the lack of adult intervention, for example in role-play, occasionally limits progress. As with other areas of learning, the support assistants make an important contribution to the good progress that children make. They are well briefed and when working with groups of children they intervene appropriately to challenge thinking and extend learning.

ENGLISH

72. Standards in English at the age of seven match the national expectations for pupils of this age. The present cohort of pupils in Year 6 has a wide range of attainment. The target the school has set for attainment in the National Curriculum tests in Year 6 is high. Inspection evidence indicates that the majority of pupils are achieving the expected levels for their age with a minority attaining above and below this level so that, overall, attainment is within the expected range.
73. Standards of attainment are at the expected levels in speaking and listening for the majority of pupils in Years 2 and 6. When pupils enter Year 1, many have a more limited range of vocabulary than is expected of pupils of their age and some still do not speak clearly. They have difficulty in understanding, are lacking in confidence to express their ideas and are hesitant to respond to teachers' questions. Pupils with special educational needs, who are well supported in small groups to promote speaking and listening, have low knowledge and understanding of words and find it difficult to develop and express their ideas more fully. Gifted and talented pupils' skills are extended through opportunities such as drama. In the production of 'Grease', they performed with good levels of confidence. Because the school places a strong emphasis on the development of language and communication skills, pupils make good progress.
74. By the age of seven most pupils demonstrate the ability to listen attentively, to contribute to class discussion, ask questions and respond to their teachers' questions with good levels of confidence. There was a good example of this in a Year 2 class, where, when discussing the Jewish faith and customs, pupils were eager to know more and confidently raised questions and chatted about what they had learned. Their level of communication demonstrated the very good achievement of pupils in their listening and speaking skills during their time in Years 1 and 2. As they move through the school, pupils listen carefully to their teachers and to each other.
75. In Year 6, the majority of pupils' conversational skills are developing well. When discussing their work, the higher and average attaining pupils confidently put forward their views when, for example, comparing personalities in the given text. Most speak independently, fluently and with good expression. The lower attaining pupils are growing in confidence but find it difficult to formulate their thoughts and they speak in shorter sentences.
76. By Year 2 and Year 6 standards in reading are in line with the expected level. Pupils in Year 2 are able to explain the difference between an author and an illustrator and are able to read simple texts with some accuracy. The higher attaining pupils clearly enjoy reading short stories. When reading, 'The Show Must Go On' by Robert Childs, one pupil demonstrated good understanding and talked at great length about what had happened in the story and what would happen next. Average attaining pupils are able to read the alphabetically ordered contents and index pages effectively and show

sound knowledge of the use of a glossary. Pupils with special educational needs use their knowledge of letter sounds to read words and to establish meaning when reading aloud, but they still require support.

77. In Years 4, 5 and 6, pupils extend their reading skills through the challenge of more demanding non-fiction material in books and on the computer. Pupils in Year 6 are presently studying the work of Michael Morpurgo and Jacqueline Wilson. They show good understanding of the texts. A significant minority of pupils still find reading difficult and are hesitant in their reading, but they persevere and have the self-esteem to tackle new words. They can use a dictionary and thesaurus to assist them in their understanding. Many also make good use of their local public library, particularly when they are given research to do for homework. In Year 6, higher and average attaining pupils are confident in the use of information and communication technology to find out information to assist them in their knowledge and understanding in other areas of the curriculum.
78. Throughout the school, pupils take reading books home. There is good support from those parents and carers who regularly hear their child read at home. Unfortunately, their individual reading records are not designed well enough to enable parents to comment on the progress that pupils make. When the two schools amalgamated, a lot of worn and unsuitable library books were rightly discarded. As yet there has not been enough finance to replace these to loan to pupils.
79. Standards in writing in Years 2 and 6 are in line with expected levels. Teachers provide carefully planned opportunities to develop writing skills and therefore pupils make good progress as they move through the school. Most younger pupils form their letters correctly and write simple sentences using full stops and capital letters. However, some pupils still require the assistance of an adult when recording their ideas, in their spelling of simple everyday words and their use of punctuation. Pupils have regular handwriting sessions that are clearly having a good impact on handwriting skills. By the age of seven, most pupils write independently and are beginning to write stories with a beginning, a middle and an end. The higher attaining pupils are beginning to use speech marks. Their spelling of simple words is generally accurate and they are able to use full stops and capital letters appropriately. At times pupils' pronunciation affects their spelling, one such example being where a pupil wrote 'las wick' for 'last week'. Pupils' work includes a good range of writing for different purposes including stories, letters, instructions for making breakfast and poetry. The quantity of work produced is also good. Higher attaining pupils use imaginative vocabulary well. In an 'Autumn' poem, one pupil cleverly created an imaginary scene in the phrase 'leaves are floating'.
80. By Years 5 and 6, most pupils are attaining satisfactory standards in writing. They write imaginatively and with increasing confidence. They are able to write letters, stories, descriptions, reports and instructions. The range of vocabulary, accuracy in spelling and the use of speech marks is good. All but the lowest attaining pupils write in a well developed, joined-up style of writing. Scrutiny of previous work, and their written work in other subjects, demonstrates that higher and lower attaining pupils have made good progress in the presentation and organisation of work. Analysis of their work shows quite clearly that, within the year, there has been a marked improvement in pupils' individual grammatical, spelling and handwriting skills and also in their use of interesting descriptive language. There are still some pupils whose vocabulary range is limited and who need assistance in formulating and recording their ideas. A comparison of records of pupils' earlier attainment with that now, together with observations of pupils' work in lessons and in the books presented for inspection, shows that pupils of all levels of attainment including those with special educational needs are achieving very well.
81. The quality of teaching in the school is very good. There is also some excellent teaching in the infant and junior stages. Because of the wide range of attainment, pupils are taught in three groups of attainment of higher, average and pupils who have been identified as having special educational needs. This enables all pupils to receive more intensive teaching and support to match their particular needs. The work provided for pupils with special educational needs is very carefully planned and, where necessary, specialist teaching and support is provided. This high quality team approach means that pupils learn very well and often results in them rapidly progressing to attain the expected level for their age.

82. The strategies for teaching literacy are very effective. Teachers ensure that lessons include reading, question and answer sessions, written activities and the opportunity for teachers to check the progress in pupils' understanding and knowledge at the end of each lesson. They then plan the next lessons to build on what pupils already know and can do. The very effective use of discussion and skilful use of questions to check understanding of vocabulary develops pupils' confidence in speaking independently, fluently and with good expression. In whole-class shared reading sessions, pupils are successfully encouraged to read fluently with good expression and find information from the text. The features of the most successful teaching are high expectations of pupils in terms of behaviour and the quality of their work. The interesting and challenging lessons enable pupils to make very good gains in their knowledge and skills. In many lessons, the methods used provide a sense of fun. In these lessons, because learning is enjoyable, teaching accelerates the pace of progress that pupils make. In all lessons, teachers ensure that all pupils are fully included. Occasionally, teachers fail to make full use of the opportunities to use their assessments to provide that little extra challenge to stretch pupils' thinking skills even further.
83. The school has effective systems in place to monitor the progress of pupils as they move through the school and good use is made of the National Curriculum tests to identify areas of concern relating to individuals and classes. However, in the sample of work provided, teachers' marking was inconsistent and did not always provide enough advice to pupils on how they could improve their written work.
84. The co-ordinators provide very effective leadership. Their subject knowledge is good. They show good understanding of the developments needed in the subject. In the short space of time since the amalgamation of the two schools, they have worked hard to implement the new policy and whole-school approaches to teaching and learning. A good start has been made in monitoring the quality of teaching and learning across the school. This good initiative is beginning to raise standards in English. The school has good relationships with the secondary schools. Pupils are well prepared to move to their next stage of education.

MATHEMATICS

85. Pupils' attainment in Years 2 and 6 is in line with national expectations. By the end of Year 2, most pupils show a good understanding of place value to 1000, showing confidence when dealing with problems of addition, subtraction and multiplication; division is less well established. Pupils are encouraged to use inverse operations to check their work and show their command of two, five and ten times tables. More capable pupils can use and interpret Venn diagrams and use block graphs to deduce facts such as the favourite sweets within school. They are confident in descriptions of common two and three-dimensional shapes, being able to recount what properties a certain shape has. A Year 1 pupil of higher ability was able to say that a cube consisted of six faces and possessed eight corners in a lesson on properties of shapes taken from a 'feely' bag.
86. Pupils of average ability are confident to add, subtract and multiply two and three digit numbers. They can describe right angles and draw them with accuracy as square corners, as well as being able to solve problems with time difference. Pupils of lower ability demonstrate a good understanding of their two, five and ten times tables, can distinguish sequences of odd and even numbers, identify common two and three dimensional shapes and draw pictures to show their understanding of reflective symmetry. In one lesson, pupils worked on rotating shapes through quarter and half turns.
87. All pupils in Year 2 benefit from teachers' applications of their skills to everyday tasks in their lives, making mathematics relevant to them. In their work on three-dimensional shapes, pupils are adept at identifying common shapes in their lives such as cuboids (tissue boxes), cylinders (toilet rolls) and spheres (tennis balls).
88. All pupils in Year 6 have a good understanding of the four rules of number up to and beyond 1000 in a variety of contexts. Higher ability pupils can confidently change Imperial measures to their metric equivalents. In one class, upon being asked why a gallon was bigger in capacity than a litre, a pupil explained the relationship between a pint and a litre, then converted eight pints into its metric equivalent. Pupils work confidently with percentages and fractions and carry out problems dealing with ratio and proportion, probability and translation of irregular shapes.

89. Pupils of average ability deal confidently with number problems to 1000, can distinguish between mean, median and mode, plot graphs and co-ordinates and use positive and negative numbers when looking at temperature charts. Pupils in one lesson worked in a 'café' to add the total cost of meals from a menu, being able to use their skills to relate the problem to a real life situation. Pupils of lower ability deal confidently with problems in the four rules of number, less confidently with division. They read scales and measure capacity and weights to a good degree of accuracy. In one class, pupils worked out the perimeter of compound shapes by measuring and areas of squares and rectangles by counting squares.
90. All pupils show a very good grasp of mathematical vocabulary, which is emphasised in all lessons. Pupils in Year 2 were able to use such vocabulary such as vertices, co-ordinates and translation in their work on rotation. A Year 5 pupil, when working on costing a holiday to France, was able to determine that, whilst the coach fare was cheaper than the air fare, the latter was 'better value for money'.
91. All pupils are given opportunities to solve problems and this is a feature the school has tried to develop recently, ensuring that pupils understand the need for mathematics skills in their own lives. The development of more complex reasoning, such as induction and deduction, is yet to be honed. A particularly effective aspect of mathematics lessons for older pupils is the identification of key facts in word problems. High levels of speaking and listening are evident in all lessons; teachers do their utmost to question all levels of ability from those identified as being gifted or talented in mathematics, to those who have special educational needs. Boys and girls receive equal challenge and in all lessons are given opportunities to work together and discuss their mathematics. Teachers ensure that all pupils are included; classroom assistants help with less able pupils and are effective in supporting those who have numeracy targets in their individual education plans. During their time in school, all pupils make good progress in mathematics and show great interest in, and enthusiasm for, the subject.
92. The quality of teaching throughout the school is good, with some very good and excellent teaching being seen. Where teaching is good or better, the daily three-part lesson has been successfully introduced. Brisk starts to lessons with challenging mental activities set a demanding tone to the lesson. Teachers use demanding questioning techniques. In a Year 6 class, pupils were asked to check their answers on conversions between Imperial and metric measures using inverse operations. Planning ensures that opportunities for exploration and assessment are well used. Classroom assistants work closely with teachers, particularly in support of less able pupils. In these good lessons, teachers use their subject knowledge to very good effect. Because of teachers' confidence in, and enthusiasm for, the subject, pupils enjoy their mathematics and display exemplary behaviour.
93. Where teaching lacks this sparkle, teachers do not make full use of assessment opportunities at the end of lessons to know what pupils' strengths and weaknesses are. There is less demand for pupils to think about the conclusions to be drawn from their learning and applied in other areas and the use of information and communication technology is not as evident.
94. Use of assessment information is good. All staff are given feedback upon test results and what areas need to be given priority. The school has identified the area of using and applying mathematics as a major area of development and this is evident in pupils' work. Targets in mathematics are set, but the practice is not consistent throughout the school. Whilst work is regularly marked, it lacks suggestions to pupils in how to improve their work.
95. Leadership and management of the subject are very good. Co-ordinators have a clear vision of the future direction of the subject and an action plan is in place to achieve it. Regular consultation takes place; all staff are encouraged to see the work of colleagues in different departments and any guidance obtained from training is disseminated to all staff. Resources are good and used effectively.

SCIENCE

96. Standards in science are in line with national expectations in Year 2 and in Year 6. Pupils make good progress from their low attainment on entry to the school. Achievement of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, is very good.
97. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make good progress in developing their knowledge and understanding of forces. In a good lesson in Year 1, pupils explored how toys moved and sorted them in terms of pushes and pulls. They made predictions and recorded their findings on a worksheet by drawing and writing. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils made tissue paper parachutes and investigated how they fell. They made comparisons between parachutes with and without a weight and observed what happened when they screwed up the paper parachute before dropping it. More capable pupils suggested it floated better when it filled with air. Work in books and on display indicates that infant pupils make very good progress in their learning about life processes and living things. Pupils in Year 1 can sort animals in terms of their skin covering and understand that different animals live in different habitats, while pupils in Year 2 carry out investigations to find out what plants need to grow. They record work in a variety of ways and the more capable pupils in Year 2 are beginning to develop an understanding of fair testing. They state what they found out in their investigations but rarely attempt to give explanations or to make simple links between cause and effect. Their overall progress in scientific enquiry is good.
98. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 make good progress in all areas of their learning. In lessons seen, pupils in Year 3 related their knowledge of transparent, translucent and opaque materials to the formation of shadows and found out, through their investigation, that opaque materials formed the darkest shadows. In an outstanding lesson on thermal insulation, pupils in Year 4 made very good progress in developing their skills of scientific enquiry. They used stopwatches confidently to measure time, recorded their results using scientific vocabulary and showed good understanding of fair testing. In a Year 5 lesson pupils showed clear understanding of life processes and made very good progress in learning about the human life cycle. Pupils in Year 6 demonstrated sound skills of scientific enquiry in planning an investigation into the wet strength of different paper towels. When questioned, they offered good explanations for their results and suggested further investigations to test these. Work in books shows that they are able to plan and carry out a fair test, record their results in tables and state what they found out, but there is little evidence of the collection of measured data presented in charts and graphs. Consequently, pupils in Years 5 and 6 have too few opportunities to identify patterns in data and make generalised conclusions. In their written explanations, there are few examples of pupils relating data and scientific understanding in their explanations of their findings.
99. The quality of teaching and learning in science, based on lessons seen and scrutiny of work on display and in books, is good in Years 1 and 2 and very good in Years 3 to 6. Of the seven lessons seen, teaching in three was very good and in one was excellent. All teachers have a good understanding of the subject and explain ideas clearly. They use questioning well to draw out and develop pupils' understanding. In the best lessons, work is well matched to pupils' needs, providing challenge for the most capable pupils and good support for those with special educational needs. In some classes, good planning sheets are used well to develop pupils' understanding of fair testing. There are good links with literacy. Teachers make a point of explaining scientific vocabulary, they use information books well and provide opportunities in science for a range of writing. Links with numeracy and information and communication technology are adequate, but the collection, presentation and analysis of data all require further development. In most classes, work in books indicates a well-planned range of investigations covering all areas of learning. In Year 6, good quality work sheets are used well to develop and consolidate skills of scientific enquiry. However, in some classes there are not enough opportunities for pupils to plan and carry out investigations and more capable pupils are not provided with work that is challenging enough. Infant pupils are not regularly encouraged to explain their findings in terms of simple cause and effect statements, for example 'I think this happened because'. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have too few opportunities to collect, present and analyse measurable data in order to identify patterns and reach conclusions relating their scientific understanding to the data.
100. The science co-ordinator has been in post since September 2003 and has a good understanding of ways to develop the subject. She has already put in place a sound policy and scheme of work to ensure continuity in learning and progress throughout the school. Targets for scientific enquiry are included in the scheme to aid assessment and it is planned to develop an assessment model of

identified outcomes for different groups of pupils in each year group. Through her monitoring, the co-ordinator is aware of the need to further develop the teaching and learning of scientific enquiry skills so that the good practice seen in some classes is applied consistently throughout the school. To this end, a sabbatical is planned for January 2004 to enable her to develop these aspects. A science club is organised for gifted and talented pupils and these pupils achieve very well. Twelve junior pupils attended the club and all received nationally accredited certificates for the work they completed. There are very good links with the local secondary school which facilitate pupils' transfer. Pupils in Year 6 visit the secondary school for lessons in the laboratories each week and they are currently carrying out a bridging project that will continue when they are in Year 7 to provide continuity of their learning. Resources for the subject are adequate and areas for further development, in particular data-logging equipment, have been identified.

ART AND DESIGN

101. During the inspection it was only possible to observe art and design lessons for pupils in the juniors. Evidence of standards for infant age pupils was taken from a scrutiny of work, displays, discussion with the co-ordinator and a scrutiny of teachers' planning. Overall, attainment for pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 is in line with that expected for their age, although standards exceed expectations in some areas of the curriculum.
102. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 use a range of media and techniques successfully to paint, draw and print as they experiment with colour, shape and texture. By the age of seven, these good foundations to learning result in pupils working confidently and creatively. They develop their skills well as they go through the school, so that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress and achieve well compared with their prior attainment. For example, in Year 1, pupils are beginning to explore their use of colour as they paint bright and attractive pictures of animals and insects in connection with their topic on 'minibeasts'. By the end of Year 2, pupils are already using their skills to good effect as they produce work in the style of well known artists. For example, pupils studied the work of L S Lowry and produced impressive sketches in his style, demonstrating a good awareness of his use of dark and muted tones for artistic effect. Paintings of seascapes in the style of Van Gogh are a further example of pupils working confidently and creatively, as they first used a colour wash for the background, before sponging clouds and finally painting the foreground. Pupils' sketching techniques are well developed and observational sketches show a keen eye for detail and line.
103. In Years 3 to 6, pupils continue to develop different techniques in a variety of media, with the best progress currently being made in Years 4 and 5, where skills are well developed. An example of this is in a Year 5 project, 'talking textiles', where pupils are in the process of designing pages for a book for younger children based on the story of 'The Rainbow Fish'. Pupils' designs reflect a range of imaginative approaches and use tactile and visual elements well in order to attract young readers. Pupils in Year 6, use the skills they have acquired in earlier years well to produce artwork of high quality. In their project on 'A Sense of Place', there are good links with other subjects as pupils combine their artwork with a geographical and historical study of the city of Liverpool. Their paintings and pastels of local sites and buildings show imaginative use of colour and good use of the techniques of blending and shading for effect. Observational sketches demonstrate a good use of perspective and in the use of shading for tone. Junior age pupils use sketchbooks effectively to investigate and draft their ideas, practise techniques and provide a record of progress. However, although pupils achieve good standards in art, there is limited evidence of craft and design work in the third dimension throughout the school. There are a few examples of where information and communication technology has been used to generate ideas and produce images, as when pupils generated patterns in the style of William Morris. Generally, though, it is not used enough to broaden their knowledge and understanding of art or in the use of computer graphics to create pictures.
104. The quality of teaching is good, with some very good features. Scrutiny of display and observations of the two lessons seen indicates that teachers have secure subject knowledge and lessons are well planned to provide interesting and motivating tasks to motivate the pupils. Attractive displays demonstrate that pupils' work is clearly valued. In lessons, pupils are praised and encouraged so they are keen to give of their best. In the lessons seen, very good relationships had been established and pupils were managed well. In one lesson, where teaching was very good, the teacher had high

expectations and transmitted her own enthusiasm to the pupils, who, in turn, were excited by the challenging task so that they worked with intense concentration and obvious enjoyment.

105. The subject is well managed by a knowledgeable and committed co-ordinator who, in the short time since the new school opened, has worked hard to formulate an art policy for the new school and to successfully implement a whole-school scheme of work that ensures that skills are progressively developed. She has correctly prioritised areas for development and will begin to monitor teaching and standards more closely when art becomes the priority of the school development cycle. Formal assessment procedures are in the process of being developed and the co-ordinator has begun to collect an annotated portfolio of pupils' work, to provide guidance on expected standards of attainment. The curriculum is enhanced by the opportunity for pupils to join the school's art, design and technology club. Art and design makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

106. Although it was only possible to observe one lesson during the inspection, it is clear from displays of pupils' work, conversations with pupils and the co-ordinator and a scrutiny of teachers' planning, that standards meet national expectations at the ages of seven and 11. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well.
107. Pupils acquire skills in measuring, cutting, shaping and joining as they move through the school. For example, pupils in Year 2 cut, shaped and joined material and card to make sun hats. Their design booklets demonstrate a growing awareness of the processes involved in the subject. They know that a design can be altered and modified and were, for example, encouraged to consider the function of their hats and the suitability of different materials. They were encouraged to reflect how they might have improved their finished hats, which had a positive effect on their thinking skills. The finished hats are displayed and the finished quality is at least satisfactory, with many finished to a high standard. For example, a higher attaining pupil used knowledge gained from a science project to select material that is light and easily manipulated. In his design he included material to protect the neck, because he is aware of the dangers of exposure to the sun. Pupils are introduced to a variety of resources such as large construction apparatus, paper, card and fabric.
108. By the age of 11, pupils use technology books to record the processes they have studied in completing a task. For example, pupils worked with a partner to produce slippers. They considered the function, purpose and user before producing detailed plans, including flow charts and carefully labelled diagrams with accurate measurements. In the one lesson observed, Year 6 pupils were making very good progress to produce a fairground model with a rotating part. Pupils used their own experience of fairgrounds when considering their designs and were effectively drawing on their technology skills to decide whether their finished product would include an oscillating or vertically rotating ride.
109. Pupils make good progress and achieve well as they learn about the processes involved in design and technology and as they develop their skills in the use of tools and materials. They have very good attitudes to the subject. They behave very well and engage enthusiastically and sensibly in discussions, respecting each other's opinions. No overall judgement can be made on the quality of teaching, but in the lesson seen it was very good. The lesson was extremely well planned and conducted at a brisk pace so that pupils were given maximum opportunity for practical involvement. The teacher demonstrated very secure subject knowledge in her clear explanations and good use of questions so pupils' knowledge and understanding were extended very well. A pupil with special educational needs was fully included and made the same progress as the rest of the class because of the high level of effective support received. Pupils were very well challenged by the teacher's high expectations. They rose to the challenge with concentration and enthusiasm.
110. The curriculum is broad and balanced in planning and communicating ideas, making a good variety of products and in evaluation skills. The use of information and communication technology in both infants and juniors is satisfactory overall. Pupils apply their numeracy skills effectively to measure and estimate and they write for a range of purposes throughout their projects.

111. In the short time since the new school opened, the initial emphasis has been appropriately placed on the core areas of the curriculum. However, the co-ordinator has made a good start to the provision for the subject. She has correctly prioritised areas for improvement on her action plan, established a subject policy and presided over the introduction of a new scheme of work that is based on nationally recommended guidelines, adapted to meet the needs of the school. Formal assessment procedures are in the process of being established. There are adequate resources for the subject, which are used well.

GEOGRAPHY

112. Standards in geography are in line with national expectations in Year 2 and just in line in Year 6. From their low attainment on entry to the school pupils make good progress in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory progress in Years 3 to 6. The achievement of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, is good throughout the school.

113. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make good progress in the development of early mapping skills and understanding of geographical places. Pupils in Year 2 use directional language well and can use symbols to represent geographical features on a map and identify their location using numbered grid squares. On a local walk they identified geographical features such as the church and the post office and represented these well on maps using information and communication technology. They understand the difference between a city and a country and can identify Liverpool and the capital cities of the United Kingdom on a map. In an excellent lesson, pupils in Year 2 showed very good recall and understanding of the geographical features of the island of St Lucia. They compared the island with the United Kingdom and the most capable explained, using a map of the world, that St Lucia is hotter because it is nearer the equator while the United Kingdom is nearer to the North Pole.

114. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 make good progress in developing geographical skills and in their knowledge and understanding of different environments and climates. They make satisfactory progress in the development of higher order thinking skills, for example, raising geographical questions based on their knowledge and understanding, comparing their own and others' views about environmental change and considering the effect of physical and human processes on the environment and on people's lives. In Year 4, pupils make comparisons of life in different European countries and compare their own life styles with those of people in an Indian village. They mark towns, cities, rivers and motorways on maps and have produced a bar chart of motorways they have travelled on. In Year 6, pupils carried out a detailed river study on their field trip to Colomendy using geographical skills well to measure the depth, width and rate of flow. They can compare different environments in terms of climate, including the polar regions, deserts and rainforests. The most capable pupils can list clear arguments for and against a quarry development, considering positive and negative effects on the environment. They use ordnance survey and atlas symbols appropriately in their map work, produce legends, use grid references and calculate distances on a map using a simple scale. In a very good lesson seen, pupils identified physical and human features of the island of Barbados on a map and, through the very clear teaching and questioning skills of the teacher, made very good progress in their understanding of why particular features are located where they are.

115. The quality of teaching and learning is good throughout the school. Two lessons were seen, one very good and the other excellent and work in books indicates good teaching and learning of most aspects. In the lessons seen, teachers showed a very good knowledge and understanding of the subject and their clear explanations and very good use of questioning developed pupils' understanding very well. Work was well planned to take account of different levels of ability and the lessons were exciting, engaging the pupils' interest and ensuring good attention to their work. Work in books indicates that map skills are well taught throughout the school and there are good links with information and communication technology and appropriate opportunities to develop literacy and numeracy skills. However, in some junior classes, work in books consists largely of worksheets and copied information where pupils fill in missing words. There are not enough opportunities to raise questions, compare opinions or consider effects of environmental changes and explain the reasons for change.

116. The co-ordinator for geography has only taken on the role since January 2003, but has made a good beginning by putting in place a clear policy focusing on progression throughout the school from the

Foundation Stage onwards. She has carried out an audit of resources and identified appropriate areas for development. The whole-school scheme of work is not yet fully in place but a nationally accredited scheme is currently being trialled and will be implemented throughout the school from September 2003. An appropriate system for the assessment of pupils' attainment and progress is planned for implementation alongside the scheme of work. The co-ordinator has a clear idea of how to proceed and a full monitoring programme is identified in the action plan for the next academic year. She now needs to consider ways to develop staff expertise in the teaching of the higher order geographical skills mentioned above. An appropriate range of planned visits and field trips enhance the teaching and learning of geography throughout the school and the co-ordinator has plans to develop these and set up Internet links with schools in different countries.

HISTORY

117. Standards in history are in line with national expectations in Year 2 but are below national expectations in Year 6. From their low attainment on entry to the school pupils make satisfactory progress throughout the school. Their achievement is good in the infants and satisfactory in the juniors.
118. Work in books indicates that infant pupils have a sound knowledge and understanding about a range of famous people and historical events. In Year 2, their work includes written accounts about the young Princess Victoria, Guy Fawkes and Christopher Columbus and factual reports of the plague and the fire of London. They made a good beginning in the development of skills of historical enquiry when they compared family life in the present day and in the 1920s and compared their own experiences of Christmas with those of children during the Second World War. They wrote their own descriptions of the life of an orphan in the early 20th century.
119. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 make good progress in the development of their skills of historical enquiry. Pupils in Year 3 show sound understanding of life in Ancient Egypt and, in a good lesson seen, used research skills well to extract information from fact sheets, an Internet web site and a range of books. In their study of the Romans, Year 4 pupils can identify some of the changes to life in Britain as a result of the Roman occupation – straight roads, hot water and city names. They have considered reasons why the Vikings invaded Britain and identified the need for land and wealth and better climate. They can describe what life was like in England at the time of the Romans, the Vikings and the Tudors and carry out research using a range of books and the Internet to find out about different aspects of Tudor life.
120. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 make satisfactory progress in learning about historical events, people in history and aspects of life at different times in the past, but their skills of historical enquiry are below those expected for their age and their progress in skills development is less than satisfactory. In Year 5, they can describe life in Ancient Egypt and in Tudor times, including a description of life on board a Tudor ship and the consideration of the reasons for the voyages of Sir Francis Drake. In Year 6, they can record key facts about historical people and events, for example, Queen Victoria, Florence Nightingale, the life and beliefs of the Aztecs and the history of the growth of Liverpool. Pupils in Year 6 can describe what life was like on board a slave ship as part of their work on the history of Liverpool. In their study of Victorian life, they can compare the key features of life in Victorian society for rich and poor people and describe the feelings and experiences of a servant in a Victorian household and a factory worker in a cotton mill. They produced some convincing points in a written argument against the education of girls. However, there are not enough examples in their written work of research in which they have combined evidence from different sources. They do not adequately consider and record the reasons for historical events and what effect they have in terms of changes and impact on life at the time and later.
121. No infant history lessons were observed during the inspection but work in books and on display indicates that teaching and learning is good in Years 1 and 2. Pupils are encouraged to present their learning in different ways and links with literacy lessons are good. For example, there are lots of opportunities for pupils to write descriptive accounts of life in the past and to develop their research skills by extracting information from fact sheets and recording it in their own words. Marking is used well to develop and assess pupils' understanding. Teachers write well-focused questions at the end of some pieces of work and pupils respond appropriately to these, developing further their

understanding of the topic covered. Three lessons were observed in Years 3 to 6 and these and work in pupils' books indicate that teaching and learning are satisfactory overall with some very good teaching taking place in Year 4 and good teaching observed in Year 3. There are satisfactory links with work in literacy and good links with information and communication technology in Years 3 and 4. In the very good lesson seen in Year 4, pupils used the Internet well and a good range of books to carry out research into different areas of Tudor life. The very good support by the teacher and a student, high expectations and the teacher's excellent questioning skills together ensured that pupils learned very well and were eager to share their findings with each other. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, made good progress in their understanding of Tudor life and in the development of their research skills. Work in books in Years 5 and 6 consists mainly of copied work where pupils fill in missing words and worksheets of questions or colouring in. There are not enough planned opportunities for pupils to record work in their own way and to express ideas and opinions in writing. There are some good examples of descriptive writing linked with literacy work, where pupils record life in different periods through diary entries or letters but too few opportunities for them to write about causes and effects of historical events or to consider different viewpoints of prominent historical figures. There is little evidence of research in which pupils combine information and data from a range of sources. In a Year 5 lesson about the life and work of John Logie Baird there were not enough books for pupils to carry out research and there were no opportunities for them to make inferences about Baird's life and work.

122. The co-ordinator for history has been in post since September 2002 and in this time has worked well to produce a whole-school scheme of work to ensure a continuity and progression of knowledge, understanding and skills throughout the school. She has identified clearly defined learning outcomes for pupils of different levels of ability in each year group so that teachers can plan work to match the different needs of all pupils and assess their understanding of the work taught. This scheme will be fully implemented from September 2003 and at present some classes are already using the scheme with good effect. The teaching and learning of history is enhanced by visits to local places of historic interest linked to pupils' work. Pupils have visited Croxteth Park, Wigan pier and Styal mill to develop their understanding of life in Victorian times and Year 6 are currently studying the history of Liverpool and exploring the city to support this work. The co-ordinator is very enthusiastic and has a good understanding of the way to improve teaching and learning in the subject throughout the school. Resources to support teaching and learning of history are adequate for Years 1 and 2, but in need of further development for Years 3 to 6.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

123. Standards are above national expectations throughout the school. The school gives high priority both in the teaching of the subject and the development of skills across the curriculum. Very good timetabled use of a new computer suite is ensuring that this key area in the school's development plan is being addressed with an urgency and enthusiasm that is valued by all staff and pupils.
124. Technical difficulties that caused problems in the past have now been resolved with regular technical support. A structured programme of work ensures that pupils make good progress in their time in school to develop a bank of skills that can be used in other subjects. Pupils in Year 1 make their own passports complete with photographs they have taken using a digital camera. Pupils in Year 6 use PowerPoint to produce a brochure extolling the virtues of Liverpool as a tourist destination. All pupils have access to a wide range of skills in the subject; with there being particularly good support for pupils with special educational needs and those identified as being gifted in the subject. The latter were able to spend a weekend at an educational centre devoted specifically to the subject, as well as attending an after school club at a nearby football club.
125. In Year 2, pupils have used word processing to experiment with different formats and fonts to design posters and use specific programs to draw maps and write fairy stories. They can obtain information and use it to formulate a simple database. No use of control technology was seen during inspection.
126. In Year 6, pupils can create a series of documents to demonstrate good skills in word processing and design. They use programs to create databases and produce graphs and spreadsheets to show favourite vegetables in the school. Pupils use the Internet and CD-ROMs to obtain information about Liverpool and the history of ethnic minorities in the city. The school encourages pupils of all ages to

use digital cameras, ranging from photographs of the school council, recording the visit of an African drummer to the school, demonstrations of circus skills and records of visits to outdoor education centres in North Wales. No work was seen with control devices or on-screen microscopes during inspection. This is an area that the school has identified for development in the future.

127. The quality of teaching is very good. This is as a result of recent in-service training that all staff have undertaken. They have a clear scheme of work to determine progression in experiences and skills. Lessons are well planned and organised. Teachers make very good use of interactive whiteboards, laptops and projectors to demonstrate skills by teachers. All pupils are actively encouraged to use digital cameras and explore the technology with hands-on experience. Very good direction and support is given both to pupils with special educational needs and those deemed to be gifted in the subject. Boys and girls have equal opportunities to participate and the use of adult support in lessons is a particular strength. Teachers have high expectations of what pupils are to achieve and what behaviour should be. Very good demonstrations by teachers and classroom assistants, together with probing questions, ensure that all lessons have good pace.
128. The use of information and communication technology across the curriculum is good. It is included in planning and teachers are aware of the need to use it in all lessons where possible. In one design and technology lesson in Year 6, pupils were able to review a presentation designed by the teacher to look at different types of rotating fairground rides. In a mathematics lesson in Year 5, the use of an interactive whiteboard enabled pupils to see information on contrasting holidays. Pupils use the Internet to obtain information to support Black History month, they use CD-ROMs to find out how the Victorians used to live, how Pasteur and Jenner researched their subjects and how St. Patrick's Day is celebrated in different countries. Particularly good work was seen in the use of spreadsheets to produce block and pie graphs to show favourite vegetables in the school.
129. Leadership and management of the subject are very good from a knowledgeable and enthusiastic co-ordinator. Initial technical problems have now been dealt with, teachers have been provided with extensive in-service training and support is available to ensure the extensive range of resources is well used. A clear outline plan for the future direction of the subject is in place for the next academic year.

MUSIC

130. Pupils in Year 2 attain standards that are in line with those expected nationally. Pupils make good progress as they move through the school and in Year 6 they are attaining standards in performance above the levels expected for pupils of their age.
131. In Years 1 and 2, pupils make satisfactory progress in their musical knowledge and skills. During hymn practice, pupils in Years 1 and 2 demonstrated growing confidence in performance. When singing a satisfactory range of songs from memory, they kept good time and showed developing awareness of patterns in music. The pupils who played an untuned percussion accompaniment demonstrated satisfactory knowledge of the changing tempo. Because pupils with special educational needs receive additional encouragement they successfully participate alongside their friends and achieve very well.
132. Discussion with a group of pupils in Year 6 shows that they have created percussion parts and composed simple melodies to accompany text. They were eager to sing a song from a summer show called 'A Holiday and a Half', which they performed with good confidence, expression and control.
133. A number of pupils, who wish to learn to play an instrument, have additional instrumental tuition. These include flute, violin and clarinet. A good number of pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 play the recorder. Some also have additional singing lessons with a member of the school staff. Those heard playing show growing musical and technical skills. The standard of their musicianship is good.
134. Only one lesson was observed in the infant department. Scrutiny of planning, the quality of pupils' singing and playing and the involvement of the teacher in an assembly, all contribute to the judgement that standards of teaching are satisfactory. This singing session also supported a sense

of community and enjoyment. Teaching in the junior department is good with some excellent teaching being seen. Teachers plan carefully, choosing music and activities that are interesting so that pupils are eager to participate. In the excellent lesson, the brisk pace maintained pupils' interest and the high challenge and the enthusiasm of the teacher was reciprocated by the pupils, resulting in high achievement. In all lessons, good use of resources and the use of appropriate musical language increased pupils' knowledge. Because teachers provide encouragement and praise, pupils with special educational needs are fully included and as a result gain the confidence to perform individually. A good range of music representing other cultures was played in Year 4 and records show Year 5 have studied music from all sorts of backgrounds, including African traditions. However, throughout the school there are missed opportunities to extend pupils' musical appreciation, knowledge of composers and styles by playing music at the start of the day, during breaks and at times in class assemblies.

135. Pupils' behaviour during lessons is exemplary. They are eager to learn and work hard and respond positively to their teachers. They are courteous and show respect for other pupils' contributions and pleasure in their own and others' performances.
136. Leadership of the subject is very good. The co-ordinator is a talented musician and is therefore able to impart knowledge to staff and pupils. A good start has been made in raising teachers' confidence in teaching the subject. The new scheme is assisting teachers in their planning. The co-ordinator is soon to have a short sabbatical to enable full implementation. The use of assessment is an area the school has identified for further development. There has been a high emphasis on performance. A great initiative was where professional dance, drama and singing teachers worked with a large group of pupils, to prepare them for their performance of 'Grease' in the Neptune Theatre in Liverpool. This provided a wonderful opportunity for pupils to extend their musical gifts, develop self-esteem, their speaking skills and also their spiritual and social development.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

137. It was only possible to see games and athletics during the inspection, but in these areas of the curriculum standards are in line with expectations at ages seven and 11.
138. By the age of seven, Year 2 pupils demonstrate satisfactory control as they use simple hockey sticks to dribble a puck around markers. They can use space effectively as they manipulate the puck, and work well in teams.
139. Pupils continue to develop their games skills effectively as they go through the school. Year 3 pupils control tennis balls well as they move around the playground. By Year 5, pupils demonstrate their skills of attacking and defending and make good progress in team participation as they play a simple invasion game, Kabbadi. This lesson created good links with geography and provided well for the development of multi-cultural awareness. Pupils in Year 6 demonstrated satisfactory standards of attainment as they practised sprinting and jumping. As they go through the school, pupils come to understand the importance of exercise for good health. A culture of improvement through evaluation is beginning to embed itself through the school.
140. Pupils in Years 4 and 6 have the opportunity to learn to swim and by the time they are 11, most can swim 25 metres. There is very good provision for extra-curricular activities, including girls' and boys' football, athletics, cross-country running, netball, rounders, badminton and touch rugby. This is helped by support received from a well-known sports company, who send football coaches into the school. Pupils' learning is further enhanced by the opportunities for involvement in competitive sport in athletics, cross-country running and football. The school has recently been celebrating its success in a local football tournament, where the boys' team was third and the girls' team was runner up.
141. In lessons, the attitudes and behaviour of pupils are good. They are sensible and often mature and have regard for the safety aspects of the subject. Pupils are always appropriately dressed and enter and leave the hall, playground and playing field in an orderly fashion. Because of the very good relationships between teachers and pupils, they listen attentively and are very willing to contribute

sensibly to evaluation and discussion. They work with effort and concentration and are developing a keen sense of sportsmanship.

142. The quality of teaching is good. Appropriate routines have been well established and lessons are thoroughly planned. The teachers and support staff take an active part in the lessons and in doing so provide good role models. Teachers give good explanations and, in most lessons, encourage the aspect of evaluation. This is having a positive influence on the attainment of all pupils. Teachers' subject knowledge is at least satisfactory and is complemented by the high standard of general teaching skills that most of the teachers exhibit. The direct teaching of strategies enables pupils to improve their performance, as for example, when they were instructed to hold the hockey sticks lower for greater control. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, are well included and their contributions are valued. All pupils make good progress in their learning and achieve well compared with their prior attainment.
143. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and committed and has succeeded in maintaining a high profile for the subject within the school. However, his role is as yet underdeveloped because physical education has not yet become a priority of the school's development plan. He will shortly be given non-contact time to monitor teaching and standards. He is aware of the need to develop assessment procedures to effectively track individuals' strengths and weaknesses. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' social development through the opportunities provided to work collaboratively and in developing pupils' self-confidence.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

144. Pupils attain good standards in religious education at the ages of seven and 11, that fully meet the requirements of those expected in the locally Agreed Syllabus.
145. By the age of seven, pupils reach good levels in their knowledge and understanding and demonstrate growing appreciation of their own and others' beliefs. In Year 2, pupils show a growing awareness that there are other faiths than Christianity. Pupils have learnt about Christian and Hindu worship. They are knowledgeable about diva lamps, rangoli patterns and discuss dress and artefacts in worship. In one lesson, pupils showed good understanding of Shabbat and were able to describe in detail the special meal using the correct Hebrew terms. They were also able to make connections with the Christian faith. Discussion with them about their earlier work demonstrates growth in knowledge of Hindu traditions and practices, knowledge of Moses, that the holy book is called a Bible in the Christian faith and a Torah in the Jewish faith and that the Rabbi is the equivalent of a priest or vicar.
146. By Year 6 pupils show deeper knowledge and understanding of different faiths. Their earlier work includes symbols used in Christian worship and the meaning of baptism, confirmation and communion. In one Year 5 lesson, pupils listened to the story of 'the turtle and the fish'. Because of the way the story was presented, pupils grew in understanding of the difficult concept of Nirvana. More recently, pupils in Year 6 have visited St Aidan's Church. They show good understanding that saints are important inspirational figures in the Christian faith. In discussion about their previous work, they are able to talk about distinctive features of religious traditions and similarities that exist. They use and understand the appropriate language, show growing understanding of symbolism and good knowledge of the diversity of religion.
147. The quality of teaching is very good. The teachers have a secure knowledge of the new syllabus. Lessons are very well prepared. Questioning is used very well to encourage pupils to think about issues and share their views. The use of appropriate vocabulary and explanation of the meanings of words broaden pupils' knowledge. Work in the subject also supports pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development as well as their literacy skills. Very good use is also made of information and communication technology. Content is challenging and the methods used are interesting. Because teachers go to great trouble to choose and prepare relevant resources, pupils gain very good understanding and achieve very well. All pupils are fully included. Work is adapted to meet the needs of the pupils with special educational needs and there are sensitive arrangements made for pupils of the Jehovah's Witness faith to do work relevant to their own religion.

148. Leadership of the subject is very effective. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable. Another member of staff has recently attended a course on the introduction of the revised policy and scheme to assist her in raising standards in teaching and learning. The school is following the locally Agreed Syllabus and this has assisted teachers well in their planning. The attractive displays in the classrooms and corridors give religious education a high profile and draw good attention to the religious symbols and associated vocabulary. The co-ordinator has not yet had the opportunity for formal monitoring within classes and there are plans for her to undertake a sabbatical to further her knowledge. There has recently been a visit to a local church and a visit from a vicar which enabled pupils to seek further knowledge first hand. The co-ordinator is in the process of getting together a package of places of worship to visit and more outside speakers representing the wider range of faiths.