

INSPECTION REPORT

STOCKTON WOOD COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Speke, Liverpool

LEA area: Liverpool

Unique reference number: 133338

Headteacher: Mrs S Stacey

Reporting inspector: Mrs H. R. Williams
22284

Dates of inspection: 24th – 27th March 2003

Inspection number: 249063

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

© Crown copyright 2003

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

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary with Nursery

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 – 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Stockton Wood Road
Speke
Liverpool
Merseyside
Postcode: L24 3TU

Telephone number: 0151 4862471

Fax number: 0151 4480305

Appropriate authority: Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr Higgins

Date of previous inspection: n/a

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
22284	Heather Williams	Registered inspector	Art and design	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements. How well are pupils taught?
11358	Vicki Lamb	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?
17756	Heather Monaghan	Team inspector	Science Design & technology	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
2759	Derek Sleightholme	Team inspector	Geography History	How well is the school led and managed?
22518	Barbara Darley	Team inspector	Foundation stage Mathematics Music	
22704	Garry Williams	Team inspector	Information & communication technology Religious education Education inclusion	
5439	Garth Jones	Team inspector	English	
24361	Elizabeth Newby	Team inspector	Physical education	

The inspection contractor was:

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

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

The Complaints Manager
Inspection Quality Division
The Office for Standards in Education
Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	7
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	12
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	15
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	18
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	20
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	23
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	24
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	28
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	30
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	35

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Stockton Wood Community Primary School was formed in September 2001 when the L.E.A. amalgamated Stockton Wood Infant School and Stockton Wood Junior School. The school serves a large estate of housing association owned property in an area recognised as having high levels of social and economic disadvantage. The school is housed in a 1940 two-storey building, which provides extensive accommodation but is in very poor condition. The school caters for pupils aged from three to 11 years. There are 370 pupils on roll, the vast majority are British white. There are no pupils learning English as an additional language. There are 163 pupils on the special needs register, one of whom has a statement of special educational needs. At 52.4 percent, the number of pupils on free school meals is significantly higher than the national average. The school is part of Speke Garston Education Action Zone and Excellence in Cities. A grant aided Parents' Computer Project is based in the school as is a Parent School Partnership Project. Attainment on entry to the nursery is overall well below average and attainment into Year 1 this year is below what might be expected.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school is now generally effective. It has only functioned as a primary school for eighteen months. In that period it had an acting head teacher for fifteen months who deferred many important decisions until the arrival of the permanent head teacher. Now the school is tackling identified weaknesses carefully through the positive leadership of the recently appointed head teacher. Although, standards are generally, low the overall quality of teaching is satisfactory enabling pupils to make sound progress throughout the school. There is a new climate of increased expectations, which is beginning to have a positive impact on standards and the quality of learning. The head teacher provides good leadership. Given the circumstances of the school, there is satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The head teacher, with the support of the senior management, provides good leadership and educational direction
- The attitudes and behaviour of the pupils are good
- Pupils show very positive attitudes to their learning and to the school
- Provision for pupils spiritual, moral and social education is good
- The school has built up a good working relationship with partner schools
- The absence of oppressive behaviour including bullying, sexism and racism is good
- The procedures of monitoring and promoting good behaviour are very good
- Good use is made of resources, including specific grants

What could be improved

- Standards in English, mathematics, science, geography, history and information and communication technology, especially in the junior years
- The effectiveness of the governors and of subject leaders in influencing and monitoring improvements in teaching, learning and standards
- The impact of assessment procedures on standards, planning and the curriculum
- The quality and range of learning opportunities to ensure that a primary ethos is established with a progression of skills and knowledge building upon previous learning in science, information and communication technology and the foundation subjects
- Ensure that all statutory requirements are met. Provision of swimming in physical education and control technology in information and communication technology for Year 6
- Attendance rate for many pupils
- The information given to parents so that they can contribute to their children's learning at home as well as at school

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

This is a new school amalgamated in September 2001 and has not been previously inspected. No comparison can be made as to improvement.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	2000	2001	2002	2002	
English	N/A	N/A	E*	E	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E very low E*
mathematics	N/A	N/A	E*	E*	
science	N/A	N/A	E*	E	

The above table shows the results in English, mathematics and science are very low within the lowest five per cent when compared to all school nationally. In comparison with schools with pupils from similar background with over 50 per cent entitlement to free school meals, standards in mathematics are still very low, but attainment in English and science is well below average.

Pupils' performance in the tests for Year 6 has been affected by various factors: well above average levels of special needs that were not supported due to lack of a special needs coordinator for a number of years, a very unsettled period for both members of staff and pupils and very low attainment on entry of all pupils when the school opened in September 2001. The school is providing an effective education now, and standards are rising. Currently standards in English in Year 2 are as expected nationally, but standards in English and science in Year 6 are below what is nationally expected. In mathematics, pupils in Year 2 are attaining standards below national expectations and pupils in Year 6 are well below those expected nationally. The school is not on course to reach the 2003 targets, which are very challenging and unrealistic.

Children's attainment on entry to the nursery is well below expectations for this age group. Progress is satisfactory overall, but due to the significant gaps in the children's knowledge and skills they are still well below national expectation when they enter the reception classes. By the end of the reception standards are well below expectation for pupils of their age.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. The majority of pupils enjoy school and are enthusiastic about all aspects of school life. They work and play well together. They have a good attitude to work. Pupils demonstrate a keen interest in their lessons and the majority listen attentively to their teachers.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils display good behaviour both in lessons and around the school. Pupils show respect for one another and co-operate well. The school has clear rules and expectations as to how pupils should behave and they respond well to these. There was one exclusion this year.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Relationships between adults and pupils, and between pupils themselves, are positive. The attitude of pupils towards pupils with special educational needs are good.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. Well below the national average. The head teacher has introduced several initiatives, which is positively impacting upon attendance and the school hopes will permanently improve attendance. The majority of pupils arrive on time.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Satisfactory	Good	Satisfactory

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

The quality of teaching and learning overall is satisfactory. There are no overall weaknesses in teaching, but there are a few individual examples of unsatisfactory teaching in some classes and subjects. There were only four unsatisfactory lessons during the inspection. When teaching is unsatisfactory it is most frequently related to weak subject knowledge and skills, slow pace and low expectations. Planning does not take into account pupils' prior knowledge and attainment. Opportunities are missed to extend pupils' knowledge. The consistently sound and sometimes better teaching in the nursery and reception classes ensures all children make satisfactory progress. Overall the teaching is satisfactory for pupils in Years 1 to 6 in literacy and numeracy, with examples of good, very good and excellent teaching. Where teaching is effective in raising standards, teachers have good strategies for promoting learning at a very fast pace. Teachers' subject knowledge is often good and they are very enthusiastic about the subject. There is a very good working partnership between teacher and teaching assistant. Planning is clear and detailed and takes in pupils' prior knowledge and attainment. There are plenty of challenges for the more able pupils. There are very high expectations and targets are shared with the pupils. Very positive attitudes are promoted and there is a high work ethic.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory for the nursery and reception classes and Years 1 and 2, but it is unsatisfactory for Years 3 to 6 due to the statutory requirement for swimming not being met and the lack of control technology and data logging in information and communication technology for Year 6.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. There are teaching assistants who support these pupils. The individual education plans are relevant to the needs of these pupils. They make satisfactory progress against their individual education plans.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good. Pupils are clearly taught why actions are right or wrong. There are opportunities in and out of lessons for pupils to learn skills for playing and working together constructively.
How well the school cares for its pupils	There are good procedures for child protection and health and safety. The school takes good care of its pupils and provides good role models.
How well the school works in partnership with parents	Satisfactory. There is good attendance at parents' evening and functions where pupils perform. Very recently parents have received newsletters, but parents did not feel well informed about their children's progress.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The current head teacher has quickly made a positive impact by improving day-to-day routines, tightening up timekeeping and giving the school a clear sense of direction. In the space of two months she has accurately assessed the strength and weaknesses of the school and has drawn up action statements to support raising of standards, aspects of teaching, school policies and procedures, subject development and the leadership roles of co-ordinators and governors. Insufficient attention has been given to establishing a consistent primary ethos across the school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Unsatisfactory. For the first eighteen months of the school's existence there were a number of statutory requirements not carried out. The present head teacher has established an effective anti-racism policy.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Unsatisfactory. The school has analysed the data from the statutory assessments, but this information has not been used to raise standards or to guide improvement in teaching. Subject leaders in the foundation subjects do not monitor the quality of teaching and learning and therefore cannot share good practice throughout the school.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. Financial arrangements are sound. Specific funding is deployed as intended and full use is made of the funding available. The accommodation is extensive, but it is very poor condition.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That their children like school. • Behaviour and attitudes are good. • Parents feel able to approach the school if they have any problems. • That the school has high expectations for their children. • The school helps their children to become mature and responsible. • That the school is well managed and led. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents did not feel their children were making good progress at school. • Not all parents felt their children received the right amount of homework. • Parents did not feel that the teaching was good throughout the school. • They felt that they would like to receive more information about how their children were getting on at school. • Parents would like to see a greater range of activities outside lessons.

There were only 26 questionnaires returned. The inspectors agree with all the positive comments and with the exception of the range of activities outside school also agree with the parents on the improvements required. At the moment pupils are only making satisfactory progress and the teaching is only satisfactory overall.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. When this new school opened in 2001 the attainment on entry of *all* pupils was below national expectations for pupils in Year 2 and very low compared with national expectations for pupils in Years 3 to 6. This was borne out by the standards pupils achieved in the 2002 national tests at the end of Years 2 and 6. At the end of Year 2 the results, when compared nationally were well below national expectations in reading, below national expectations in mathematics and attainment in writing was broadly in line with national expectations. In comparison with schools with pupils from similar background, that is, over 50 per cent entitlement to free school meals, attainment in reading and writing were well above the national average and above the national average for mathematics. The results for teacher assessment in science were below the national average and well below average for pupils performing better than expected for their age. Girls out performed boys in reading and writing in these national tests.
2. In the national tests in 2002, the performance of pupils aged 11 was very low in English, mathematics and science, within the bottom five per cent of all schools across the country. When compared with similar schools with over 50 per cent entitlement to free school meals, the results for English and science standards were well below average and for mathematics standards remained in the bottom five per cent of all schools. In English and science boys out performed girls and in mathematics girls out performed boys in these national tests. As the school is new there are no trends in pupils' standards of attainment by which to make comparison.
3. The school fell short of its target for English by 29 per cent and it was 39 per cent short of the mathematics' target. Due to Years 3 to 6 not having a permanent special needs co-ordinator for a number of years prior to the amalgamation there have been no pupils highlighted with special educational needs. Pupils have not received the support that they needed throughout Years 3 to 6 to make the necessary improvement in order for standards to have risen.
4. There are several reasons for why the school is still struggling to reach national expectations. These are as follows:
 - When this new school opened in September 2001 the attainment on entry for all pupils in Years 3 to 6 was very low and for Years 1 and 2 below national expectations;
 - There is a large number of pupils with special educational needs in Year 6 who, up until recently were not identified as having special educational needs and therefore were not supported effectively;
 - The last eighteen months have been very unsettled for both the members of staff and the pupils.
5. Children entering the nursery vary every year in their knowledge and understanding, but, generally, their attainment is well below expectations for children of this age. This year's intake has significant weaknesses in mathematics, communication, language and literacy. These significant weaknesses influences creative play and knowledge and understanding of the world. The children who are at present in the reception classes still have significant gaps in language and mathematics, which continues to impact on their knowledge and understanding of the world and their creative play. Throughout the

nursery and reception, children make satisfactory progress, but by Year 1, most children are not on course to reach the standards expected for their age in the six areas of learning. The gains in reading enable pupils to start to read simple words and understand the different purpose of words and pictures, but they do not have the variety of language expected of pupils of this age. Children with special educational needs are appropriately provided for, and make progress similar to that of their peers.

6. Current standards of attainment in Year 2 are in-line with national expectations in English, science, art and design, design and technology, music, physical education and in religious education, standards of attainment are in-line with national expectations of the local agreed syllabus. Standards of attainment are below the national expectations in mathematics, geography, history and information and communication technology.
7. In Year 6 current standards of attainment are in-line with national expectations in art and design, design technology, music, physical education and in-line with national expectation of the local agreed syllabus, but below the national expectations in English, science, geography, history and information and communication technology and well below the national expectations in mathematics.
8. Pupils make satisfactory progress in literacy and numeracy skills during their time at school. Throughout the school there has been a positive impact on the achievement of pupils from the successful implementation of both the National Literacy and National Numeracy Strategies. Both these strategies have helped to improve teaching and give lessons structures that can be used in other curriculum subjects.
9. Pupils' number skills in Year 1 are becoming sharp and most work with speed and accuracy during the numeracy hour. In Year 2 pupils are making satisfactory progress as they started from below national expectations for their age. There is good use of practical work and oral work to aid pupils' learning. There is good use of rotational symmetry in art, but there is little evidence that numeracy is used effectively in other subjects.
10. Reading habits are developing well, but there are still some pupils in Year 6 who find reading embarrassing and prefer to write rather than read. The school has invested in many new books that appeal to both boys and girls to try and encourage pupils to read regularly. Pupils' writing skills in English books are clearly improving in Years 1 to 5. The books show an increasing fluency and control with some pupils writing very well. In Year 4 a lower attaining pupil could use words such as 'scuttled' and 'crept' to replace the use of the word went. Looking at a sample of books, presentation is just beginning to show improvement. During the autumn term work was scruffily presented. Grammatical errors and misspelling persist even though most classes have regular spellings to learn. Pupils are attentive listeners and generally follow instructions well. They have less well-developed speaking skills. Pupils speak confidently and enthusiastically, but what they say is limited by their lack of vocabulary.
11. Pupils are making satisfactory progress in science even though standards are below average at the end of Year 6. Good attention is being paid to promoting the investigation and experimental aspects of the subject. Teachers are providing interesting practical activities for pupils to 'learn by doing' and this motivates involvement and sustained concentration. However, sometimes the teachers over direct these activities and pupils have insufficient opportunities to complete their own investigations and analyse their own results. There has been some improvement in levels of attainment in Year 6 since last year due to extra funding by the Education Action Zone to enable the school to employ another teacher. This has enabled the school to set for science in Year 6.

12. Although pupils' progress is satisfactory in information and communication technology it has been hampered by inappropriate furniture in the information and community technology suite, technical problems and lack of programs for Year 6 to do control and data logging. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 could not use the computers in the suite due to the inappropriate furniture, but instead had to crowd around the classroom computers in groups of four. Standards at all ages are unsatisfactory in this subject.
13. Pupils make satisfactory progress in all subjects and in the more practical subjects such as art and design, design and technology, music and physical education standards are satisfactory.
14. When the teaching support is used well it is a great help for pupils with special educational needs and enables them to make satisfactory or better progress. Within the school there is good practice in the use of teaching assistants already in existence. There is still the difference in achievement between boys and girls in English, mathematics and science. The special needs register has highlighted a large number of boys with reading and writing difficulties. The school does not currently identify in its monitoring the progress made by higher-attaining pupils. These do not consistently make the progress they could.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

15. Pupils' attitudes to their work, the values they demonstrate and their personal development are good and this results in improved learning. They like school and respond well to the values that the school promotes. Pupils work hard in lessons even and show a good level of interest and involvement in the activities provided. The parents who answered the questionnaire are satisfied with behaviour in the school and believe that their children are learning to behave in a mature and responsible way.
16. Pupils know the school routines and keep to them well. They work independently on their tasks when given the opportunity and those who need help seek and use it sensibly. Pupils talk about their work confidently and try hard to improve and succeed. On a few occasions there was a loss of concentration and interest in lessons when teaching was unsatisfactory.
17. Relationships between pupils and between pupils and adults around school are good. In classrooms, pupils learn from the positive examples set by staff and are responsible in their communication with each other. Pupils are learning respect for their own and others' endeavours. For example, in a history lesson in Year 5, pupils praised each other as they dressed up in the style of Ancient Greeks and demonstrated high levels of enthusiasm for the work that their teacher had devised for them. Pupils follow advice well and are prepared to respond to challenges to improve, this has a positive impact on their learning. They are friendly and helpful towards visitors. In the playground adults and children chat in a friendly way and no signs of oppressive behaviour were seen.
18. Pupils' behaviour is good and they respond well to the schools' clear rules and the expectation to behave well, this allows the teachers to teach. All pupils work and play together well. In the playgrounds pupils make very good use of the space available to them and are all happily occupied. Their behaviour when entering and leaving the hall for assembly is respectful and orderly. The school has good procedures to ensure that

if there is any bullying or racism it is dealt with quickly and fairly. Occasionally some pupils find it difficult to maintain the high standards of behaviour expected in school but they respond well to the guidance provided by staff. Consequently, the school very rarely needs to resort to its ultimate sanction of exclusion from school. There has only been one pupil excluded for a day in the last eighteen months.

19. The good procedures for pupils' welfare and personal development and the good relationships mean that pupils learn to develop good working habits, independence and take on personal responsibility. Pupils of all ages are able to approach teachers and support staff confidently and respectfully. They volunteer to help and carry out duties given to them conscientiously, acting responsibly. Pupils respond sensibly when their views are sought and take pleasure in receiving recognition for their efforts. During assemblies pupils respect the nature of the occasion and join in reflectively. Pupils enjoy the clubs on offer and have recently experienced some outstanding successes in local sporting events. The confidence gained with these sporting successes is evident in the physical education lessons. They work to raise funds for charity and all take part in opportunities to publicly perform.
20. Pupils' attendance is well below that seen in most schools nationally. There are a few families that consistently do not ensure that their children attend on a regular basis and this hampers learning for these pupils. However, the school is working closely with the education welfare officer in close relationship with these families to try and alter their children's attendance pattern as this will help to raise standards for these pupils. The vast majority of the pupils arrive at school on time and enable their lessons to begin promptly. Registration procedures are conducted efficiently and lessons begin promptly.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

21. The quality of teaching overall is satisfactory. There were only four lessons where the teaching was unsatisfactory. Of the 78 lesson or part of lesson observed, in 40 teaching was satisfactory, in 26 teaching was good in seven teaching was very good and in one mathematics lesson in Year 1 the teaching observed was excellent.
22. Within the nursery and reception classes the majority of teaching is satisfactory. Teachers set clear routines and expectations that enable the children to gain independence and become responsible for collecting and putting away resources. These resources are well-organised by the teachers and accessible to the children. The children are well-trained by the teachers to be careful and to respect the equipment they use. Children are encouraged by the teachers to have a positive attitude and develop enthusiasm for exploration, investigation and learning. In communication, language and learning lessons teachers provide a wide range of activities to help children understand and consolidate knowledge. They are skilful at asking questions to extend children's learning. Class management is good and there are good relationships between children and teachers. For example, when one child became slightly upset that he wasn't chosen by his peers to act out a character that was being sung about the teacher immediately noticed and involved him in choosing the next song to be sung. This sensitivity to the needs of the child demonstrated by the teacher ensured that he was actively involved throughout the lesson. There are lost of opportunities to extend children in class session by insufficient use of the teaching assistants. The more able children are given undemanding work. In the unsatisfactory lesson there were insufficient support strategies and challenges to encourage children to write independently. Throughout the nursery and reception classes there is insufficient focus on the promotion of children's speaking skills.

23. In Years 1 and 2, of the 20 lessons or part of lessons observed, nine were satisfactory, seven were good, three were very good and one excellent. In the lesson that was excellent there was very enthusiastic teaching with good strategies for promoting learning at a very fast pace. There was a very good working partnership with the teaching assistant. The teacher used very good reinforcement to consolidate pupils' learning. Very positive attitudes involving all pupils were promoted. Relationships were very good. Continuous assessment was used throughout the lesson to improve teaching. Work was clearly planned to take in pupils' prior knowledge and attainment. There was a high work ethic with pupils showing perseverance and a keenness to complete the task set. Targets were shared with the pupils and the teacher had very high expectations. There was a very good mixture of visual and practical methods of teaching that made the lesson interesting. Planning was clear and detailed, with plenty of challenges for the more able pupils. Throughout the lesson teaching was consistently at very high level and promoted good attitudes and above average attainment. Where lessons were satisfactory there was a relaxed pace. In one mathematics' lesson in Year 2, all pupils were using the same sheet to record their answers so work was not planned to account for the different abilities within the class, and there was not enough challenge for the more able pupils. Marking is inconsistent and does not tell the pupils the next step they have to take to improve.
24. Teaching in Years 3 to 6 is, overall, satisfactory with some examples that are good and very good. Of the 49 lessons or part of lessons observed, 24 were satisfactory, 18 were good and four were very good. There were three unsatisfactory lessons. Where teaching is good or better, the planning encourages pupils' interaction and discussion. Lessons start promptly and there is no time wasted. Teachers have good subject knowledge and confidently deliver the lessons. Teaching assistants are actively involved in the lessons. Research skills are strongly promoted and there is a good collection of books recently purchased for the library for the pupils to use to extend their knowledge. There is a good mixture of visual and practical activities that adds well to pupils' understanding. Good links are made with other areas of the curriculum in a very natural manner; for example, there was a good link with the history of mathematical design when discussing a Greek pattern. There is good behaviour management with systems that pupils know and respect. Teachers use effective questioning to prompt pupils' thinking and extend pupils' knowledge. Dramatic oral delivery ensures pupils remain interested.
25. Where the teaching is unsatisfactory teachers' subject knowledge is weak, pupils receive incorrect information and planning is of an unsatisfactory quality that does not take into account pupils' prior knowledge or attainment. Teaching assistants are not actively involved in the pupils' learning throughout the lesson. Teaching is sometimes not precise and opportunities are missed to extend pupils' knowledge. In one unsatisfactory lesson the pace was so slow pupils that lost concentration and eventually, several pupils did not participate in the lesson thereby affecting their learning. In the same lesson there was insufficient guidance to ensure improvement.
26. In English, teachers effectively follow the national strategy. Generally, the teaching of literacy skills is good. Teachers use a common set of medium term planning goals based on the literacy strategy framework, but when writing their daily plans the objectives are less specific and this influences the cohesion between Years 1 and 2 and Years 3 to 6. There is evidence that the three-part literacy lesson structure is

effectively used in other subjects. There are good links made to work covered in the literacy hour when teaching other subject, for example, when Year 5 pupils had to illustrate one of the myths they had studied in the literacy lesson. Teachers are effective in their class management and control, creating a good learning environment and enabling pupils to remain on task. Teachers effectively display literacy aids on their classroom walls alongside pupils' work. The teachers draws the pupils' attention to the literacy aids displayed to help them in the oral and plenary parts of the lesson. Individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs are generally used effectively during the literacy hour. The teaching assistants are involved in successfully supporting these pupils. When teaching assistants are least likely to be used effectively, it is during the shared part of the literacy hour.

27. Overall, the quality of teaching in mathematics is good. Teachers carefully follow the numeracy planning, but do not always consider the more able pupils' prior attainment and knowledge sufficiently to enable them to be consistently challenged, resulting in these pupils not achieving their full potential. There is little evidence that literacy or information and communication technology is planned specifically for use during the numeracy lessons. All teachers have a satisfactory understanding of the National Numeracy Strategy. Lessons have an effective structure. In lessons, objectives are shared and where the quality of teaching is good there are high expectations and a good pace to the lessons. In the plenary there are only a few examples where the teachers refer back to the objectives given at the start of the lesson and discuss with the pupils what they have learnt.
28. Although teaching overall is satisfactory, there are inconsistencies within lessons and classes. There is good practice throughout the school that needs to be modelled. Marking across the school at the moment is ineffectual in raising standards as teachers do not give pupils constructive comments to take their learning on to the next stage. If they write 'good' they do not explain what makes it a good piece of work. Presentation generally is unsatisfactory throughout the school although there is evidence that recently this is improving. The teachers do not set homework consistently and opportunities are lost to extend pupils' learning.
29. Teachers do not currently use their knowledge about pupils' progress sufficiently well, by modifying their teaching to meet the needs of everyone. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. The new co-ordinator for special educational needs has had a beneficial impact in a very short time in producing good clear individual education plans, which are monitored regularly to ensure the progress of each pupil. There are examples of good practice by teaching assistants, but this practice is not consistent throughout the school particularly in numeracy and literacy. On occasions some teaching assistants are inefficiently deployed to support individuals and small group needs. Teachers are always looking for opportunities to give praise and encouragement to pupils with special educational needs. They are integrated well into the class and teachers are aware of the individual education plans.

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

30. The school provides a broad range of curricular opportunities, which are well-planned to make them appropriate for the pupils. The quality of learning opportunities provided

for children in the nursery and reception and pupils in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory, but it is unsatisfactory for pupils in Years 3 to 6 because there is a lack of continuity. In most subject areas the school curriculum is effectively operating as two separate units. The school is aware of this and is now working towards a unified curriculum from Years 1 to 6. The school makes good use of local and national initiatives to support this development. Curriculum time is appropriately allocated and a teaching timetable is drawn up for each class, but the total amount of teaching time both for the infants and juniors is below that which is nationally recommended. Curriculum planning has recently been reviewed and the school has focussed effectively on the provision for literacy and numeracy. The national strategies for literacy and numeracy have been introduced with the support of the local education authority and the Education Action Zone. These are now well-established and as a result standards in these subjects have begun to improve.

31. The school has a planned programme of curriculum development and has established a sequence of review for all other subjects. There are written policies for all subjects that originate from the time the school operated as two separate school and do not effectively contribute to the sense of pupils' development through school from the age of three to eleven. Teachers follow nationally recommended schemes of work for most of the subjects. All subject policies and schemes of work are due to be updated. Meanwhile, the present planning ensures that all subjects in the national curriculum are taught. There are plans for subject leaders to take a more active role in overseeing the planning and teaching of their subjects to help in establishing consistency throughout the school, and to allow opportunities for teachers to share their expertise with the aim of providing an equally good curriculum throughout the school. With the exception of physical education and information and communication technology, the school meets statutory requirements. However, there is at present no provision for the teaching of swimming and no equipment for teaching control technology or data logging to Year 6. Policies for personal social and health education, sex and drugs education ensure that these areas are dealt with appropriately. The daily act of worship meet statutory requirements.
32. Since the appointment of the new head teacher the school is involved in a number of supportive projects in order to improve curriculum provision and raise standards. It is part of the Children's Fund Transition Project co-ordinated by the Education Action Zone. Since January this has provided an additional member of staff to work with children in Year 6. This extra member of staff enables pupils in Year 6 to be taught English, mathematics and science in smaller groups and this is beginning to be effective in accelerating their progress. The school is part of an Excellence in Cities initiative, which enables it to employ a full time learning mentor to work with the older pupils who are having difficulties at school. This support, which is provided on an individual basis to meet the specific needs of the child, has in many cases, been extremely effective. It has had a significant impact on the attitudes and behaviour of the individuals concerned and supported their continuing involvement in all areas of the curriculum. The school is also part of the Department for Education and Skills' Pilot project – National Literacy and Numeracy Strategy Intensifying Support Project, which began in February 2003 with the aim of raising standards and accelerating progress. This project is at an early stage and at the time of the inspection only a plan for its development had been drawn up.
33. Curriculum provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. Pupils throughout the school are supported by the many teaching assistants, and have full access to all areas of the curriculum including extra-curricular activities. The special educational needs' policy has been recently updated with the support of a Beacon

School. The very recent appointment of an experienced special needs co-ordinator who has provided support and guidance to staff, is already having an impact on the standards achieved. Pupils who have emotional and behavioural difficulties are managed successfully within the school and benefit from the "Quiet Place." This features in the Department for Education and Skills' study on good practice and provides a range of therapies for children experiencing stress, enabling them to achieve improved access to the curriculum and addresses mental health issues. The school runs 'Early Bird Club', which provides a nutritional and positive start to the day for its members and has also improved attendance and punctuality for this group of pupils.

34. The curriculum is enhanced by a number of clubs, which take place during lunchtime and after school. Parents expressed their appreciation of the contribution this makes to the improvements they have seen in the school. Many clubs involve sporting activities, for example, football for boys and girls, indoor athletics and cross country running. Activities are enthusiastically supported by a large number of children. The sports project in collaboration with Liverpool University and 'Sportlinx', gives pupils opportunities to take part in competitive sport. This has a positive impact on pupils' self esteem especially since all teams have enjoyed recent success. There are also clubs which give children the opportunity to be involved in the creative arts, in particular, dance for boys and girls, music and drama.
35. The school makes good use of the local environment and local facilities. The children visited a local playground before drafting their playground designs in Year 4, and infant classes visited local churches before using a range of materials to interpret their church designs in art lessons.
36. The school has good relationships with other schools. It has established regular links with 'Parklands', the local secondary school. Year 5 pupils visit the school to use their facilities for teaching food related topics as part of the design and technology programme. There are plans to develop activities to improve transition from primary to secondary schools in conjunction with 'Parklands High School' and 'Middlefield', another local primary school. The school is involved in the 'Harmony Project' with local schools involving music, dance and drama, which concluded with public performances at the local secondary school and at each primary school.
37. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. During the inspection there were many occasions during the daily act of worship when pupils were given the opportunity to reflect. A candle is regularly lit and a chime bar sounds to help pupils to focus on their thoughts. During assemblies and religious education lessons pupils learn about the beliefs and practices of the Christian and other faiths and this gives them a good appreciation of the spiritual values and beliefs of other world faiths. Pupils' spiritual development is effectively promoted through art, music and religious education. During inspection week the older pupils were learning about Muslim beliefs and practices. The school has a strong commitment to developing a climate in which all individuals can grow and flourish. Pupils are taught to respect others, to accommodate individual differences and to be respected. They are given the opportunity to explore human feelings and emotions in a variety of contexts. Years 1 and 2 talked about "How I feel when I am lost." Pupils in Year 6 listened to and discussed a story, which modelled a good relationship between a father and son who met only at weekends.
38. The provision for pupils' moral development is also good. The school provides a clear moral code, which is promoted consistently through expectations and monitored practice rather than through written rules, although some classrooms do display rules that the pupils have agreed. The house system named after local celebrities

encourages pupils to gain house points, which are awarded for good work or behaviour and encourages a positive ethos that impacts on learning. Pupils clearly know right from wrong and are well aware of the system of sanctions, which is occasionally used most effectively to maintain a calm and purposeful atmosphere throughout the school that enables teachers to teach effectively.

39. Good provision is made for pupils' social development. Pupils of all ages work co-operatively together and share materials and equipment well. They are taught to take care of property and equipment and not to waste materials. There are many opportunities for positive corporate experiences, for example, assemblies for parents and team activities and games. However, the house system gives pupils the opportunity to work together and contribute to a larger group.
40. The provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. There are good opportunities for pupils to study the history and culture of their own country. They learn about their local area, for example, the buildings, parks and churches, and during inspection week junior pupils enjoyed seeing and handling Victorian washing equipment as part of their history. There are many posters around the school depicting the lives of people in other lands and other cultures are represented in the range of fiction and non-fiction books in the library. Year 1 children can count in Spanish and some junior pupils have the opportunity to speak French. The music department has a good range of instruments including some from other cultures and pupils have studied the work of a French artist. However, the development of pupils' cultural awareness is not sufficiently evident. The school could make more use of opportunities to extend pupils understanding and empathy with people from a range of cultural backgrounds in order to prepare them for life in a multicultural society.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

41. Arrangements for the welfare, health and safety of pupils are good. Members of staff are knowledgeable and conscientious in their approach to the welfare and safety of the pupils. Teachers and teaching assistants supervise the pupils well throughout the school day. Children joining the nursery classes are gradually and sensitively introduced to school routines and this helps them to settle in quickly. Members of staff know pupils well and pupils know to whom to turn for help or advice. Comprehensive policies from the previous two schools are used as a basis for the school's practices but they are not all designed with this particular school in mind. Although the principles are good, they do not necessarily include all of the features and input from everyone involved that need to be taken into account to meet the specific needs. Parents are happy that the school promotes good attitudes and values and find the school approachable if they have anything to discuss with teachers. In the main they find that the school responds appropriately to problems.
42. The school provides written reports to parents on how their children are getting on in school, but the information is not given in a consistent style. For example, within an actual pupil's report, for one subject an explanation is given as to what the pupil can do, whilst in another subject it reference is made to the pupil's attitudes and not to the skills or knowledge learnt. As well as inconsistency within the reporting itself there is inconsistency throughout the school.
43. Procedures for assessing pupil's attainment and progress are unsatisfactory because the information gained is not effectively used to modify and improve the planned curriculum to suit pupils of different abilities. The school carries out a number of appropriate assessments in the foundation stage. Assessment information from the

national tests at the end of Years 2 and 6 is analysed and strengths and weaknesses are identified. The information gained is not yet used to adapt the teaching programme and is therefore not sufficiently effective in raising standards. The school recognises the need for this to be developed and there are plans to introduce and monitor the use of assessment by subject co-ordinators as part of the curriculum development plan.

44. Individual class teachers carry out day-to-day assessments of pupils' work and keep their own records. There is no common format or consistency of practice between classes. Pupils' work is marked regularly but many comments are insufficiently analytical and pupils are often not clear what they need to do to improve. The school plans to introduce a marking policy and to focus particularly on literacy during its introduction, in order to establish consistent practice throughout the school.
45. The whole school has recently begun a target setting system with written targets for each pupil in English and mathematics, which are shared with parents. These will be checked against performance three times a year and used as a record of progress. This is not yet embedded in practice, but has the potential to form a useful working document when it is used in lessons and matched to pupils' attainment.
46. All teachers make assessments of pupils' work at the end of each year in English mathematics and science using the nationally recommended tests. They use these along with their own judgements, based on pupils' work in the classroom to assess the level at which pupils are working. These assessments are used to track pupils' progress, set future targets and also to identify where booster support should be directed during the following year, in order to improve learning. Most teachers are accurate in their judgements and the school plans to keep a portfolio of samples of pupils' work at the different levels to support this process. The school is working with the Education Action Zone to identify appropriate software to analyse assessment information from the national tests at the end of the Years 2 and 6. It is anticipated that this can then be interrogated efficiently, presented in the form of graphs and analysed for different groups of pupils within the school, to track their individual progress over time and to make more accurate predictions of their future performance.
47. 'The Early Bird Club,' run by volunteers is a very good feature of the welfare provision in school. Many children are given a well- balanced meal in an informal setting with good supervision at the beginning of each school day. As well as giving children a good, safe start to the day it has made a notable contribution to the improvement in the attendance rate for the school as a whole.
48. The school has made good arrangements to meet health and safety obligations. Accidents and illness are handled with care and consideration and several members of staff have undertaken first aid training, although some certificates are out of date. The school is careful to record accidents and to inform parents of incidents which may need further attention.
49. Good procedures are established to manage arrangements for child protection in-line with those laid down by the local education authority and in conjunction with other support agencies. Members of staff are provided with appropriate advice to guide their responses should they have concerns about a pupil's welfare.
50. Procedures to monitor attendance and punctuality are very good and are used well to provide support for pupils who develop erratic or infrequent attendance. Good attendance is promoted throughout the school by attention to what is expected and by providing rewards for pupils who attain a very high rate of attendance. Effective

working links are established with the education welfare service to help the school support pupils whose poor attendance is affecting their learning.

51. Very good procedures are established for monitoring and promoting high standards of behaviour. These make a very significant contribution to pupils' personal development. The school sets high standards based on a system that makes sure pupils know the difference between right and wrong and rewards those who behave well. On the whole, teachers and support staff give very constructive guidance to those who find it more difficult than most to conduct themselves appropriately. Sanctions that are imposed are designed to allow pupils to reflect on what has gone wrong and how they can improve in future. This is successful and there has been only one pupil excluded for a day from school in the last eighteen months. In general, staff act as good role models and demonstrate a positive approach to managing pupils' behaviour, including sharing with pupils the difficulties they may experience in responding to challenging incidents and providing personal incentives for improvement that are matched to real-life goals. For instance, pupils who wish to take part in sports clubs and training must demonstrate self-control and consideration for others in their day-to-day school life, qualities essential for working as a team and playing fair. Members of staff consistently praise good work and sociable behaviour which effectively motivates pupils to try to please their teachers. No incidents of bullying were seen during the inspection. The majority of parents who responded to the inspection questionnaire indicated that they are satisfied that behaviour in the school is good. The majority of parents are also clear that children like school.
52. Pupils' personal development is supported well through the good relationships within school. Pupils are involved in activities that allow them to share views, understand issues and make valued contributions to lessons and other activities, such as assemblies. The programme for personal, social and health education allows pupils to express their views and feelings, and pupils have a wide number of adults in school that they can turn to, or who can be enlisted, to help them with problems. This guides them in learning how to make responsible choices and builds their confidence and self-esteem and has led to the school receiving a national award for being a healthy school. Events such as celebration assemblies highlight and reward pupils' significant achievements. Opportunities to help in class and around school support pupils' sense of achievement, care towards others and self-worth. The school takes part in fundraising events and holds assemblies that help pupils develop responsible attitudes to the lives and needs of others. In the playgrounds and dining hall children are looked after well. Equipment is provided for pupils to use during leisure times and supervising adults help them to organise games and learn new skills. For example, during the inspection some older girls were excitedly learning how to play a new ball game demonstrated by a teacher and an assistant. Parents are invited into school to see their children take part in some special events and this provides a good means of acknowledging pupils' good points and boosting their self-esteem.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

53. Although the school has established some good links with parents and parents view the school in a satisfactory light, the partnership between home and school is unsatisfactory overall.
54. Very few parents responded to the opportunity to share their views with inspectors. Those who did consider that the school expects their children to work hard and achieve their best, that the school helps children to become mature and responsible and that

behaviour in school is good. These parents find the school approachable and can easily contact teachers with questions or concerns. The area of the school's work that parents are least happy with are focussed on the opportunities provided for parents to work with the school to help their children learn. For instance, they feel that pupils could achieve more and would like more information on what is taught so that they can help. They would like better information on how well their children are progressing and a clear homework policy that is put into practice throughout the school. Parents who attended the meeting with inspectors expressed satisfaction with the provision of activities outside lessons, especially 'The Early Bird Club' and feel that the school is well led and managed and that there has been an improvement in recent months in this aspect of school.

55. Overall, the quality of information provided to parents is unsatisfactory. There has been no annual meeting of parents or a report presented by the governors to parents since the school became a primary school. Parents are legally entitled to be provided with both of these and this is another breach of statutory entitlement. There was no school prospectus during the first five terms of the school's existence although one is available for parents now. Although this document is brief it contains a good range of information on school procedures and essential information that parents need in order to equip their children for school. However, it does not contain all of the information that parents are legally entitled to receive and some of what is provided is out-of-date or insufficiently specific. For instance, information on school holidays and attendance do not make clear to which year the prospectus applies and information on special educational needs does not let parents know of the school's approach or provision. There has been no agreement drawn up between parents and teachers to support the aims of the school in general and children's learning in particular. Much of the other information for parents provided in school is not specific to the school. In general, parents feel unaware of how their children are doing at school and how to help them. Parents feel that they can approach teachers for additional information or help when they want, but were not always made aware of problems in good time, for instance when their children move between sets or may have special educational needs. Parents want more information on what their children are doing in class. Annual reports to parents on how their children are getting on do not always give a clear picture of what pupils know and can do and how they could improve in future. They do give a good picture of how pupils are responding to what is provided and also parents are made aware of targets for improvement during consultations with teachers.
56. Opportunities for parents to help their children at home are limited owing to the lack of information on the curriculum and a coherent homework policy. Some homework is given for literacy and reading and none in mathematics or topics for some pupils. Parents generally feel that their children do not get enough homework and report that they welcome the introduction of regular homework and wish to work in partnership with the school to help their children. The school is currently considering ways to improve homework provision. Good liaison with parents of children at the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2 encourages reading at home. Parents who read with their children at home have a significant impact on the progress that their children make but the scheme at present is not yet extended to all pupils in Years 3 to 6. Members of staff feel that parents are generally supportive of what the school aims to do, but often need to be encouraged and reminded.
57. Some parents help in school with computers, reading and artwork but not all offers of help, for instance to hear pupils read in school, have been taken up by members of staff. Parents are very supportive of events organised by school to raise funds or where children are involved in performing, such as at Christmas and at the end of the

school year. A good feature of the school's partnership with parents is the way in which courses are run in conjunction with local partnerships to enable parents to come into school to work with their children or to learn new skills alongside other members of the local community. Their involvement encourages their children to work hard and do their best. Parents take part in information and communication technology projects and pupils of all ages take home maths games to play with their families. Parents have worked with staff to learn how to use special packs to help their children with nursery activities. Several teaching assistants employed by the school are, or were, parents of pupils and were inspired to take up training as a result of voluntary work in school.

58. The school has involved parents in new developments by seeking their views, for instance on plans for the new building. The new building is planned to encourage community to come into school and learn new skills. Pupils will see, for example, adults including their parents coming regularly into school to learn computing skills.
59. In addition to the very positive impact on learning of the parent and school partnership that comes from parents' listening to their children read at home, pupils benefit from seeing the good relationships between staff and parents at the beginning and end of the school day and from seeing adults from the local community working in school.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

60. Although the school opened in September 2001 it was led by an acting head teacher for four terms. As a result many of the actions normally associated with the opening of a new school were covered by interim arrangements and many decisions were deferred to the arrival of the permanent head teacher. Some statutory requirements were not met during the eighteen months of this new school. During its first year, the school started to receive the benefits of a number of projects including those funded through the Education Action Zone and links with officers monitoring and evaluating these initiatives were established from an early stage.
61. The current head teacher took her up appointment just twelve weeks before this inspection. In this short time she has already made a positive contribution to the leadership and management of the school by first improving day-to-day routines, tightening up timekeeping and, most importantly, giving the school a clear sense of direction. She has quickly assessed the strengths and weaknesses of the school and, in the absence of a formal school development plan, drawn up action statements to support the raising of standards, aspects of teaching, school policies and procedures, subject development and the leadership roles of co-ordinators and governors. The head teacher has summarised the way forward in an action plan programme that:

"will reflect the vision for the school and long term priorities for improvement".
62. Although there is now a much better sense of direction, insufficient attention has been given to establishing a whole school primary ethos through the way the school is led and managed. Most of the staff working at the school joined with experience of either infant or junior practices and do not appreciate the importance of developing primary approaches to development of the curriculum, judging pupils' progress and monitoring teaching. The school now has appropriate priorities for improvement but there is some way to go before new approaches become embedded as part of the daily life of this relatively new primary school.
63. The head teacher has considered how the senior management team can be strengthened and has drawn up a revised structure that includes representation of all

key stages and special educational needs. For important aspects of school improvement, such as raising standards, specialist co-ordinators are expected to join this senior forum. The head teacher is determined that this strategic group will play a crucial part in promoting a positive school ethos and a strong sense of accountability.

64. When the head teacher took up her post there were no written policies or procedures for the new school. During her first term she has produced several new policies including guidance to parents on school approaches to homework, pupil management of pupils, the merit system for good behaviour and dealing with bullying. Until recently, information to parents has been limited and remains overall unsatisfactory; parents have not yet been invited to attend an annual meeting by the governors to report on their role in the new school, details of proposals for a home-school agreement are not available and, until recently, a prospectus was not available for those considering admission. This latter matter has now been addressed, although, it is still not completely compliant with statutory requirements. Other aspects of school improvement linked to the duties of the governing body are now being tackled more purposefully and their accountability is already improving. The recently appointed and enthusiastic chair of governors holds a business meeting with the head teacher every two weeks. Together they are striving to strengthen the bond between link governors and teachers responsible for subjects and special educational needs.
65. New subcommittees for finance, staffing, curriculum and premises have been established and a structured timetable for meetings links appropriately with those of the full governing body. The governors have shown a willingness to attend local education authority and school based training. The chair of governors and head teacher are keen to support this as most governors have had little opportunity until recently to learn how to interpret school data and how pupils' results at this school compare with those nationally and in schools with similar characteristics. Although statutory requirements for most national curriculum subjects and religious education are met, the current curriculum approved by governors does not meet the expected requirements applicable to swimming or control technology in Year 6.
66. The monitoring role of the senior management team and staff responsible for curriculum subjects is unsatisfactory. Although the deputy head teacher has completed a detailed analysis of pupil performance data, the useful information gained has not yet filtered through to key stage managers and subject leaders. Some external monitoring has been undertaken within the evaluation measures built into the funding arrangements of the Educational Action Zone, including the involvement of consultants for literacy and numeracy who have provided training for staff in these national programmes. However, almost all of the coordinators lack experience in monitoring lessons in their subjects; they do not check standards and pupils' progress through direct observation of teaching and learning and they have not accessed training to carry out this role in the new school. The head teacher has identified professional support through an action plan for the coming year to develop the monitoring role of senior managers and subject leaders as a staff training priority in order to raise standards.
67. The principles of equality of opportunity, satisfactorily established with pupils, are also implemented in relation to the teaching and non-teaching staff. All members of staff have been able to access professional training during the year to support the teaching of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology. There are satisfactory induction arrangements to support staff new to the school and, now that school routines have been improved, those working in a temporary capacity. Good support has been provided for a newly qualified teaching assistant who has embarked on additional training to improve her personal qualifications. Performance management arrangements are, however, unsatisfactory. The governors have not yet set performance objectives for the head teacher. Similarly, although teachers were

allocated a team leader to monitor and review their individual performance, no end-of-year reviews were completed. The head teacher has drawn up a plan to address these shortcomings as a priority within the staff development programme.

68. Financial arrangements are sound. A recent report of the auditors noted satisfactory financial management operating at the school and no serious shortcomings. The head teacher has quickly responded to recommendations made through an action plan that identifies responsibility and timescale for improvements that will sharpen up some financial practices. The school had a working surplus at the end of its first financial year and, based on projections received, is expected to maintain this position during the coming year. Specific funding for special educational needs, projects to raise standards and the Education Action Zone's programmes are deployed as intended. For example some Education Action Zones funding has been used as expected to pay an additional teacher who works with pupils so that they might, with more individualised support, reach the national expectation in the national tests in Year 6. Some action plan statements for the coming year have not yet been fully costed because, at the time of this inspection, the scope of the Standards Fund was not known. The principles of best value are becoming established satisfactorily. The head teacher is already challenging the school to move forward, standards have been compared with other schools, parents have been consulted and the costs and benefits of service providers are being assessed.
69. School administration and communication is efficiently administered. The duties of the senior administrator and assistant administrator are clearly identified. This results in efficient management of administrative tasks including the entry of pupil information data, the ordering of goods and services and the word processing of letters and school documents. Many of these tasks are now carried out efficiently using information and communication technology software. Good use is made of internal mobile telephones; this helps the head teacher and administrative staff maintain close contact with the site manager in the present large premises.
70. Staffing levels are satisfactory in this two-form entry school. There is a good allocation of teaching assistants. Most teachers are allocated one teaching assistant on a full-time basis. However, the amount of release time for the special educational needs co-ordinator is barely adequate given the high proportion of pupils identified with special educational needs at the school. The head teacher is considering the inclusion in the amount of staff release time in the development of the financial budget for personnel for the coming year. The newly qualified teacher is provided with an appropriate amount of non-contact time.
71. The accommodation is spacious and adequate for current needs although it is in poor condition. There are fully specified plans for the construction of a new school on the present site to commence in the coming year. There are good facilities for information and communication technology and music. Resources for learning are good in the nursery and reception classes, history and art, and satisfactory in all other subjects. Recent improvements to the library have made a positive impact on literacy skills and pupils access to information for topics.
72. Given the circumstances of the school, the quality of teaching, achievement of pupils, unit costs and its effectiveness, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

73. In order to improve the education provided by the school, the governing body, head teacher and members of the staff should ensure that:
- (1) Standards are raised in English mathematics, science history and geography, especially in Years 3 to 6, by:
 - Providing more opportunities to extend the pupils' language and vocabulary enabling them to speak at greater length;

- Improving presentation, the setting of homework across the school and the consistency of marking so that pupils know what they need to do to improve their standards;
- Ensuring that work takes into account pupils' prior attainment and achievement;
- Ensuring that expectation of the average and more able pupils is increased.

(Paragraphs:

5,10,28,79,84,86,87,88,89,91,93,94,97,99,102,119,120,121,123,124,128,129,130,132,133 and 140)

- (2) Standards in information and communication technology are raised by:
- Ensuring that all statutory requirements for this subject are met;
 - Enabling all year groups to access the computer suite by providing suitable furniture.

(Paragraphs: 11, 65, 136 and 138)

- (3) Improve the leadership and management of the school by:

- The governors and members of staff working together to establish a whole school primary ethos;

(Paragraphs: 30,32 and 62)

- Raising the profile of monitoring so that the successes of the school can be recognised and actions taken to improve those aspects of provision where there are weaknesses in order to raise standards;

(Paragraphs: 62, 66 and 106)

- Developing the role of subject leaders so that they become confident in monitoring their subject across key stages, ensuring good practice is shared and providing well-informed advice on how their subject can be improved in order to raise standards;

(Paragraphs: 66, 70, 83, 98, 114, 126, 135, 140, 143, 150 and 156)

- Increasing the involvement of governors with school improvement targets and developing their understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school so that they can be better informed of what need to be done to raise standards;

(Paragraphs: 61,64 and 65)

- Merging the recently drawn up action plan statements for school improvement into a formal school development plan;

(Paragraph: 61)

- Ensuring policies are drawn up and ratified for all subjects, RE and those aspects of school provision where a policy for this new school does not exist.

(Paragraph: 31)

- The governors ensuring statutory requirements for the provision of information to parents, the home-school agreement, and performance management are fully met.

(Paragraphs: 55, 64, 67, 134 and 144)

- (4) To improve the quality and range of learning opportunities by:

- Integrating curriculum planning across the key stages to ensure that work builds on previous learning and becomes more demanding in science, ICT and the foundation subjects;
- Meeting statutory requirements in relation to swimming.

(Paragraphs: 30, 31, 118, 124 and 134)

- (5) Provide parents with sufficient, straightforward information to enable them to support their children's learning at home and at school.
(Paragraphs: 42, 54, 55, 56 and 64)

- (6) To continue to focus on raising attendance to the national level by:
- Continuing to monitor absenteeism;
 - By continuing to promote good attendance by providing rewards;
 - Continuing to use the good working links established with the education welfare service.
- (Paragraphs: 20 and 50)

In addition to the main key issues, the governors should consider including the following minor issue in their action plan:

- To extend the teaching time in-line with national recommendations.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

78

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

44

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	7	26	40	4	0	0
Percentage	1.3	9	33.3	51.3	5.1	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR– Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	62	370
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	163

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR– Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	163

English as an additional language

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	26
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	17

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	92.6
National comparative data	94.1

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2002	28	19	47

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	20	22	27
	Girls	16	17	19
	Total	36	39	46
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	77 (n/a)	83 (n/a)	98 (n/a)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	22	27	24
	Girls	18	19	16
	Total	40	46	40
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85 (n/a)	98 (n/a)	85 (n/a)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2002	29	33	62

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	13	8	18
	Girls	12	8	19
	Total	25	16	37
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	40 (57)	26 (26)	60 (67)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	10	17
	Girls	12	11	17
	Total	23	21	34
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	37	33	55
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

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

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
312	1	0
0	0	0
6	0	0
1	0	0
0	0	0
1	0	0
3	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
1	0	0
0	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	16
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24
Average class size	24

Education support staff: YR– Y6

Total number of education support staff	16
Total aggregate hours worked per week	375

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	16
Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	52
Number of pupils per FTE adult	8

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	5

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	3.5
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

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

	£
Total income	585,431
Total expenditure	524,80
Expenditure per pupil	1,233
Balance brought forward from previous year	n/a
Balance carried forward to next year	61,251

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	370
Number of questionnaires returned	26

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	62	27	8	0	4
My child is making good progress in school.	65	12	15	4	4
Behaviour in the school is good.	50	42	4	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	30	39	13	13	4
The teaching is good.	58	19	19	4	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	42	27	12	15	4
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	81	15	0	4	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	65	23	8	4	0
The school works closely with parents.	46	31	8	8	8
The school is well led and managed.	54	31	4	4	8
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	62	35	0	4	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	32	32	8	20	8

Row totals may not total 100% due to rounding

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

74. Children start school part-time in the nursery class at the age of three, and most transfer to two reception classes to commence their full-time education. This helps to ensure satisfactory continuity of learning. During the children's first term in the nursery, teachers informally assess them using comprehensive skills sheets and match these to the assessment steps of the Foundation Stage curriculum. The attainment of the current nursery intake is well below expectations for their age with significant weaknesses in mathematics and communication, language and literacy, which also impacts on their creative play and knowledge and understanding of the world. In the reception classes the teachers formally assess children's abilities using the local authority baseline assessment. Most children enter the reception class with levels of knowledge and skills which are still well below expectations for children of this age. The significant gaps remain in language and mathematics.
75. In the nursery, children make satisfactory progress overall and good progress in their personal, social and emotional development. Consistently sound and some better teaching ensures all children make satisfactory progress during their time spent in the nursery and reception classes. There are good gains in reading in reception where children of all abilities are beginning to read simple words and understand the different purposes of words and pictures. Children with special educational needs are appropriately provided for, included in all activities, and make progress similar to that of their peers.
76. Across the nursery and reception, teachers' planning reflects the expectations of the national Foundation Stage curriculum though there are variations in approach and the quality of practice. In reception classes children are prepared for the National Curriculum and they are introduced to more formal literacy and numeracy sessions. Members of staff are beginning to make appropriate use of national guidance on the steps in children's learning to plan activities and to assess children's knowledge and skills. All staff know the children well and have developed good relationships with them. The curriculum is appropriate in range and well-balanced. Teachers make good use of all the space available to them including planning a range of activities outside. The nursery and reception areas are adequate in size but lack a covered area for wet weather play and no natural areas for children to investigate living creatures and plants. Storage space and the range of equipment are good and accessible. The environment is as bright and attractive as the teachers can make it in a dilapidated building.
77. At the time of the inspection 50 per cent of the teachers were temporary and many teaching assistants were new. They have tried hard since January 2003 to form a new team and work together. The Foundation Stage leader has implemented group meetings and meetings with the senior management team. There is a clear desire to create coherence and consistency across the four classes and the team members are keen to develop the awareness of nursery and reception as a key stage in children's development. The foundation stage leader's role is underdeveloped. She does not have sufficient non-class based management time to effectively monitor the quality of teaching, children's learning and to support improvements.

Personal, social and emotional development

78. There are clear routines and expectations in the nursery and reception classes, which ensure children settle in well and quickly gain independence. A high priority is given to ensuring children learn to play together and respect each other. All equipment is organised to ensure it is easily accessible, enabling children to select activities without adult assistance. Children are encouraged to be careful and responsible and take good care of all equipment. They listen well to staff during large and small group activities. Children have good relationships with adults but in nursery particularly rarely play together or discuss ideas. There are occasional arguments involving sharing resources results of the children's lack of language and limited speech. The quality of teaching and learning is good in the nursery and reception classes and ensures children have positive attitudes and develop an enthusiasm for exploration, investigation and learning. In nursery and reception classes children's knowledge and skills are below expectations for their age. Children are unlikely to reach the expected standard by the time they leave reception.

Communication, language and literacy

79. Members of staff provide a wide variety of activities and model language well which helps children gain in confidence when speaking to adults and to the class. Through skilful questioning, repetition and reinforcement a nursery teacher successfully helped children understand a story and consolidate their knowledge of what makes plants grow. However, having both staff involved in one large group limits children's opportunities to take turns in activities or to discuss what they think. There are good opportunities in nursery and reception to promote an interest in early mark making and writing. These develop well and in reception most children form their letters well and write legible letters under the teachers' writing or from memory. More able older reception children use of words on a chart when writing down colours but they are insufficiently challenged to write at greater length. There are insufficient support strategies and challenges to encourage children to write independently. There are some good links between the big books staff read with children and opportunities for role-play. Learning the sounds of letters does not have a strong enough focus to assist children in learning to read. In nursery and reception children enjoy looking at books. They handle them well and older children know about authors and illustrators. Over time, pupils make good progress in reading from nursery children recognising that words are different to pictures to reception children reading simple books and recognising many key words. The quality of teaching and learning in the nursery and reception classes is satisfactory and promotes good listening skills and positive attitudes to writing. However, there is insufficient focus on the promotion of children's speaking skills and teachers do not plan sufficient opportunities to enable the children to use their speaking skills. There is too little emphasis on adult support for reading activities outside large group sessions. In nursery and reception children make satisfactory progress but their knowledge and skills remain well below expectations for their age. When the children leave reception they will not have reached the expected levels of attainment.

Mathematical development

80. In nursery and reception classes there is an emphasis on oral number games and rhymes and learning to recognise shapes. For example, in nursery the children looked at the base of a range of plant pots and identified circles, squares and rectangles. Reception children recognise that these are faces of a three-dimensional object and

are beginning to learn names such as cube, cuboid and sphere. From nursery to reception classes children learn to count and recognise numbers and put them into the correct sequence. More able children are developing an understanding of simple addition and represent this with numbers. The quality of teaching is satisfactory and there is an appropriate focus on developing children's mathematical vocabulary. In reception there is a good focus on teaching specific mathematical vocabulary such as more/less, bigger/smaller, taller/shorter. There are some missed opportunities to highlight mathematical elements of general activities. In nursery and reception pupils make sound progress but their knowledge and skills remain well below expectations for their age. Children are not on course to attain the levels expected by the time they leave reception.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

81. Children have a limited general knowledge of the world around them and do not always have the language to express what they know. Teachers provide good opportunities for investigation and discussion, for example experimenting to find out which three-dimensional shape would roll down a slope. There is insufficient use of computers but children know how to use a tape recorder and headphones. The lack of a natural area outside the classroom limits teaching opportunities but teachers have innovative ways of promoting understanding of how things grow by using card models. They support this with practical activities such as growing plants and making seed envelopes with instructions for their mothers on Mother's day. The quality of teaching and learning in the nursery and reception classes is satisfactory. Members of staff provide a range of small group activities and model language appropriately to extend children's knowledge. This approach ensures they make sound progress but their knowledge and skills remain well below expectations for their age. Children leaving reception will not be on course to attain the levels expected of them.

Physical development

82. In nursery, children control a range of wheeled toys successfully and make sure they do not crash into others. In reception, teachers play games with pupils to emphasise positional vocabulary such as under, over and around. Throughout nursery and reception children learn to handle small equipment with increasing control, for example of pencils and tools. Members of staff provide opportunities for children to use the hall for specific physical education sessions. They make good use of mathematical vocabulary in counting and recognising shapes when playing games with children outside. The quality of teaching and learning in the nursery and reception classes is satisfactory and promotes children's physical development, ensuring they make sound progress and achieve expectations for their age. Children are on course to meet the required standards by the time they leave reception.

Creative development

83. There are appropriate role-play areas in both nursery and reception classes. Creative play equipment is linked to stories in big books and poems such as the 'Queen of Hearts'. There is a good range of resources to promote creative play in reception but children's play is limited by their inability to read and understand words of the nursery rhymes such as the 'knave of hearts'. In nursery, limited speech means that children play in the same area but do not converse and create co-operative play situations. There is insufficient planned support to 'play' with the children and help develop language and role-play situations. There is a stronger focus on opportunities for painting and craftwork. Following instruction from the teacher, reception children

looked at a branch of cherry blossom and used their fingers to print petals on their mothers' day cards creating a good impression of what they saw. The quality of teaching and learning in nursery and reception classes is satisfactory and there is sound learning, but children's knowledge and skills remain well below expectations for their age. Children are unlikely to reach the expected standards by the time they leave reception.

ENGLISH

84. At the end of Year 2, results in the 2002 national tests showed attainment in writing to be broadly in-line with the national average. Attainment in reading at the end of Year 2 was well below the national average. In comparison with schools with pupils from similar background with over 50 per cent entitlement to free school meals, the results at the end of Year 2 are well above the national average for both reading and writing. Girls achieve higher standards than boys and exceed national averages by the end of Year 2.
85. Results in the 2002 national tests at the end of Year 6 show pupils' attainment was well below the national average. The results remain very low in comparison with schools with pupils from similar background with over 50 per cent entitlement to free school meals. Although by the end of Year 6 girls achieve higher results, both boys and girls achieve below the national average.
86. The English target of 69 per cent set for Year 6 pupils attaining the expected standards for their age or above was not be realised, as it was very challenging. In fact, when considering the very low attainment of these pupils on entry to the newly amalgamated school the English target was unrealistic. The target set for 2003 is 70 per cent of the pupils to attain national expectations or above. This is slightly higher than the previous year and again considering the attainment of the pupils on entry to the school and the high number of pupils with special educational needs in Year 6 it is very unlikely that the school will reach its target figure of 70 per cent.
87. The inspection confirms that standards in English are improving in Years 1 to 5. Pupils' achievement throughout the school is satisfactory. The school has introduced regular assessment in English and more pupils are being helped to raise their attainment with a developing programme of guided reading, the use of teaching assistants and the setting of targets so that pupils can take responsibility for their own learning. For pupils in Year 6 inspection findings reflect standards similar to last year's test results but the booster classes are assisting positively in raising standards.
88. The majority of pupils are making satisfactory progress, considering their low starting point especially in reading. These limitations are being addressed by effective teaching in Years 1 and 2. The additional literacy strategies and opportunities for pupils to use their speaking, listening, reading and writing skills in other subjects assist in raising standards.
89. Standards in speaking and listening are in line with national expectations for Year 2 and below average for Year 6. There is evidence among the Year 1 pupils that standards are rising, through the use of drama and some good oral opportunities in the literacy hours. In Year 2 pupils extended their vocabulary with a lively antonym game where they had to find words with opposite meanings to the ones given. Throughout the school, pupils sit and listen to their teachers very well and volunteer answers and information. They are keen to share their knowledge with others. On several occasions, pupils demonstrated their oral skills by reading aloud to the class. At present many

pupils lack structure and adequate vocabulary in their responses. During literacy lessons pupils are encouraged regularly to contribute to the discussion through the effective use of questioning and in talking about their work at the end of the lesson. Pupils with special educational needs make good use of the oral opportunities encouraged by teaching assistants and make satisfactory progress.

90. Standards in reading develop from a low base, but are not yet as high as they should be. The school's 'English Action Plan' places high importance on raising these standards, with regular assessment and planned targets. Newly introduced 'Individual Pupil Target' books set a goal for pupils to help them progress, which eventually will have an influence on raising standards as pupils become more involved in taking responsibility for their own learning. The school plans to develop further the use of regular group guided reading whereas at present time is given to hearing individual readers. One good guided reading session in Year 5 gave pupils the opportunity to use inference to aid their understanding of what they were reading. Many pupils have a satisfactory understanding of what they are reading and have been taught effective ways of sounding out unfamiliar words in order to read them. A Year 3 class enthusiastically revised letter sounds with their teacher. Some older readers, in Year 6 for example, also used the context of the word in the sentence to provide clues for meaning. During literacy lessons there was more emphasis on guided writing than guided reading. This could explain why writing standards are higher than reading at the end of Year 2. The school has recently grouped its books to help teachers and pupils choose reading books at the right level and there has been an investment in many new books. However, even some more able pupils say they do not like reading outside school. The expansion of the school library, stocked with new information books, which appeal to both boys and girls, may help to encourage the habit of reading.
91. Standards of writing in Years 1 and 2 are higher in relation to the age of pupils than the standards in Years 3 to 6, but there are some good examples of developing confidence in writing throughout the school. In a Year 1 class, pupils followed a good piece of modelling by the teacher with some writing of their own based on the opening of the story "The Three Billy Goats Gruff." With help from the teaching assistant, pupils with special educational needs contributed well and amongst the higher ability pupils there was some extended writing that was well above the expected level. In Year 4, pupils edited a 'Miss Metal' story, showing a mixture of reading and writing skills and a developing grasp of the principles involved, after the teacher had helped them to plan a framework during a shared writing session. A Year 5 class which had read about the legend of 'Medusa' used its knowledge of vocabulary to suggest descriptive phrases to the teacher who wrote them on the flip chart. The pupils then used the example to write about their own choice of mythical beast. These are examples of writing in different styles. There are insufficient examples of poetry and play writing and extended work in pupils' books. There are signs that literacy teaching is influencing the whole curriculum, with some generally well - written work in other subjects such as that on magnetism in Year 6 science. However, inaccuracies in structure and spelling persist as well as poor presentation. For example, underlining without using a ruler was seen in more than one class.
92. Handwriting is regularly practised but there are inconsistencies in approach. It is important, too, that all teachers model good handwriting in work on flip charts and boards. Otherwise pupils are confused about their handwriting style.
93. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory across the school. Much of the teaching is good and there was no unsatisfactory teaching. Teachers use questioning well and generally maintain a good pace. Some teaching is lively and motivating, as in

Year 3 when pupils answered the question “What would happen if?” in a shared reading session. Humour is often used to interest pupils in the chosen text or tasks. Some, but not all teachers display the objective of the lesson for pupils to share. Although teachers use a common set of medium-term plans based on the National Literacy Strategy Framework many of the objectives in the daily plans are less specific. The literacy co-ordinator is developing this as part of the English action plan and this will help to increase cohesion between infant and junior stages of learning, thereby easing the transition of pupils from one class to another. Teachers use the individual education plans of pupils with special educational needs and involve teaching assistants effectively in working with groups of pupils. Teaching assistants are not as well used in the shared parts of the literacy hour. There are very few examples of teaching assistants helping pupils to volunteer answers or understand the shared text.

94. Instructions are given clearly and teachers are effective in their class management and control, creating a good environment for learning and maintaining concentration in their pupils. Pupil work is displayed and the walls of all classrooms are full of useful literacy aids and words. Teachers also provide work matched to the different needs of the groups within the classes based on a common theme, using the five groups of pupils suggested in the medium-term planning. Lessening the number of groups on occasion would reduce the reliance on work sheets and provide opportunities for in-depth independent work or guided work for all levels of attainment in Years 3 to 6. There is inconsistency in marking and in the use of homework, but teachers in Years 1 and 2 have been successful in sending books home and engaging parental support in pupils' reading.
95. The leadership and management of the subject are good due to the training received by the outside consultancy provided by the Education Action Zone and there is a determination to make the raising of attainment in this subject a priority. The senior management supports this strategy and a revised subject development plan has been written. The co-ordinator is committed, with the support of the head teacher, to a programme of classroom monitoring which should help to spread the good practice which exists in the school and ensure that the new assessment programmes and individual pupil targets have a clear effect on the practice in the classrooms. Although very little use of information and communication technology in literacy was observed, the school has the resources to develop it. The recent investment in books provides teachers with good resources to support pupils' learning and to provide suitable books for boys, in order to raise their attainment. In the shared sessions of the literacy hour as well as in the group work, there are good opportunities to develop discussion and reflect on the meaning of different texts, as in Year 2, where a group of pupils compared versions of the 'Cinderella' story. In this way, the subject contributes well to the pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

MATHEMATICS

96. Inspection evidence indicates that by the end of Year 2 standards are below the national average, which is consistent with the school's 2002 test results. Pupils start school with very little experience of mathematics and make satisfactory progress. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory considering that on entry to Year 1 is below national expectations. The school's test results for pupils at the end of Year 2 compare very favourably with similar schools and reflect consistently sound or better teaching. Where teaching is good or excellent pupils make good gains in their learning. For example, in Year 1 pupils count confidently backwards and forwards to 100 and beyond and understand addition and subtraction of numbers to 20. Year 2 gain understanding

of properties of numbers up to 100 but are not secure beyond this. Too few pupils are able to tackle larger numbers.

97. By the end of Year 6 pupils' standards of attainment are well below those expected for the pupils' age. The inspection evidence matches that seen in the national tests. The school's test results fall into the bottom five per cent of all schools nationally and in comparison with similar schools. The target of 59 per cent that was set for 2002, for the number of pupils expected to attain the national average for their age was too challenging and unrealistic considering the low knowledge base with which these pupils entered the new school in 2001. The 2003 target of 65 per cent of pupils attaining the national average for their age or above is unrealistic and too challenging. Two significant factors influence overall standards in Year 6. Current Year 6 pupils have had many changes of teacher, which has impacted on their learning and consistency of progress. There are also many pupils with special educational needs in this year group. The overall achievement of pupils in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory. Pupils are grouped into sets by ability to aid efficiency of teaching to enable all pupils to make satisfactory progress. There is clear evidence that attainment in other year groups within the school is improving reflecting examples of high expectations and some good and very good teaching. For example, in Year 3 more able pupils were challenged to use and understand Year 5 mathematical language and tackle work on equivalent fractions a level above that expected for their age.
98. There are significant variations in the number of special educational needs between different year groups, which affects the overall standards achieved. Pupils with special educational needs are fully integrated into all classroom activities. Teaching assistants play an important role in supporting groups of pupils and ensuring they can access the lesson and make similar progress to their classmates. However, most teachers make too little use of them during class discussions. There is some excellent practice in Year 1 where there is a good teaching partnership between the teacher and the teaching assistant producing a fast pace to the lesson, high expectations and as pupils thoroughly enjoy the lesson, they learn very effectively.
99. The school has placed a significant focus on raising standards in mathematics and has had much additional training on implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy. Teachers plan carefully to the strategy but do not alter the challenge of task sufficiently to consistently challenge more able pupils, which results in the more able not achieving their full potential in all lessons. The coordinator has made a careful analysis of past test results, but this analysis has not been used to make significant changes to the teaching programme to pick up common misconceptions and gaps in pupils' knowledge. There is little use of planned literacy or information technology in mathematics. Very few written comments from teachers limits pupils' development and use of specific mathematical vocabulary.
100. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Teachers have a satisfactory understanding of the National Numeracy Strategy. They plan work well to ensure most pupils make sound progress. Some examples of good, very good and excellent teaching were observed. Where the quality of teaching is better, teachers make the purpose of their lessons very clear to pupils, set high challenges and set a good pace for work. At the end of the lesson they remind pupils what the objectives of the lesson were and discuss with them what they have learnt. All teachers explain tasks well, which ensures that pupils know what to do and thereby enabling them to settle easily to tasks and work hard. However, few teachers make explicit how much time pupils have to complete the work and how much work is expected from them. Teachers are positive and enthusiastic about mathematics and consequently the pupils respond well. Pupils

behave well in lessons because teachers have good classroom management skills and good relationships with pupils. This creates a positive work ethic and pupils concentrate hard, which helps their learning. Teachers use effective strategies to ensure that all pupils are included and consequently pupils' behaviour and attitudes are good. However, in the lesson observations and from the analysis of pupils' work, some weaknesses in teaching emerged. Teachers' planning does not always take account of the needs of all pupils, especially the more able pupils and their work reflects this lack of challenge. Teachers use a satisfactory range of mathematical resources, such as number lines for counting, calculating and ordering numbers. There is too much variation in teachers' expectations of presentation. They mark work regularly but give too little guidance to pupils on how to improve further or where they are going wrong.

101. The school recognises that the subject leader's role is underdeveloped. She has a clear perception of what needs to be done to continue to raise standards. She understands her role and her responsibility for monitoring teachers' planning, results and the quality of teaching and learning. All monitoring had previously been completed by outside agencies or the previous head teacher. This did not enable her to gain a full first-hand view of standards across the school. She has developed a clear plan for future improvements to consolidate on the training teachers have had and to write policy and guidance to ensure greater consistency of approach and expectations across the school. The school is also planning to refine its assessments to ensure better and regular assessment of work to inform the target setting process, which is relatively new and does not yet drive the pupils' efforts.

SCIENCE

102. Most pupils' standards in science overall are in-line with the national averages by the end of Year 2, although fewer pupils attain the higher level. They achieve equally in all aspects of science. By the end of Year 6 pupils' attainment in the 2002 national tests was very low compared with the national average with few pupils attaining the higher level. The school was in the bottom five per cent of all schools nationally. Progress throughout Years 3 to 6 is variable with pupils maintaining satisfactory progress in Years 3 and 4. There has been some improvement in levels of attainment in Year 6 since last year due to the extra teacher funded by the Education Action Zone. Since January pupils have been grouped according to their ability and taught in smaller classes and this is beginning to have a positive effect on standards. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory.
103. When pupils enter Year 1 their knowledge and understanding of the world is below expectations for their age. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make satisfactory progress. Pupils in Year 1 are familiar with a range of common properties of materials and most describe them in everyday terms for example "hard and dull". Some pupils explain why some materials are suited for specific purposes for example "a metal knife is hard so it can cut". Pupils in Year 2 work in pairs using electrical components to make simple circuits with a battery, crocodile clips and a bulb. They remember work done the previous week and most recall that things made of metal conduct electricity. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 make satisfactory progress. Pupils in Year 3 with help can plan a fair test and carry out an investigation on the comparative strength of bags. In Year 4 pupils are confident in their knowledge of solids, liquids and gases and can explain orally the terms reversible, irreversible and evaporation. Pupils' work in the Year 6 classes is below the standard expected for children of this age. This is partly due to previous teaching by a number of temporary teachers and partly to the ability of this particular group. The school identified this problem and since January the pupils have been divided into three classes, which are grouped according to their ability and their work has shown some improvement.

However, the level of written work in the pupils' books does not adequately reflect their understanding.

104. Overall, learning is satisfactory and the quality of teaching is good though it varies throughout the school. In Years 1 and 2 teaching varies from satisfactory to very good. Most teachers place an appropriate emphasis on developing pupils' skills of making observations and comparisons. Teachers prepare their lessons well and pupils are given many opportunities for practical activities, which help them to learn effectively. Most teachers use a variety of creative strategies to engage and maintain pupils' interest and, as a result they make good progress in these lessons. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well by teaching assistants and make good progress.
105. Teaching in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory or good, but also there is some unsatisfactory teaching. Most lessons are well-prepared and the equipment that is required is collected before the lesson so that no time is wasted. Teaching is related suitably to pupils' experience and interest, for example a shiny new mountain bike illustrated the properties and uses of a range of materials. Pupils are given many opportunities for practical activities and there is appropriate emphasis on scientific investigations, for example, testing the strength of bags made of different materials. However, these activities are sometimes over-directed by the teacher and pupils have insufficient opportunities to complete their own investigations or to analyse their own results. For example, when testing the strength of bags groups of pupils had different results but these were not discussed and the pupils all recorded similar conclusions. On these occasions pupils develop a passive attitude to learning and carry out instructions rather than being pro-active in practical lessons. Some teachers have good scientific knowledge and a real interest in the subject and when this occurs teaching is clear and detailed so that the scientific knowledge and terminology required is taught explicitly. Where unsatisfactory teaching was seen the teacher's scientific knowledge was insecure and teaching was not precise. Expectations of the more able pupils in this group were not high enough, and these pupils failed to reach the standards of which they were capable.
106. All pupils have good attitudes to science. Pupils throughout the school enjoy practical science lessons and work well together sharing tasks and equipment. Younger children enjoy talking about their work and most of the older pupils respond orally with confidence. They generally record work carefully, often supported appropriately by headings on prepared worksheets.
107. Leadership and management of science are satisfactory. The recently appointed subject leader effectively ensures that all areas of the programmes of study are planned and that there is appropriate emphasis on scientific investigations, using a nationally recommended scheme and supplementing this with other published material. She supports teachers informally in their planning and has encouraged the very practical approach to teaching which is evident throughout the school. The coverage of teachers' weekly planning is not monitored at present, but there are plans to do this, to monitor pupils' written work and also to monitor teaching in the classroom and share expertise. This will be an effective strategy for improving the quality of teaching and learning, which varies between classes across both key stages. Teachers use a number of prepared worksheets, which help pupils to record their work efficiently, but the very frequent modelling of responses by the teacher leads to identical written work in many books and prevents some pupils from thinking and writing independently, which is a skill they need to learn in order to achieve well in the written tests at the end of Year 6.

108. Resources are adequate for most topics and some topics are resourced well, but there is at present no equipment for data logging which is required for the older pupils. Resources are accessible from the science store and work has begun to group them according to science topics linked to the teaching programme. When completed this will ensure easy access and appropriate use. The budget is currently 'needs led' with a priority on replacing materials for practical lessons, but there are plans to allocate a budget to subject leaders and this will facilitate planned development. There is an environmental area in the school grounds, which is effectively used by pupils in both key stages and the school makes good use of the facilities at Speke Hall and Stockton Wood for environmental work. The assessment of science is an identified area for development. Pupils' work is marked regularly but there is no common policy and much of the marking is insufficiently analytical. Pupils, especially those in Years 3 to 6 are not given sufficient guidance to help them to improve. At present there is no common system for recording pupils' achievement related to the learning objectives of lessons and therefore no records are passed on to support the efficient planning of topics as they are built upon throughout the teaching programme.
109. Annual tests are carried out in Years 3 to 6 and a detailed analysis of Year 6 tests has been carried out, but this is not used to adapt teachers' planning and is therefore not yet effective in improving standards.

ART AND DESIGN

110. Pupils' standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 are in-line with those which are expected nationally for pupils of this age. As there is no previous inspection report it is not possible to make a judgement on school improvement in this subject. The achievement of all pupils including those with special educational needs is satisfactory; this is partly due to the pupils' eagerness to succeed and from the caring approach and encouragement of teaching assistants.
111. By the end of Year 2 most pupils chose appropriate materials to represent such things as flames, smoke and water when they were doing collages of 'The Great Fire of London'. Pupils realise that works of art do not have to be finished in one session. In one Year 2 class there were some very good paintings of buildings and their reflection in water that showed very great care and good observation. These 'reflection' paintings were very effectively built up over several lessons. Good use of pictures help to stimulate ideas before pupils start their own paintings and collages. There is a good display of computer generated symmetrical designs that link with work on symmetry in mathematics. When Year 2 made clay tiles, pupils were able to roll out the clay to a fairly flat shape and use appropriate tools to cut rough rectangles and to apply relief patterns. In the lesson observed pupils explained how they produced the tiles, but they made no attempt to explain how they could improve the tiles.
112. By the end of Year 6, pupils draw portraits in the cubist style but are unable to talk about any artists who used this style in their paintings. Pupils use view-finders to select views that they think are interesting when sketching out in the environment. They use a grid system to enlarge sketches. Using pastels and the techniques of shading, blending and smudging pupils enhance their drawings from their sketches. Perspective has improved and there is satisfactory attention to detail. Prints of famous artists are used as stimuli for pupils, but pupils are unable to name any famous artists or paintings. Pupils can give constructive opinions on colour combination and patterns.
113. Work displayed shows that pupils have had varied learning experiences and opportunities. These include painting self-portraits and flowers, using techniques found in aboriginal art to produce their own pieces of art, painting pictures of local buildings and individual collages of Joseph's coat of many colours. Well-chosen materials are

used to represent the pupils' ideas for example pastels, paint, collage and clay. The school follows the Qualifications, Curriculum and Assessment 's schemes of work. As stimuli for their own designs in Year 3, pupils use the artistic work of Celts. Effective links are made with literature and history when pupils in Year 5 created collage scenes from Greek mythology. Observational drawings of pupils' own shoes are displayed very effectively. Some of these are very good and show very careful attention to detail.

114. Sketchbooks are not consistently used throughout the school and where they are they are not really used to help to improve pupils' drawing. The majority of drawings in these sketchbooks are very untidy and immature. There are very few constructive comments and only in one class during the inspection were the designs in the sketchbooks used to influence the work in the class. In other classes where sketches were used as designs, these were on pieces of paper.
115. Overall teaching and learning are satisfactory. The management of pupils in lesson is consistently good. In the most successful lessons teaching enabled the pupils to improve and build upon skills already learnt and learn new ones. Lesson objectives are stated clearly at the beginning of each lesson and discussed again at the end of the lesson. This reinforces the learning that has taken place throughout the lesson. In the successful lessons pupils were given the opportunity in the plenary to discuss problems they encountered and how they could overcome them. Teachers were there to give advice and to ask questions of the pupils, but also knew when to stand back and let their pupils' creativity flow. The teachers had high expectations of what they wanted the pupils to achieve. A Year 5 teacher drew effectively upon pupils' experiences in information and communication technology of 'layering' to produce a background as an aid to help them understand the concepts needed to complete the task they were about to do. In the lessons that were satisfactory there were no opportunities for the pupils to discuss and evaluate their work. Expectations were not high enough.
116. Pupils are enthusiastic about art and design. They enjoy the practical side of the subject work well and sustain their efforts. One pupil in Year 6 was so enthusiastic about the topic covered that she went home and produced similar drawings and brought them in the next day. Within the same class it was lovely to see one girl, who normally finds schoolwork hard, produce a very good piece of artwork and receive recognition from the class for her efforts. In a Year 2 class there was a moment of 'awe and wonder' when one boy came across a strand of red twine flecked with gold and silver. On picking it out of the basket he pronounced spontaneously 'oh it's beautiful'. He then showed it to his friend and proudly used it on the collage. Pupils work collaboratively and sensibly. They show respect for resources and particularly enjoy choosing their subjects and materials as seen when they were preparing to do a collage in Year 5.
117. The coordinator for art and design does not have the opportunity to observe lessons or use monitoring to encourage good practice throughout the primary age range. The coordinator realises that she has to ensure progression of skills throughout the school and she realises that sketch-books are not being used effectively in all classes. The coordinator does not feel confident to evaluate the work done in Years 3 to 6. Assessment is currently unsatisfactory because there are no formal assessment procedures for art and design, and there are no portfolios of pupils' work so moderation does not take place. Although the coordinator provides advice and support when requested the leadership and management of this subject is unsatisfactory.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

118. The pupils' standards in design and technology are in-line with national expectations by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Three lessons were seen during the inspection; however,

discussion with pupils and teachers and an analysis of past and present work shows that pupils complete a number of units of work satisfactorily as they move through. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory.

119. Pupils in Year 1 had produced a range of stable structures for their model playground. They had been taught a variety of ways of joining components and selected from a good range of materials to fix them together. Pupils' work on display showed clear differentiation and individuality of design. In Year 2 pupils designed and worked in groups to make a coat of many colours for Joseph. Most pupils managed the difficult manipulative tasks of pinning and cutting with a minimum of help and all persevered to complete the task over two weeks. The pupils effectively modified their designs as they went along trimming decorations to an appropriate size and were able to evaluate the finished coats, pointing out the best features. Pupils in Year 2 had collaborated to construct a dolls house with several rooms and had added successfully a light circuit and simple switch mechanism. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 have a good understanding of designing for a purpose, for example groups of pupils worked on the construction of playgrounds for different people and adapted their plans well. Most pupils worked with enthusiasm and evident enjoyment in the lessons seen.
120. Overall teaching and learning are satisfactory. Teachers make good use of other subjects as contexts for design and technology where this is appropriate. Pupils in Year 3 had designed and were making Roman chariots. Clear and well-prepared teaching enabled them to disassemble a model, learn the names of the component parts and draw up a specification for construction. Techniques and skills were clearly demonstrated. Pupils designed and modified shapes successfully and with confidence. Teachers in both key stages prepare lessons well so that all tools and a good range of exciting materials are accessible to enhance learning.
121. The coordination of design and technology is not well-developed with Years 1 and 2 and Years 3 to 6 working as two separate units. The subject leader does not have an overview of development across the key stages. Teachers in Years 1 and 2 follow a nationally recommended scheme of work and this is effective in supporting their planning. Appropriate techniques are taught and there is evidence of progression in pupils' cutting and joining skills. In Years 3 to 6, a plan has been devised that ensures all aspects of the subject are covered but teaching does not specifically build on the work covered in Years 1 and 2 and previously acquired skills and knowledge. Planning for progression of skills is not developed and there is a significant difference in practice between classes. The school has a satisfactory range of tools and materials and there are adequate facilities for teaching food technology.

GEOGRAPHY

122. Standards are below what is expected by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. By the end of Year 2 most pupils have marked the location of Liverpool and London on a base map of the United Kingdom. They named the River Mersey and discussed local landmarks along its banks such as the Liver Building. They used photographs of them to compare them with famous buildings in London. In work based on a story of an island community, pupils have started to compare the geographical features of that setting with the features of their local area. In this work the level of understanding of more able pupils is more typical of those of average attainment at this age. Consequently, when asked about the characteristics of an island few pupils knew from memory that this was "land surrounded by water". When looking for evidence of transport on a large illustration of the island community a more able pupil could identify and name a "jetty"; another could plot a journey using clear directions. One pupil spoke confidently about

the difference between a fishing boat and a ferry; most, however, simply noticed that there were few cars, and several boats. With careful prompting by the teacher pupils eventually concluded that there was no train service.

123. By the end of Year 6 most pupils have worked collaboratively to produce diagrams recording the features of tropical, desert and arctic climates. They have copied these on to a world base map to show the relationship between climate and location. Pupils have produced maps of well-known rivers such as the Nile and they have traced the course of a river labelling a waterfall, valley, tributary and estuary. Although most pupils have attempted to draw diagrams of coastlines that show the effect of the sea on the land, only more able pupils reach the standard expected at the end of Year 6. Geographical terms such as erosion have not been learned securely. More able pupils are more confident in producing labelled diagrams on worksheets; less able pupils sometimes struggle to complete these tasks. Pupils have begun to consider the impact of rain forests cleared for timber on the environment. More able pupils have a more mature understanding of the balance between exploiting world resources for economic gain and conserving resources to support plant and animal life. However, the level of understanding of these environmental themes and quality of discussion linked to this work is based on vocabulary more typical of pupils in Year 4 than in Year 6.
124. Given that most pupils' knowledge and understanding on entering the present Year 1 is below average, most have made satisfactory progress by the end of Years 2 and 6. Achievement is satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to those of other levels of attainment; their progress in most lessons enhanced through the sensitive support and encouragement of teaching assistants. There are no significant differences in the achievements of girls and boys in geography. This satisfactory progress is shown in the improvement made in pupils' understanding of their local area. From a basic knowledge of some of the landmarks of Liverpool in Years 1 and 2, pupils by Year 4 are learning to use more detailed base maps of Speke, identifying their school, the local church, Liverpool airport, the motor works and the streets where they live. Some more able pupils have made sufficient progress to be able to trace their journey from home to school on these detailed maps.
125. In Years 1 and 2 and also in Years 3 to 6 the quality of teaching and learning is mostly satisfactory. The management of pupils in lessons is regularly good. Although one good lesson was observed, the pupils' work drawn from many year groups revealed several shortcomings in teaching that limit improvements in standards. Where teaching was good, such as in a Year 2 lesson on island transport, the teacher's planning recognised that, whereas the more able pupils would be expected to work independently using their geographical and literacy skills to produce a survey from a story illustration, lower-attaining pupils would benefit from extra input from the teaching assistant who would show them a sequence of illustrations. These pupils would then use a specially produced simple recording sheet that they could tick as they spotted different types of transport.
126. However, this good planning and preparation is not consistently applied throughout the school. As a result past work shows that pupils, of all levels of ability are often attempting the same level of work. This leads to more able pupils not being sufficiently stretched and those with special educational needs struggling to complete the tasks provided. Once work is completed, insufficient attention is given to marking. Although most work is marked, it is rare for comments to be added that will be a guide to pupils on how to improve their learning; this hinders the raising of standards. Some work is not marked and occasionally work of an unsatisfactory standard is inappropriately

praised. As lessons draw to a close pupils have few opportunities to check back on the learning gained and discuss what they will do next. Assessment in geography is unsatisfactory with annual progress information inconsistently reported to parents.

127. Pupils' attitudes to geography are broadly satisfactory. Where lessons are lively with geography presented in an interesting and informative style they enjoy the activities and are keen to respond. Some are keen to use maps, especially of the area around the school. However, pupils' attitudes to presentation are very variable. Teachers give insufficient attention to improving the quality of presentation, with standards of writing below what would be expected for the pupils' age.
128. The leadership and management of geography are unsatisfactory. Although the coordinator provides appropriate advice and support to other members of staff in planning and resources, the present arrangements for assessing pupils' progress are unsatisfactory. Similarly, as the coordinator does not monitor teaching or standards these important aspects of leadership are unsatisfactory. As a result where good practice exists there is no mechanism for the coordinator to identify and share this with others.
129. The range of geographical experiences taught follows national guidance. This helps teachers to cover a programme of geography topics, sometimes taught in blocks, that meets the content required by law. The good variety of school visits and the opportunity for Year 6 pupils to take part in a residential visit helps improve pupils' learning and understanding of different places and landscapes. Resources for learning are satisfactory; they include new information books in the school library, useful maps and photographs of the local area. Regular use is made of the Internet to research information for topics.

HISTORY

130. Standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are below those expected nationally. However, considering that most pupils enter Year 1 below national expectations achievement is satisfactory.
131. By the end of Year 2 most pupils have learned about the history of homes and everyday working practices. Pupils have gained valuable experiences of the skills used in everyday life such as washing, cooking and cleaning through access to genuine school artefacts and regular visits to local museums and places of historical interest. Pupils have enjoyed visits to the Piermaster's House at Liverpool Historic Dock and nearby Speke Hall. They have also learned about the lives and achievements of well-known historical characters such as Florence Nightingale and Samuel Pepys. More able pupils relay their knowledge of famous people orally although the range of vocabulary they draw on is typical of average standard. Although lower attaining pupils have used photographs of famous people as prompts for discussions their ability to retain factual knowledge of the past is limited.
132. By the end of Year 6 most pupils have satisfactorily extended their understanding of history including experiences drawn from World War 2. Most pupils can write letters home about their impressions of life as an evacuee. More able pupils incorporate images of a journey into the countryside by train, living in a large country house and having access for the first time to a garden. Pupils wrote a second letter home as a soldier on duty in Poland. Although these activities show satisfactory levels of understanding they are below average for more able pupils as the text produced falls below the range of vocabulary normally associated with pupils at the end of Year 6. Lower ability pupils attempt these tasks with difficulty. Their past work shows they

have not been provided with sufficiently modified tasks matched to their level of understanding. Where writing is completed it is often copied from text produced from class discussion rather than personal thoughts put into words. In work using photocopied images of ration books and an ID card the higher and average attaining pupils usually completed the factual information with reasonable accuracy. Some lower attaining pupils struggled to complete this work satisfactorily.

133. Given that most pupils' knowledge and understanding of history on admission to Year 1 this year is below the national average, most have achieved satisfactorily by the end of Years 2 and 6. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to those of other levels of attainment; they benefit often from the caring approach and encouragement of teaching assistants. The inspection findings show no significant difference in the achievements of girls and boys in history. Most pupils progress satisfactorily; from spontaneous discussion that occurs in infant classes when pupils use artefacts such as a washboard and tub, to junior year groups deploying literacy research skills satisfactorily, using contents and index pages and transferring some of their writing for display by word processing it on a computer.
134. Although the teaching included one very good lesson in Year 1 and several good lessons in Year 5, the analysis of pupils' work confirms that over time teaching and learning have been mostly satisfactory. In the most successful lessons the history teaching provided good quality experiences with a lasting impact on pupils' knowledge and understanding of past times. For example, in a Year 5 lesson almost half of the class dressed up in Greek costumes while other pupils used a good collection of resource books to access information on this topic. Lively contributions from pupils of different levels of attainment were accompanied by spontaneous applause as individual pupils dressed up willingly. The lesson provided good opportunities for social, moral and cultural development; it was used well by the teacher to make key points about costume style such as the way colour could be linked to status. The history of mathematical design was incorporated as pupils discussed a Greek pattern on one fabric. When a flying insect arrived into the classroom the teacher managed the interruption well and the pupils' concentration and learning was quickly restored.
135. Pupils enjoy history sessions that include practical work. In a very successful Year 1 lesson the teaching assistant entered into an important partnership with the teacher as they both showed pupils how the skills of washing were carried on in the past. Some pupils tried out a 'poss stick', others turned the handle of a mangle. The teacher had high expectations during follow-up work where one group of pupils produced observational drawings of an artefact linked to the historical period. Pupils' past work however reveals the same teaching shortcomings also reported in geography. Sometimes lesson planning does not follow the school guidance, the preparation of work is not sufficiently matched to the range of ability, the opportunity to provide guidance on how to improve is missed when work is marked, a secure system for assessment of progress over time has not been established and information in annual reports to parents is inconsistently recorded.
136. History is taught regularly through a selection of topics planned across the academic year. The content follows national guidance that has been adopted and it meets the coverage required by law. As some teachers prefer to use blocks of lessons to teach units of work while others include history lessons throughout the year there is inconsistency across and within key stages. The school visit programme has provided good opportunities for pupils to sample historical experiences in museum settings that simulate former times. Pupils enjoy these visits, recorded through photographic

evidence, because they have been able to dress up, “attend” a Victorian schoolroom and use historical artefacts to practise skills not used today.

137. The co-ordinator, who also leads in geography, provides advice and support through planning and provision of resources. However, as the co-ordinator does not have opportunity to observe history lessons or use monitoring to encourage good practice throughout the primary age range, subject leadership is at present unsatisfactory.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

138. Standards are below those expected of pupils in Year 2 and Year 6. Statutory requirements are not met for Year 6 pupils. Due to technical problems and limited software, control and data logging are not taught to Year 6. However, pupils are making satisfactory progress. The use of information and communication technology in other subjects is generally satisfactory from the scrutiny of work on walls, although there was very little observed during the week of the inspection. Experiences are created to enable pupils to practise and develop their skills in real situations. The new computer suite provides opportunities for pupils in Years 3 to 6 to acquire the skills required, but Pupils in Years 1 and 2, although timetabled for computer suite access, are not using it because of a lack of chairs of suitable size. Thus in these classes, pupils are taught in groups with four pupils using one computer, which clearly inhibits progress on raising standards.
139. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 learn how to give simple instructions to cause something to happen. In one lesson the four pupils’ demonstrated good control of the mouse, responded to instructions and copied what was previously demonstrated. They create simple text and use their word processing function accurately. In the small group observed, they were eager to talk about their work, explain what they were doing and listen carefully to the advice of others during their short time at the computer.
140. Pupils in Year 3 develop appropriate skills as they undertake specific modules of work in the suite. They can use text and graphics to make a poster to sell a ‘Roman Villa’. During the lesson, pupils used previously acquired skills well, such as drag and paste and changing font size. In a Year 4 lesson, pupils were modelling on the screen and learned the use of the ‘Repeat Command’ to write procedures to construct regular polygons. In both lessons, the teacher’s input was high and the teaching assistant took a supportive role, particularly for pupils with special educational needs. Pupils throughout the lesson, with encouragement and support, gained confidence in using these skills, knowing that an important aspect of their acquisition of skills was ‘trial and improvement’. By the end of Year 6, pupils generally access the internet to research information on World War II and the rain forests, use power point to tell the story of Florence Nightingale, use text and graphics and data handling in the mathematics curriculum and use word processing to write a diary. Pupils do not study control or modelling in Year 6.
141. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Teachers, however, are waiting for training to completely update themselves on the required skills to enable them to teach with confidence. Good quality resources in the computer suite are positively influencing the quality of learning but the technical problems the school has experienced, the lack of training, the non-use of suite by Years 1 and 2 are inhibiting the positive impact required for standards to rise. Where the suite is used well by confident teachers, the progress made is at least satisfactory and often good. Pupils use the allotted time well,

remain on task, respond to encouragement and react confidently to the support given. This approach is not consistent for the reasons outlined. The school is addressing these issues. The opportunities provided for all pupils, including pupils with special educational needs, to work collaboratively promotes moral and social development and positively ensures educational inclusion.

142. The leadership and management of information and communication technology is satisfactory overall. The co-ordinator is well informed and has completed a comprehensive audit of the subject's strengths and areas for development to assist raising standards to a satisfactory level. The school has rightly identified the need to continue to develop the programmed use of information and communication technology across the curriculum as a priority. Monitoring of planning takes place but the monitoring of teaching, learning and standards and the use of assessment overall remains unsatisfactory. With the exception of the lack of control and data logging programs for Year 6 resources are satisfactory overall.

MUSIC

143. In Year 2 pupils' standards of attainment are in line with those usually seen for pupils of this age. Discussions with Year 6 pupils indicate that their knowledge and understanding is also appropriate for their age. All pupils, including those with special educational needs make sound progress.
144. Across the school the quality of singing is in line with what is usually heard for pupils of this age. In assemblies, pupils showed keen enjoyment of music. They sing a range of songs from memory with confidence, good volume and an awareness of working together to give a better performance. In assemblies for the younger pupils their enjoyment of music is aided by the involvement of all staff present. In lessons all pupils took pleasure in singing familiar songs and showed a keen interest in learning new songs. By the time pupils are in Years 3 and 5 they confidently perform two and three part songs where each group must sing differing words and rhythms. Pupils played instruments carefully to ensure they keep to the beat when accompanying songs. They explore the sounds a variety of instruments can make. For example, Year 2 pupils experimented with finding different ways to play their instruments such as loudly and softly, then quickly and slowly. They followed the sound pattern of a pictorial score holding the beat well. In Year 3 pupils successfully accompanied a two part song playing chime bars and holding the rhythm well. Year 6 pupils were not timetabled for music during the inspection. However, discussions with pupils showed that they had clear views about music and discussed their preferences between classical works such as Vivaldi's 'Spring' and more modern popular music such as songs by Madonna. They discussed how they had composed musical scores of their own, practised them and performed them to the class. Throughout the school pupils display a keen enjoyment of music. Year 6 pupils particularly look forward to music at the end of the week and stated that, "music takes you anywhere and leads you to your own world."
145. In most lessons observed the quality of teaching and learning was satisfactory. Where teachers had very secure subject knowledge and a clear enthusiasm for the subject, lessons had a good pace and high levels of challenge. For example in Year 1 the teacher very effectively modelled singing, clapping rhythms and moving to music. This ensured all pupils joined in without any inhibitions, developed a good sense of rhythm and movement. They all thoroughly enjoyed the lesson. In Year 3 there was a reverential atmosphere when the teacher played the flute to her class and the pupils listened intently. However, where teachers are less confident a slow pace leads to lack of concentration from pupils and insufficient learning. There is some parental concern

that insufficient music is taught but there is no evidence to support this view. Music is taught regularly and teachers plan lessons carefully. They have clear expectations and most pupils respond well. However, there are missed opportunities for pupils to formally record their compositions and thoughts about their lessons. There are few opportunities for pupils to use their writing skills and no use of information and communication technology was evident. There are missed opportunities in assemblies to discuss the music pupils listen to. There has not been a strong focus on this subject since the school opened and, although, a new subject leader has recently been appointed the leadership and management of the subject is unsatisfactory. Her role is not clearly defined so there is no mechanism for the subject leader to gain an oversight of standards and how well teachers' plans are put into practice. The school recognises this and it is a high priority of the subject and school development plan.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

146. Overall standards in physical education at the end of Year 2 are satisfactory and pupils' attainment except in swimming is on course to be in line with national expectations by Year 6 although pupils do not receive their full entitlement to the National Curriculum because swimming is not taught. Pupils' achievement throughout Years 1 to 6 is satisfactory.
147. By the end of Year 2, most pupils are able to follow a sequence of simple instructions. They can throw with some accuracy to a target using beanbags and hoops and their skill level is typical for pupils in this age group. They are able to travel with, send and receive a ball. Some pupils are able to anticipate the return of a beanbag and clap between throwing it in the air and catching it, although a minority of pupils throw randomly with little evidence of control. In work based on developing the skills needed for games activities, they are able to throw underarm and are developing hand to eye co-ordination, which is appropriate for this age group.
148. By the end of Year 6, pupils work in pairs, small groups and individually to practise and refine sequences of movements. They learn to stretch and relax and understand the importance of preparing their bodies for exercise by warming up and then cooling down after a period of sustained activity. Most pupils are able to explain their choice of movement. They can reflect on each other's performance by talking about high, medium and low levels they have worked at in previous lessons. They build on this understanding by working out different types of movement, such as spinning, as well as describing the different directions in which they can move. They make decisions about their actions and select movements in order to create sequences with partners. In experimenting with different gymnastic movements, pupils are able to identify similarities and differences between their own work and that of others.
149. In Years 1 and 2 and in Years 3 to 6, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Lessons have a clear structure. Teachers effectively model, for example, warming and cooling procedures. As a result, pupils know the importance of safety during physical education. Teachers and teaching assistants are appropriate role models for the pupils. Most are appropriately dressed although one lesson was observed in which staff did not wear physical education kit. Teachers actively participate in the lessons. Pupils are organised into a variety of groups or pairs so that they can develop stretching and flexibility. At times, pupils work individually and are supported by teachers. Some pupils in Year 3, for example, were shown, how to improve their control and stillness by the

teacher who demonstrated movements before pupils were able to practise individually. In Years 1 and 2 and Years 3 to 6, the management of most groups of pupils is good although a small group of pupils in Year 2 did not follow instructions. One good lesson was observed where effective links were made with science and pupils encouraged to use their knowledge of stretching as a stimulus for their activity. Pace during lessons is good, with sufficient time allocated to activities, discussion and reflection.

150. No differences were noted between groups of pupils although teachers took opportunities to work with pupils who needed support during lessons. In one Year 2 class, noteworthy skills were identified and demonstrated to the rest of the class to help them improve the standard of their work.
151. Pupils' attitudes to physical education are satisfactory. They participate with enjoyment in their lessons and they work enthusiastically. Clear direction and leadership from their teachers mean that they usually understand what is expected of them although in one Year 2 class, expectations for pupil behaviour were not made sufficiently clear and some pupils' participation was, briefly, unsatisfactory. Pupils' relationships with one another are good overall. In one lesson, pupils asked to select partners were careful to ensure that no – one was left without a partner.
152. The coordinator for physical education provides advice and support for planning topics and securing resources. However a clear system for monitoring the quality of teaching or standards is not established and these important aspects of leadership are unsatisfactory. Where good practice exists, there is no opportunity for the co-ordinator to identify and share this with others. The leadership and management of physical education are unsatisfactory.
153. Pupils have access to a variety of out of school activities and teams. Their successes are celebrated and displays around the school demonstrate the pride that is taken in their achievements. Pupils talk enthusiastically about these opportunities and the learning mentor who encourages pupils to take part in the activities gives them good supports.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

154. Standards in religious education are in line with those expected by the locally agreed syllabus at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, and pupils in Years 1 to 6 make satisfactory progress.
155. In Years 1 and 2, teachers provide pupils with suitable opportunities to learn about Jesus, his birth and life, using references from the New Testament. They not only learn about Christianity, but also about Judaism and Hinduism. Pupils enjoy listening to stories. In a Year 1 lesson, pupils listened intently to the miracle of Jesus calming the waters. The pupils then related the story of the calming of the waters to modern day actions and related their own experiences of how they have helped someone and how they can help each other. In a Year 2 class, pupils in small groups enacted different parts of the story of the 'Prodigal Son' to give a fuller meaning to the story. The opportunity provided for 'hands on' experiences is a strength and, in religious education, particularly deepens the meaning.
156. In Years 3 to 6, pupils reflect on the meaning of symbols used in different faiths. For example, in a Year 3 class, pupils were familiarised with an understanding about Palm Sunday and how and why different symbols are used in worship and celebration. A visitor very skilfully demonstrated why different clothes are worn by clergy, the

relevance of colours, and the reason why candles are lit and why people take bread and wine. Pupils were involved in a simulated Christening. Throughout the lesson good questioning by the visitor provided opportunities for pupils to offer reasons for the different symbols. In a Year 5 class, pupils were told the story of the 'Trial of Jesus' and pupils enacted in groups a script as a prelude to their discussion of aspects of the trial and whether or not Pontius Pilate was a coward. In Year 6, pupils learned about how a Muslim family used the Qur'an. They displayed curiosity, asked questions, made comments and showed initiative, working in groups. The opportunity for discussion and interaction in all classes promotes pupils' moral, social and cultural development, as well as, helping develop their speaking and listening skills.

157. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Although teaching is satisfactory overall during the inspection there were examples of good teaching. Throughout the inspection, pupils displayed positive attitudes to their religious studies and are keen to listen, especially when teaching is supported with visual materials. This helps pupils consolidate information. Planning indicates a range of suitable provision and the impact of the new locally agreed syllabus has been positive. It is comprehensive and provides teachers with valuable guidelines. It ensures that pupils have suitable opportunities to think about their own ideas and views, especially in their writing. Teaching does not always match the needs of pupils of different levels of attainment, which means that work can sometimes be too challenging for less able pupils and insufficiently challenging for the more able. Pupils have opportunities to acquire subject specific vocabulary of different religions and pupils use this in their discussion groups. Teaching is usually brisk, time and resources used effectively and questioning is probing. These approaches ensure that the management of pupils' behaviour is never an issue. Pupils were not observed using their information and communication technology skills to seek information to support their learning but this is currently due to technical problems.
158. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The school is using the new locally agreed syllabus, which is very comprehensive and is promoting teachers' confidence in this subject. The co-ordinator has recently received guidance on the content of medium term planning, which is proving useful. The new syllabus has assessment procedures identified and the school is shortly to implement these. The time allocated for teaching is appropriate and the co-ordinator monitors planning carefully but there is no monitoring of the teaching, learning and standards in this area. Good links are established with the church and the positive impact of this was observed. The school visits a synagogue and is now to explore the possibility of extending these visits to churches of other faiths. Pupils' spiritual development is extended through the daily act of worship and the school overall makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' awareness of other faiths. Resources are satisfactory overall.